



QUESTIONS RAISED BY MOSES

(Transcript of the talk given by Bob Moses at the 5th anniversary of SNCC)

What you should suppose about SNCC people is that they are not fearless. You'd have a better idea about them if you would suppose that they were very afraid and suppose that they were very afraid of the people in the South that they have to fight and struggle against. And suppose also that they are very afraid of this country. But suppose, then, that they had no choice, that is they can, through many different ways, see that their backs, so to speak, were against the wall and they had to move within that fear. And then suppose that what they are trying to do is explore how to move within the boundaries of fear and that what they've got to learn about fear is that it paralyzes you so that you don't move -- you don't do what you think you should, be it ask a question or take a person down to register. And suppose also about the Mississippi people that they're not heroes and that we're not heroes, that we're trying very hard to be people and that is very hard. If anything what we're trying to do, or have to do, is to see how you can move even though you are afraid.

I have just one thing that I would like to share with you. It's a question, it's a problem, that our country faces tangled up with thousands of other problems. We suppose that the people who murdered Micky and Andrew and James were not like us, not like most people in the country. And I think that that's a deep mistake, that we don't understand the implication of that. People keep asking me, "Do you think that they will get convicted?" and I keep saying, "No." But I also wonder why they keep asking because if you think about that, it seems that our experience will tell us that they cannot be convicted, that they will not be convicted, that the chance of their being convicted is almost zero. For them to be convicted would be for society to condemn itself and that's very hard for society to do, any society. Condemnation seems to have to come from outside or from the ranks within that are not a part of it.

So the jury that votes together to decide whether or not the people, the 18 or 21 people who evidently got together and sat down and then planned and then

got up and then murdered, that jury is like them. That's a hard thing to understand in this country.

The only place where they can be tried for murder is by a jury, a local jury, called together in Neshobe County. They're being tried now, not for murder, but for depriving people of their civil rights in the act of murdering them. That's the actual charge. People don't understand that.

That jury, that local jury, if you called it together, would presumably be the murderers' jury because the juries in the counties in the South are called together under the auspices of the sheriffs and the sheriff is presumably one of the persons indicted for the conspiracy to murder. I am fascinated with that. It's a very, very clear kind of thing. Suppose the sheriff killed somebody; then to have his trial, he calls the jury together. So you have the murderer's jury. And the problem seems to me to be, how can a society condemn itself?

I think that that question is a question for the country in this sense. The country refuses to look at Mississippi, and at the white people down there, as like them. So, therefore, they miss the main point, it seems to me, about the deep South and about the people there and, also, about ourselves.

Life magazine had a picture of the people who did the murder and they pictured them eating and laughing and joking and talking as though they were morally idiots. And I think most people in the country reading that got that impression. But you don't put yourself in that classification so they're other people -- they're not like you or like us. The Saturday Evening Post had a picture of a Klu Klux Klan on the front page just recently and at the end of the article talked about them as outcasts, as people who are in no way like most Americans, as rejects from the society. I think that's a false interpretation which people are getting and, therefore, they analyze the problem wrongly and, therefore, they look for wrong solutions.

The problem is so deep, all you can do is raise these questions. We feel that if we're going to get to the bottom, if

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Who Decides?

Within the past four years the Negroes' mass protest movement in the South has exploded many times -- in areas all over the black belt. The names Danville Virginia, Gadsden Alabama, Savannah Georgia, St. Augustine Florida are known at least to people who are close to the movement as places where some kind of mass action has taken place. And Albany Georgia, Cambridge Maryland, Birmingham Alabama, and very lately Selma Alabama are known at least to the general public in America and in some cases to the entire world.

In these places, thousands of people participated in protests and in one year, 1963, 20,000 went to jail demonstrating. An outgrowth of these protests has been an omnibus Civil Rights Act in 1964 and a pending Voting Rights Bill. But what has happened to all those people? Where are the people who marched 15,000 strong in Birmingham? Where is the Albany Movement? Where are all those people (also thousands) who protested and went to jail in Mississippi since 1961?

In Mississippi, there is an active Freedom Democratic Party which meets in country areas usually once a week. Thousands of people participate. The FDP is challenging the seating of five Mississippi congressmen. There is an active Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) which grew out of national civil rights groups. COFO is now many local groups working to attack local problems. The Mississippi Student Union, growing out of the Freedom Schools, is one of the most active student protest groups in the country. In some counties of the Mississippi Delta area, they have succeeded in setting up their own school system. The movement in Mississippi has continued since 1961. It is constantly creating, re-evaluating, and growing.

The Negro communities of Birmingham and Albany are two of the most well armed in the U.S. Sporadic police riots break out, particularly in Albany. They only serve to tear the lives of the people who are involved in them. There are no active civil rights movements, though most of the problems still exist that gave rise to the mass demonstrations. In 1962 and 1963 the eyes of the people were wide and alive. They marched and went to jail and continued to march. Today one can see the same emptiness and hopelessness which exists in Harlem and South Chicago.

There are no great differences between the problem which affected Danville, St. Augustine, Albany, Birmingham and Mississippi. It is one of people simply trying to live as human beings. But the approach to the solution of the problem was radically different. It centered around leadership and decision making.

In Birmingham, the people invited leaders in through the church. The ministers

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SNCC

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ASK YOURSELF THIS IMPORTANT QUESTION: What have I personally done to Maintain Segregation?

If the answer disturbs you, probe deeper and decide what you are willing to do to preserve racial harmony in Selma and Dallas County.

Is it worth four dollars to prevent a "Birmingham" here? That's what it costs to be a member of your Citizens Council, whose efforts are not thwarted by courts which give sit-in demonstrators legal immunity, prevent school boards from expelling students who participate in mob activities and would place federal referees at the board of voter registrars.

Law enforcement can be called only after these things occur, but your Citizens Council prevents them from happening.

Why else did only 350 Negroes attend a so-called mass voter registration meeting that outside agitators worked 60 days to organize in Selma?

Gov. Wallace told a state meeting of the council three weeks ago: "You are doing a wonderful job, but you should speak with the united voice of 100,000 persons. Go back home and get more members."

Gov. Wallace stands in the University doorway next Tuesday facing possible ten years imprisonment for violating a federal injunction.

Is it worth four dollars to you to prevent sit-ins, mob marches and wholesale Negro voter registration efforts in Selma?

If so, prove your dedication by joining and supporting the work of the Dallas County Citizens Council today. Six dollars will make both you and your wife members of an organization which has already given Selma nine years of Racial Harmony since "Black Monday."

Send Your Check To THE DALLAS COUNTY Citizens Council

SELMA, ALABAMA
YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS GOOD FOR 12 MONTHS

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This supplement to The Movement is published by The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, 584 Page Street, San Francisco, California

The Movement is the monthly newsletter of California Friends of SNCC

Reprints of the supplement are available from this office.

single copies	5¢
2 - 10 copies	4¢
10 - 100 copies	3¢
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Individuals willing to send packages of food and clothing to the residents of Selma should mail their packages to

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All packages should be insured, and return requested.

of New York, 2nd and 3rd largest banks in the United States.

Policy control of the Liberty National Insurance Co. is exercised by persons who are very much a part of the fabric of the topmost political and economic power in the US. (ed. note: The Hammermill Paper Company announced Feb. 4 that it would build a \$35 million plant in Selma, because, said the Chairman of the Board of Directors, of the "character of the community and its people." The Liberty National Life Insurance Company bought \$400,000 worth of industrial development bonds from Hammermill in order to finance the building of the plant.)

This tangled web of power reaches into Lyndon Johnson's White House and into the US House of Representatives (in the person of Congressman Howard Callaway, who sits on the board of the Trust Company of Georgia and Georgia Power Company, another operating subsidiary of the Southern Company

What hope is there for American Negroes, and for those who support their aspirations, when the President who appoints the judges and the US attorneys (who supposedly will enforce the civil rights act) is so closely tied in with the industrial and financial elite which sees fit to honor the murderous Alabama Police minions of Governor George C. Wallace and Sheriff James Clark?

And do not these honored and esteemed financial and industrial leaders hold the whips and clubs with which Selma Negroes were driven from the streets on March 7, in the same sense that the financial and industrial elite of Germany were found guilty of participating, by consent, in the massacre of 6 million Jews in Nazi Germany?

And what will the American people do about it?"

Bloody Sunday

As seen through the reports coming from the South, events moved quickly toward Sunday, March 7, 1965. SCLC came to Selma as an organization in December 1964 and began to work with SNCC in voter registration. A Freedom Day was planned for four days in January. John Lewis and Martin Luther King were both in Selma for Freedom Day January 18, and led 500 Negroes to the courthouse. They were forced to stand in an alley all day, and then no one was registered. King was punched; Lewis pinned the attacker's arms to his side.

On January 19, Lewis, John Love, and Lafayette Surney of SNCC were arrested, together with SCLS's Hosea Williams and Mrs. Amelia Boynton. Day after day the people came back to the courthouse, on February 10, 600 students, on the 15th 2000 adults and 1000 students.

A boycott of downtown Selma merchants was begun, individually and spontaneously by local people, when they saw some of the merchants serving on the sheriff's posse. The latest report from John Love (March) says that the boycott is effective and spreading.

On February 20, the Dallas County White Citizens Council held its annual barbecue, at which Ross Barnett spoke. The place for the barbecue was the National Guard Armory in Selma. A telegram of protest was sent to Washington by SNCC over the use of Government facilities for the racist meeting.

On February 22, another march led by Lewis and King. The people were put through the process of signing an "appearance book" and were then told if they came back on March 1 they would be registered; if not they would be considered ineligible.

The following evening, 60 students, led by John Lewis, left Brown's Chapel (the headquarters of the demonstrations) to march to the courthouse in protest against Wallace's ban on night marches. They marched six blocks to the Coca Cola plant, where they were confronted with three times their number of city policemen. They knelt to pray, sang, and returned to the Chapel.

On March 4, high school students expelled for leaving school to attend the funeral of Jimmy Lee Jackson, murdered by State Troopers, urged their fellow students to boycott the school. The first day of the boycott was 99% effective. (On absence notes signed by their parents, the reason given for their absence was "brother's funeral").

At a meeting between the staffs of SNCC and SCLC in Selma on Friday the 5th, the SNCC staff expressed its opposition to the planned march from Selma to Montgomery. SNCC workers thought the danger to the people involved was greater than the objectives and any possible achievements of the march warranted. At the SNCC Executive Committee

meeting in Atlanta that day and Saturday, many members expressed their opposition, but it was decided that in view of their concern for and commitment to the local people, SNCC would provide the services already agreed on - radios, the WATS line, and the services of the Medical Committee on Human Rights. SNCC staff members would participate in the march on an individual basis.

Events in Selma were approaching a crisis. Wallace had ordered the troopers to use "every necessary measure" to stop the march. Martin Luther King was in Atlanta. The march, when it began, was led by John Lewis, SNCC worker Robert Mants, SCLS's Hosea Williams, and Albert Turner, head of the Dallas County Voters League.

The facts are well known.

Two to three thousand people were marching.

At a few minutes past 4 in the afternoon all hell broke loose in Selma. SNCC worker Lafayette Surney was at a phone booth near the bridge:

"4:15 p.m. State troopers are throwing tear gas at the people. A few are running back. A few are being blinded by tear gas. Somebody has been hurt -- I don't know who ... They're beating them and throwing tear gas at them.

4:16 p.m. Police are beating people on the streets. Oh, man, they're just picking them up and putting them in ambulances. People are getting hurt, pretty bad. There were two people on the ground in pretty bad shape ... I'm going to leave in a few minutes ... People are running back this way.

4:17 p.m. Ambulances are going by with the sirens going. People are running, crying, telling what's happening.

4:18 p.m. Police are pushing people into alleys. I don't know why. People are screaming, hollering. They're bringing in more ambulances. People are running, hollering, crying ...

4:20 p.m. Here come the white hoodlums. I'm on the corner of one of the main streets. One lady screamed, "They're trying to kill me."

4:26 p.m. They're going back to the church. I'm going too"

Who Is Responsible For Alabama Police Brutality?

This question is raised in a SNCC Special Report issued Monday, March 8. We quote in part:

"A clue to the answer is provided, ironically, on the same evening, March 7, The ABC network presented their Sunday Night Movie, "Judgement in Nuremburg." The movie is the story of the war crimes trials held in Germany after World War II. The trials attempted to fix the blame for the murder of 6 million Jews in the Nazi gas chambers. The movie points out that the best educated, most respectable, most prestigious and most powerful of Germany's indus-

QUESTION

Where am I
in our history books

I built the
ark that
saved you
from the sun

and nursed
your babes
with black
milk laughter
everywhere

so where

am I

oh where

am I



ERRATUM

To the quote
"families that
pray together
stay together"

please add
"in darkness"

W. W. Long

former SNCC Coordinator who worked in Selma—
reprinted from the Frederick Douglass Free Press

trial, political and financial elite must bear the major portion of the guilt, for they were the ones who could have stopped the massacre, and didn't.

We shall make no attempt to do a definitive analysis of the structure of economic power which lies behind, aids, abets, and approves such police brutality in Alabama. The evidence is so near the surface of everyday life in America that no definitive analysis is required.

On December 4, 1964, in the Municipal Stadium in Selma, "law enforcement officers from the state, city, and county... were guests of honor at a barbeque given by the Liberty National Insurance Company." -- Selma Times-Journal, 12/6/64.

These guests who were honored by the insurance company included "law enforcement officers" from Al Lingo's State Police, Sheriff Clark's deputies and Posse, and the Selma police department. Officials and employees of Liberty National, ... stood behind the serving counter's and loaded the plates of the hungry "law officers."

Who and what is the Liberty National Insurance Company? Our records do not indicate who owns the stock of the company. But we do have a list of the members of the Board of Directors, the governing body of the corporation, which determines all policy matters and must approve, ultimately, all expenditures, including the cost of paying tribute to the "law officers" of Alabama...

The Liberty National Board of Directors includes:

-- Walter Bouldin, President of the Alabama Power Co. and a director of Birmingham Trust National Bank. Alabama Power is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Southern Company. The largest stockholders in the Southern Company

As word of the SNCC project spread a call for help came in from a group of farmers in Wilcox County, where there has not been a registered Negro voter in 50 years. James Austin left Dallas County to aid them: a number were successful in filing applications, but none were registered. Wilcox County still has no registered Negroes.

Before it was necessary for the Lafayettes to leave Selma a year later, Bernard was successful in organizing a powerfully functioning youth organization, working with the students of Hudson High School. These students took over the job of canvassing the city for voters. In September, 1963, it was the high school students who spearheaded the street demonstrations. These demonstrations organized by SNCC and led by the Dallas County Voters League were the first in the county's history. Sit-in demonstrations against local downtown establishments met with stiff and often brutal resistance from municipal, county, and state law enforcement officials. SNCC Chairman John Lewis came to Selma to participate in the operations, which were continuing hard and fast, and which broke through the fear and apathy that was prevalent at that time among local Negroes.

Sheriff Clark, with a federal suit pending against him, was understandably nervous. He called for and received aid from State Public Safety Director, the notorious Colonel Lingo, in the form of 150 state troopers. He also organized what is now called "Clark's Posse," a band of 300 local citizens to help in quelling demonstrations.

A Freedom Monday was scheduled for October 7, 1963 (at that time the Registrar's Office was open only every other Monday), and the demonstrators pressed harder to arouse as many Negroes to register as possible.

Street by street canvassing was carried on. The week before Freedom Monday, Jim Forman arrived to join in the organizing, John Lewis and other SNCC workers being in jail. On the afternoon of October 7, 450 Negroes were lined up in front of the Court House. Sheriff Clark issued orders that no one could leave the line for any purpose. Two SNCC field secretaries were beaten and arrested when they attempted to pass out sandwiches and water to people on the line. Clark and three deputies drove away Forman, James Gildersleeve, president of the Dallas County Voters League, and the state senator from Maryland, Mrs. Welcasne, when they attempted to speak to people on the line.

About 14 Negroes were processed that day, but the events had shaken Selma, and work was accelerated, high school students canvassing in the city, and SNCC workers in the rural areas.

The fear and apathy had been enormous, but the break-through was equally great. By November, 1963, Bruce Gordon, SNCC

worker in Dallas County was able to add at the end of his field report, "While driving through a rural area returning to Selma after a day of canvassing I passed a Negro farmer, on a mule drawn wagon, singing 'We Shall Overcome' to himself."

A Few Words About Sheriff Clark

One of the strongest forces operating against the movement in Dallas County is Sheriff Clark and his Posse. (which, he claims, is used only for floods, fires, and civil defense). The Posse is not necessarily more brutal than the state troopers - it was the troopers who beat the movement to death in Gadsden, using cattle prods on people, beating women on the breasts, and men on their testicles. But Dallas County is the only county with such a posse, and it provides a concentration of brutality unexcelled elsewhere.

In December, 1963, Sheriff Clark, together with County Solicitor Blanchard McLeod and four policemen, raided the SNCC office - striking a SNCC worker, confiscating the office files and ripping the telephone from the wall. They then raided the SNCC Freedom House and arrested 9 persons.

Clark has attended every mass meeting held by SNCC, the Dallas County Voters League, or the Dallas County Improvement Association, with his hand on his hip and frequently a cattle prod (which he describes as a "most humane instrument") in his hand. In September, 1963, SNCC worker Worth Long reported:

"Selma is in a state of siege. Everywhere you look you see state policemen or members of the special posse brandishing clubs and cattle prods."

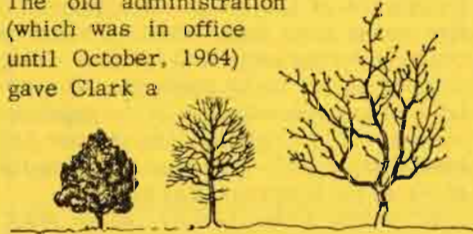
That's fall, 1963 - a year and a half before things erupted in Selma.

The Posse, used to hinder union activity as well as harass voter registration efforts, is a specially deputized group, empowered to carry weapons and make arrests. At least 100 wear old army fatigues, helmets, and boots. They work closely with the state troopers, and have travelled as far away as Birmingham, Tuscaloosa and Gadsden to quell civil rights activity.

Just before the events of Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965, John Love reported,

"There seems to be some confusion and uncertainty in the white community over how to deal with us, and a possible split between the supporters of the brutal Sheriff Clark and the more moderate Commissioner of Public Safety, Baker. The old administration

(which was in office until October, 1964) gave Clark a



completely free reign, and made no visible efforts to restrain him. The present administration seems more anxious to control him - though it is questionable whether this is possible ... (Ed. note: At 7 p.m., March 7, 1965, SNCC's Lafayette Surney reported from the Good Samaritan Hospital in Selma: "I just finished talking to Police Commissioner Baker. He said that State Troopers took over and just took it out of their hands.")

At this point it doesn't seem that the people of Selma have been turned around by Clark's brutality. The 300 people who were active in the first Freedom Day in October of 1963 are still with us."

Sheriff Clark's terror has served not only to keep the Negro in constant fear. As one white citizen of Selma said, "The trouble is, too many of our people fear the white man more than they do the Negroes."

The Eye Of Hurricane

By summer of 1964 things had subsided: "The county got an injunction prohibiting assemblies of three or more persons in any public place. Named in the injunction were fourteen organizations, including SNCC and SCLC, and forty-one individuals.

The combination of arrests, intimidation, violence and the injunction brought civil rights activity to a temporary halt in mid-July. But it did not bring to a halt the determination to create change in this old Southern city, although the past as well as the present in Selma has not created a situation in which change is easy." -- Jerry Demuth, "Black Belt, Alabama."

An important step was taking place during this time of calm. At the same time that Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Mrs. Victoria Gray and Mrs. Annie Devine were challenging the regular Democratic officeholders in Mississippi, a Selma woman, Mrs. Amelia Boynton, qualified to oppose veteran Representative Kenneth A. Roberts in Alabama's May primary.

She was the first Negro to run for Congress from Alabama since the Reconstruction, and the first woman ever to try for the office. An insurance agent and employment office operator, and resident of Selma since 1930, Mrs. Boynton ran a vigorous campaign, and of course lost. There are 860,073 white voters in Alabama, and 66,009 Negro voters.

One problem was made clear to SNCC workers after the Boynton campaign: they would have to dig deeper into the community with their work. Their own experience, combined with the nearby Mississippi model, indicated to the SNCC staff that they had much work to do before the Dallas County movement would reach the poorest Negroes in the area. At this point the movement was led by only a few local people; the full participation of many local Negroes in every level of decision-making remained an unrealized goal.

MARCHING THROUGH SELMA

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT OF DOCUMENTS AND ANALYSIS

The White City

The county seat of Dallas County, Alabama, lying on the bluffs of the Alabama River, an important Confederate military depot in the Civil War, today the birthplace and stronghold of the Alabama White Citizens Council, is an ordinary town, a friendly, ordinary town. Listen to the people who should know:

"Selma is now a little country town that is typical of most small Southern towns." - Alabama Historian, M.B. Owen in Our State Alabama.

"The white and Negro races have lived together in Selma and Dallas County for many generations in a state of peace and tranquility ... We have enjoyed mutual confidence and trust between the races, and this will again prevail regardless of current unrest." - 23 Dallas County Business Leaders in a full page ad.

"There hasn't been a lynching around here for 50 years." - A Citizen.

"You can walk any place in Selma at any time of day or night without fear of being clubbed, which is more than you can say for Washington, D.C." -- The Mayor, Chris B. Heinz, also president of the Selma Citizens Council.

There is no Klu Klux Klan in Selma "because people put their trust in law-enforcement." -- The Sheriff, Jim Clark.

The industries in Selma are small and based mainly on cotton. There is also the Craig Air Force Base, three miles away, the home of the Jet Qualification Course and Basic Instructors School. The financial and business ties of Selma to the North are important and will receive attention later.

The Negro City

There are also some Negroes in Selma. They account for over half of the urban population and 58% of the county's population. Of those eligible to vote, less than one percent are registered.

"Did the Sheriff strike at you?"

"He did."

"Did he miss you or hit you?"

"He hit me."

"How many times?"

"He hit me over the head three times, punched me in my stomach two times, punched me in my side once, and then kicked me in the chest." -- Testimony of Bosie Reese, registration worker, arrested at Dallas Co. courthouse. Quoted in John Fry's "The Voter Registration Drive in Selma, Alabama," Presbyterian Life, 1/15/64.

"MAIDS"

"With the minimum wage per hour being \$1.25, there are still hundreds of maids here in Selma working for \$15 per week. With hours varying from 7 am to 5 pm." -- Frederick Douglas Free Press, 1/15/65.

"Median family income in Dallas County is \$2,846 (compared to \$3,937 for the state), but median family income for Negroes is only \$1,393. Median school years completed in the county is 8.8 (compared to 9.1 for the state), but median school years completed for Negroes is 5.8" -- Jerry Demuth, "Black Belt, Alabama," Commonweal, 8/7/64.

Selma is an ordinary town in the Black Belt of America, whose counties are economically and socially among the worst in the nation.

Washington Winds Slowly O'er The Lea

The Justice Department has been active in Alabama since 1957. In April, 1961 they filed suit against the Dallas County Board of Registrars, seeking an injunction against discrimination in voter registration. The US District Court denied the injunction. The case was appealed to the Appellate Court, Judge Cameron presiding. In November, 1963, 30 months after the filing of the suit, the injunction was granted: it does not, however, touch the major varieties of discriminatory practice.

In June, 1963 the Department attempted to get the Federal District Court to keep the County officials and Sheriff Clark from intimidating Negro applicants. Judge Thomas refused to grant an injunction. The appeal failed. The Department finally got a hearing in October, 1963, but no injunction resulted. The case is still on appeal.

This sketch of legal redresses suggests the legal state of affairs in Selma and Dallas County: the impotency of the courts to relieve an inevitable situation.

"As early as 1961 ... the Justice Department filed suit against the Board of Registrars of Dallas Co. Four years and five more suits later effective relief is yet to be forthcoming, and the first voting referee is yet to be appointed. The extraordinary concentration of the legal resources of the Justice Department has been to no avail" -- Congressman Resnick of NY in the Congressional Record.

In nearby Perry County, where SNCC has also been conducting a voter regis-

tration drive, the Justice Department was successful in obtaining a federal voting referee. However, between November 3 and December 18, 1964, the referee registered only 2 of 61 Perry County Negroes who tried to register. The Justice Department has challenged his rulings.

"Perhaps we need to charge the Justice Department with something more than a mindless mechanical approach to a vital problem. On January 21, 1965, Judge Thomas was petitioned by NAACP lawyers to issue an injunction against Sheriff Clark's repressive acts. Thomas granted this relief on January 23, saying:

Under the guise of enforcement there shall be no intimidation, harrassment, or the like, of the citizens to register to vote, nor of those legally attempting to register to vote, nor of those legally attempting to aid others in registering to vote, or encouraging them.

On the scene was US Deputy Marshal Fountain, policing the Federal Judge's ruling for the Justice Department. He chose to enforce the ruling to its strictest letter, even denying registration drive leaders the right to speak to applicants in line or bring them food and water. Inspection of the statement of Judge Thomas' rule given above indicates this Justice Department man's sudden zeal for enforcement exceeded the bounds of court order. There were no complaints from Sheriff Clark, at whom the injunction was aimed.

And there have been no complaints from him since then." -- "Justice Department Activity in Selma, Alabama," Special SNCC Report, 2/25/65.

It should be noted that most of the Judges who frustrate Justice Department efforts at gaining voting rights were appointed by Democratic Presidents. Judge Johnson, whose recent order cleared the way for the Selma-Montgomery march, is an Eisenhower appointee.

The Agitators

"You're an agitator: that's the lowest form of life." -- Sheriff Clark

SNCC workers Bernard and Colia Lafayette, Frank Holloway and James Austin came to Selma in the early fall of 1962 to begin a voter registration drive. They set up a voter registration class in the house across the street from the county jail, then in some of the churches. They also made contact with the Dallas County Voters League, which has been operating in that area for 20 years.

CONTINUED

were the leaders. The leaders decided to push for a single objective (employment of Negro policemen and city workers). The leaders then told people how to solve the problem. The leaders made decisions and the people followed.

The leaders said march and the people marched. The marches got publicity because the leaders were going to jail. The people went to jail too but little was said about them. The leaders spoke for the people on TV, articulating what the people wanted. But in "high level" meetings, the leaders only met with other leaders, not with people involved in the local area. So after a while the leaders got a Civil Rights Act and the people stopped marching.

The people in Birmingham trusted leaders just as we all do. We trust people to do our job for us when we don't want to take on our own responsibilities. Further still we are taught that it takes qualifications like college education, or "proper English" or "proper dress" to lead people. These leaders can go before the press and project a "good image" to the nation and even to the world. But after a while the leaders can only talk to the press not with the people. They can only talk about problems as they see them -- not as the people see them. And they can't see the problems anymore because they always are in news conferences, "high level" meetings or negotiations. So leaders speak on issues many times which do not relate to the needs of the People. And leaders negotiate with leaders of a town (the mayor or sheriff) for the people. Sometimes among themselves the leaders reach political agreements but the problems of the people are not solved. So the leader leaves -- to speak up North or to lead other people. And what of the people who stay? They played no part in deciding what took place and since their energies were used for demonstrating and getting beaten and going to jail, since they never discussed why they should do these things but were told why by the leaders and since they did no negotiating or even talking about whether or not they wanted to negotiate, they are acting in a vacuum. And many times they are worse off than before the leaders came in because they have no other way of attacking the problem. That's Birmingham and St. Augustine and soon, probably Selma.

In Mississippi there were also people with common problems. A leader came whom the people trusted. But the leader got the people together and said, "You decide, you make decisions about your life." "You decide about voting. You decide about demonstrating. Just as you are. You don't have to be articulate or politically developed. You know your conditions better than I, better than any one." It took a while. There were no marches the first week or, even sometimes the

first year. But people began to do things, to act, and to decide and they marched and formed their own political party and community organization. Everyone led. Everyone got a chance to speak. They are writing their own voting bill, MFDLP says that the people who can say best what it means to be denied the right to vote are the people who aren't allowed to vote because it has happened to them.

Mississippi, through people like Fannie Hamer from Ruleville, Susie Ruffin from Laurel and Hartman Turnbow from Holmes County, shows that maybe the most important thing is that they came from inside rather than outside. They are already the people. They are by no means proper by outside standards. They split verbs and flatten phrases. And they are leaders.

Maybe the most important thing about a leader is his personality -- his self-confidence, the way he walks and talks. He knows he can lead and likes it. What would happen if there was a complete reevaluation of leaders who know they can lead. The role of a leader could change so that he would use his dynamism to project other people -- tell them they can lead -- ask people questions rather than give them answers. Maybe the presence of a leader reaches the point where the best thing he can do is withdraw -- just leave. The leader would work himself out of a job. (This is the reason a large number of the staff of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) are leaving Mississippi after nearly four years work to expand organizing in other states.) If he continues to project people he'll soon find that he's needed less and less as a leader even if more and more as a person and this

will probably be hard to take. The spotlight is gone and self satisfaction must be derived a completely different way -- that of seeing people do things themselves. Maybe at this point the leader can raise the question of rotating leadership positions in and out (like MFDLP) so that the person not the position is most important. This rotation might be made effective if it's projected that leadership can change as tactics or issues change. The same may be done with structures. In this context structures have to be such that they are molded to fit people's needs rather than the usual case of the structure becoming so important that people have to fit into them. (in a large sense like the U.S. Government and a smaller and sometimes more tragic sense civil rights groups.)

In negotiations this is more difficult because the only people who can really negotiate about people's lives are the people themselves. Also with news reporting more people should be able to speak. Newsmen are very much oriented to seeking out leaders. Maybe that orientation has to be reevaluated so that they talk to more people. The idea is to broaden leadership roles.

The question of leadership and it's role in the Movement is one which will very soon have to be dealt with or the destruction of people will continue. Using people as a means to an end cannot continue. Perhaps even if the ends justify the means what justifies the ends? If we destroy people for an objective then what good is the objective? Who does it serve: No one has the right to go into an area to lead people and not allow them to decide in which direction they want to go.

JIMMY GARRETT

WHAT MEANS TO WHAT ENDS?

... differences in means can sometimes be as important as differences in ends. The defect of the traditional NAACP approach is not that it is ineffective but that, in (Louis) Lomax's phrase, it achieves its goals by "doing the job for the people, rather than having the people do the job themselves." ...

Important as the demonstrations have been to Negro morale, however, it would be a mistake to exaggerate their impact. They have contributed a great deal to Negro self-pride -- but not enough to conquer apathy, not enough, certainly, to stir the great bulk of slum dwellers into action on their own behalf. Indeed, Louis Lomax, the chronicler of "the Negro revolt," occasionally seems puzzled at the superficiality of the results to date. Writing about Montgomery, Alabama, for example -- the birthplace of the "revolt" -- Lomax asks why "such a deep-rooted movement as the Montgomery boycott resulted in nothing more than the integration of the buses." In fact, the boycott did not do that, either. Integration came as a result of an NAACP suit filed six months after the boycott began. Nor was the movement as deeply rooted as it appeared at the time; as soon as the original leaders left the scene, the movement dissipated. In 1962, for example, less than a year after Rev. Ralph Abernathy had left his Montgomery church for a pastorate in Atlanta, the SCLC held a state-wide conference in Montgomery. The leaders hoped to climax the three-day meeting with a mass rally in one of Montgomery's Negro churches. Not a single church was willing to lend its facilities for the rally -- not even the church Reverend Abernathy had headed, where a year before a group of Freedom Riders had spent the night besieged by a white mob outside. And by 1963, most Negroes in Montgomery had returned to the old custom of riding in the back of the bus.

(Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in Black & White*, Random House, N. Y., pp. 140-2)

HUAC AND BIGOTRY ARM IN ARM

we're going to go down there and try and create anything new, then we have to do this because it seems that right within our country you have that problem where everybody can focus on it and say what are the conditions which create a society in which people sit down and plan and kill and then pat themselves on the back as patriots. Because they're defending their liberties and what they hold most dear and their civilization?

That, it seems to me, is the point about us as a country where we are with the bomb and what we do in terms of Vietnam. We are not over there killing people primarily but defending liberty and defending our concept of what is democracy, civilization and so forth. There's no forum to raise those questions.

I raise them because I don't think we're going to escape that easily, because they're going on killing in Mississippi. At the same time that everyone knows about the three who were killed and the people who are on trial for that, no one asks about the two Negro boys whose bodies were severed in half, who were found while they were looking for the other three, because nobody knows about them. And nobody asks why did that grand jury let those people off who were indicted for that crime, on the same day that they indicted the people who were supposed to have killed the other three. And nobody asks because, again, nobody knows about it.

I have one other thing that I'd like to share. What we have begun to learn and are trying to explore about people is how they can come together in groups, small groups or large groups, and talk to each other and make decisions about basic things about their lives. I think that that has application everywhere in the country. Whatever we currently mean by democracy, we don't mean that people should come together, discuss their main problems that they all know about and be able to do something about themselves. That was what the Free Speech Movement meant, as I understand it, as it unfolded in part.

One problem with people who might want to try to do this, say in S. F. or anyplace, is that they would first think that in order to go to people and get them together, they would have to have

"... All this does not mean that HUAC and its counterparts alone originated the communist charge against integrationists. Civil rights groups are challenging society as it is, and all through history those who want to keep things as they are have labeled advocates of change as 'subversives,' 'outsiders,' and 'traitors.' To the white man on the street in the South, the word 'communist' means just those things. Thus, long before HUAC, Southerners who feared change were calling all who questioned the South's racial patterns communists.

What HUAC and the other committees have done, however, is to give weight to those reckless charges by placing upon them the stamp of approval of a government committee. They have provided the official national and state legislative reports which can be quoted with immunity to libel. They have enabled the segregationist to tie his kite to the national issue of communism and thus pose, not as the defender of a corrupt Southern status quo, but as a guardian of the national security

It would be almost impossible for a person to have done anything constructive to right the world's wrongs and not have a 'citation' in HUAC files. These huge files are available to any member of Congress and through them to various individuals, organizations, and state officials. The helter-skelter citations thus become lethal smear weapons in the hands of segregationists, both official and unofficial

THE STATE COMMITTEES

Regular users of HUAC files are the various investigative committees in the Southern states which sprang up after 1954. These committees have had various

"House Un-American Activities Committee: Bulwark of Segregation," Anne Braden.

something for them to talk about. So they would have to have a program to carry to them or they would have to have something to organize them around. But it doesn't turn out to be true, from our experience. You could in the North, in the ghettos, get together 10 or 20 people and out of their getting together and giving them a chance to talk about their main problem would come some programs, that they themselves decided on, that they thought about. If that happened

names - from the Legal Educational Advisory Committee established in Mississippi in 1955 to the Committee on Offenses Against the Administration of Justice in Virginia to the more open copying of the HUAC name in Louisiana's Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities. But all have similar aims, chiefly to preserve segregation, and their method is to pounce upon those who oppose it. Sometimes the same function is performed by a state sovereignty commission, and some states - Mississippi for example - have had both a sovereignty commission and committee

As the various little state HUAC's hold their hearings, they issue their own reports, which then also become 'authoritative' sources and are in turn quoted by agencies of other states - or by the congressional committees as further 'evidence' of the subversive nature of the integrationists

GRIST FOR VIGILANTE MILLS

A new technique that has recently emerged is the use of HUAC-documented newspaper articles as the basis for legal action against integrationists by local officials.

For example, when the Danville, Va., affiliate of SCLC launched direct-action protests against segregation in 1963, local newspapers began a series of attacks charging that communists were behind the movement; authority for the charges were citations of HUAC and the Florida investigating committee. Later, when city officials went to court to stop the demonstrations by injunction, the clippings of these articles were presented as 'evidence' that the demonstrations were communist-inspired."

and began to happen around the country, that would be the key to spreading some of the things that have happened in the South to the rest of the country. That not only goes for poor people but for the professional people as well. The last meeting where I was, where I was partially hooted down, was at a doctors' meeting in L. A. when I asked them about Medicare. The concept that doctors should discuss Medicare, pro and con, in their meetings seems to be alien to democracy.

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