

THE WALKING CITY, A HISTORY OF THE MONTGOMERY BOYCOTT

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By Norman W. Walton

PART II

Mass Arrest of Boycotters

On February 22 deputies began the arrest of all persons connected with the boycott who were violating the state law. . . the arrest which was to shock the world. A total of ninety three persons was arrested under the law. Twenty-four were ministers. For almost two days the courthouse was crowded with Negroes going in and out. They were given a number and fingerprinted and photographed. The whole procedure seemed to have everyone confused because surely there had been nothing like it in Montgomery's whole history. Negroes who were expected by all past action in history to be afraid and attempt to deny the charge, virtually placed themselves under arrest. There seemed to have been some supernatural force that gave them strength. Many Negroes after hearing that their names were on the list went straight to the courthouse. Others went to inquire if they were on the list. One Negro leader, after being told he was not listed, became angry and insisted on knowing why he was not. It was indeed a day of honor to be arrested. Thurgood Marshall, General Counsel for the NAACP, declared "up until the indictment was handed down by the Montgomery County Grand Jury, there was a local problem growing out of the spontaneous resentment of the people. Now it has become our case and we intend to fight it."¹⁰

In the meantime the City Commissioners had proposed a final compromise which would end the boycott. The arrest and the compromise came when Rev. King was out of the city, but at a mass meeting led by Rev. Ralph Abernathy, the compromise, which was the same as the one which had been refused by Negroes, was voted down.

Boycotters in the Court

The trial of 93 Negroes charged with illegally boycotting the Montgomery City Lines, began on March 19, 1956. About 500 Negroes waited

in the halls and outside the small courthouse which was to be the scene of the trial. The Rev. M. L. King Case No. 7399, pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and recognized spokesman of the boycott, was the first to be tried.¹¹

On the first day of the trial, the State Prosecuting Attorneys produced testimony and bookkeeping records to show that several thousand dollars had been spent by the Montgomery Improvement Association to finance automobile rides for Negroes who had boycotted the Montgomery City Lines, Inc. Mrs. Erna Dungee, wife of a Negro Doctor and financial secretary of the Association, affirmed financial records presented by Assistant Circuit Solicitor R. E. Stewart. Mrs. Dungee testified Association checks were paid to eight service station operators for gasoline purchases for operation of the transportation service. Particular attention was given to the check of \$5,000 made out to cash and endorsed by King. Mrs. Dungee testified the money was simply a transfer of funds from Alabama National Bank in Montgomery to Citizens Trust Company in Atlanta, Georgia.¹² King had explained this move in a mass meeting; he said it was to prevent the tying up of funds by local officials.

The Defense Attorneys Arthur Shores, Peter Hall, Ozell Billingsley, Fred Gray, Charles Langford and Robert Carter objected to the admission of the bookkeeping records on grounds that the records, deposit slips, and checks were photostatic copied and not the best evidence, and that the records of the Improvement Association were "immaterial and irrelevant."¹³ Judge Carter overruled the objection and admitted the evidence. He explained that there was enough evidence at that time to connect the material with a charge of conspiracy against the defendant.

After the state had completed its case, the Negro Defense Attorneys immediately sought to throw out all

of the prosecution's evidence as insufficient to prove that King violated Alabama anti-boycott law. "Even if the state had proved such action," Gray continued, "no evidence was produced to show the Negroes did not have a just cause or legal excuse."¹⁴ Again Gray restated that the law itself, under which King was brought to trial, was unconstitutional in that it violated the Federal Constitution.

Replying to the Negro Attorneys, Circuit Solicitor William F. Thetford said both the Alabama and U. S. Supreme Court have held that the boycott law was not in violation of freedom of speech or assembly.

Judge Carter overruled this request of the Negro Lawyers and stated that he thought the state had established a "prime facie" case of conspiracy but did not say if King was connected with it.¹⁵ The state had attempted to show that Negroes were threatened and intimidated to keep them from riding the buses, by presenting Negroes who were later to be called "black Judases" to testify that they had been threatened and intimidated.

On March 21, Rev. Martin L. King testified in his defense that he had not encouraged Negroes to boycott the buses and that his attitude was "Let your conscious be your guide." He described the Improvement Association as an organization created to improve the general status of Montgomery, improve race relation and uplift the "general tenor of the community."¹⁶ He agreed that the officers of the Association were M. L. King, President, L. R. Bennett, Vice President, U. J. Fields, Recording Secretary, and E. D. Nixon, Treasurer. King also supported the statement that about \$3,500 a week was being spent to support the bus boycott.

King was questioned by City Solicitor William Thetford on the facts about the formation of the boycott and said he couldn't remember what group drew up the petition or the recommendations that were presented at the first mass meeting, nor could

he remember whether the agenda for the meeting at the Holt Street Baptist Church was drawn up that afternoon or that night. "In any event," he said, "the plan reflected the wishes of the 4,000 Negroes present at the December 5 mass meeting."¹⁷ When asked if there were any white persons who were members of the Montgomery Improvement Association, King said that he didn't know because "We don't keep our records on the basis of race." However he admitted that Graetz was a member.

Rufus Lewis, First Chairman of the Transportation Committee that operated the car pool, explained how the committee arranged a system of free transportation for Negroes financed by contributions made at church services and mass meetings. He said approximately 43 pick up dispatch stations were set up to accommodate persons who could not get transportation otherwise.

One of the difficulties of the state was its own witness, the Rev. U. J. Fields, pastor of the Bell Street Church and Secretary of the Montgomery Improvement Association. He refused to swear the oath to tell the truth because it was against his religion, but he promised the Judge he would tell the truth. Most of his answers were in the tune of "My memory does not serve me well enough to answer" or "the words do not make sense to me now."

The Defense Attorneys used 28 witnesses to show Negroes were mistreated while riding the buses. Mrs. Thelma Glass of the Women's Political Council testified her group had tried for six years to get the City Commission to arrange more favorable seating conditions on the buses and were refused. Mrs. Sadie Brooks, member of the Civic Federation Club, testified she heard a Negro passenger threatened because he did not have the correct change. "The driver whipped out a pistol and drove the man off the bus."

Georgia Gilmore said when she boarded a bus, a driver yelled out at her, "come out nigger and go in the back door." When she stepped off the bus to comply, the driver drove away. She continued, "when they count the money, they do not

know Negro money from white money."

The Rev. Robert S. Graetz, 27 year old white pastor of the Trinity Lutheran Church in Montgomery testified for the defense. He declared that King was not in favor of threatening or intimidating anyone who chose to ride the buses.

Richard S. Jordan testified that his wife had been forced to move to make way for white ladies at the capitol just going two blocks. He also objected to being called "nigger" and "boy." Della Perkins said she had been called "ugly black ape" by a driver. Many of the Negroes wore crosses on their lapels reading "Father, forgive them."

Scores of the newspaper reporters representing publications in the United States, India, France, and England covered the trial. The reporter from the farthest distance was M. V. Kamath, Special correspondent of the press of India, LTD, which is the AP of India. The New York Post sent down two artists to cover the trial. They were Harvey Dinastain and Burt S. Luenman. Farrel Dobbs, N. Y. who was a candidate for President of the United States in 1948 and 1952 on the Socialist Workers Party ticket was covering the trials for a labor weekly. He stated "I believe their (the Negroes) demands are democratic and certainly they are entitled to full equality as citizens. I am interested in the trial because of the demand for democratic rights which our group adheres to strongly." Negro Congressman Charles C. Diggs (D-Mich.) was present. He brought more than \$5,000 contributed by residents of Detroit to aid the boycotters.¹⁸

Rev. King was convicted on March 22, on a charge of violating the state's Anti-Boycott Law and was fined \$500 and cost in court by Judge Eugene Carter, the equivalent of 386 days at hard labor in the County of Montgomery. Carter ordered a continuance in 89 other cases of Negroes charged with the same violation until a final appeal action was complete in the King's case. Hundreds of Negroes and whites, including newspapermen, television-cameramen and photographers waited

outside the courthouse to greet King. As King and his beautiful wife left the courthouse, they encountered a lively demonstration on the sidewalk and in the streets. The crowd waving and clapping their hands and chanting "Long live the King," "God bless you" and "we ain't gonna ride the buses no more." King's remarks were, "we will continue to protest in the same spirit of non-violence and passive resistance using the weapon of love.

Judge Carter left town for a "welcomed rest" after the court ordeal. Negroes knew that even though he sought refuge in isolation, he could not erase the stain of injustice from his conscience. Nor would the nation allow him to forget, because the people were already branding him as a butcher of democracy."

In New York, Rabbi William Rosenblum stated that the conviction of the leader of the non-violent protest "emphasizes some of the amazing contradictions upon which the American people and the world as a whole should ponder. The Judge who imposed the sentence upon this fine Christian minister is himself a Christian Bible Class teacher, a mason and a member of the American Legion."¹⁹

In New Jersey, a young Evangelist, Russell Roberts, started sleeping, fasting and praying in his Shiloh Baptist Church pulpit in sympathy with the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott. He thrived off one quart of vegetable juice a day and declared, "I will live and sleep and pray and fast in my pulpit for as long as God gives me strength." Roberts lost 15 pounds as he continued for 11 days to pray for the rights of all people.²⁰

The pro-boycott sentiment extended throughout the nation and gained momentum when a group of prominent clergymen led by Adam C. Powell called upon every Negro man, woman and child to join in a National Deliverance Day of Prayer. Powell told a Harlem church rally he might resign from Congress and devote himself to a nationwide prayer movement against segregation, if his March 28 Deliverance Day extended itself successfully. He would ask President Eisenhower to join in the prayer day on the steps of the White House and

would confer with Cardinal Spellman.²¹ In the Negroes' great anxiety to aid the movement in Montgomery, it was rumored that sympathizers throughout the nation would stop work for an hour and pray. However, Dr. Joseph H. Jackson, President of the National Baptist Convention, told Powell the work stoppage idea was completely erroneous. He declared that we are interested in prayer only, and Powell concurred by declaring, "we are not emphasizing anything that will cause tension or ill will."

Most Negroes in the nation seemed to have been in favor of the National Deliverance Day Movement, but some of the leaders felt that a more effective program for the boycotters would include some financial support. In the light of the idea, it was suggested that instead of demonstrating to show sympathy that March 28 would be a day every American Negro would give one hour's pay to support the protest.

In the South, the pro-segregationists rallied their forces to combat the proposed "Day of Deliverance." George W. Cheek of Selma, Alabama felt the Negroes were not sincere in posing such deep "love" for those who "hate" them so intensely. He warned the southern whites to beware of outside influence like Adam C. Powell of New York who suggested a day of prayer for the deliverance of Montgomery Negroes from the wickedness of their white friends. About the prayer day, he declared, "Let them pray, they should pray! But praying till the crack of doom will not bring integration."²²

Decision, Confusion and Protest

On April 23, 1956, the Supreme Court banned racial segregation on buses operating within the states by refusing to review a decision by the U. S. Circuit Court in Richmond stating that segregation on intrastate buses in Columbia, South Carolina violated the Federal Constitution. The decision by the Supreme Court caused a great deal of confusion throughout the nation. Some believed it abolished all segregation on intrastate media, others believed it abolished all segregation on intrastate travel only in South Carolina and still

others believed the court made no decision on the question but merely returned the appeal to the lower court where it had apparently not been completed. Immediately the many pro-segregation leaders branded the U.S. Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation on public buses as an "unwarranted invasion of state and municipal rights" and a new step in "Federal dictatorship." On April 23, the Superintendent of the Montgomery Lines posted orders to his drivers not to enforce segregation on the buses. On the other hand the City Commission issued a warning that it expected the bus company and other persons to abide by Alabama Laws, and that they would enforce the City Laws to maintain segregation. An angry city bus driver threatened an Associated Press Photographer who attempted to take a picture of the bus. He declared "If you take my picture, G - - D - - - you, I'll kill you." Another driver declared, "I feel like driving this bus straight into the river."²³ A National City Lines, Inc. representative, parent of the Montgomery City Lines, stated that the company would not enforce segregation and the company would help its drivers, if they were arrested.

In the meantime, the Negroes, in a mass meeting, declared "We will never go back to Jim Crow buses." They adopted a resolution, read by Rev. King, which declared:

"Whereas the public officials of . . . Montgomery and . . . Alabama have indicated . . . that they intend to . . . use all means available, including the arrest of bus drivers and passengers who refuse to abide by and obey the segregation law . . . it is . . . agreed that the conditions heretofore existing remain the same because of the position taken by our public officials.

Be it therefore resolved that we, the Negro citizens of Montgomery, Alabama . . . will continue to carry on our Mass Protest . . ."

On May 9, Circuit Judge Walter B. Jones issued an injunction against further compliance with the bus company's integration order. To this

Benjamin W. Franklin, Vice President of National City Lines, stated: "We will obey the injunction of the court." This statement by the National City Lines representative created a favorable climate for peace between the city officials and the National City Lines.

On May 11, 1956, a three Judge Federal Court panel aired the anti-segregation suit filed by Attorney Fred Gray. City Attorneys worked diligently with the theme, "If Segregation Barriers are Lifted, Violence will be the Order of the Day." To these assertions, Judge Rives of the panel asked "Can you command one man to surrender his constitutional rights, if they are his constitutional rights, to prevent another man from committing a crime?" This statement brought a new confidence to the Negroes in their struggle and kindled their hopes that justice was residual in the courts.

The three Judge Panel studied and deliberated on the case for a few weeks and then on June 4, 1956 declared the city bus segregation laws of Alabama unconstitutional. Thus the city continued operating under conflicting orders of two courts—the Federal Court injunction requiring desegregation and a Circuit Court injunction ordering maintenance of separate seating of races. City Attorneys promised to appeal the case.

In the meantime, the Negroes of Montgomery continued to walk and passively resist the injustices which would destroy the dignity of man. Somehow they seem to be sure that here in THE WALKING CITY the battle for the preservation of democracy in America and the world was being fought.

By now the Montgomery boycott had continued so long until it was hardly news. The routine of share a ride or walk, mass meetings every Monday and Thursday nights had become a part of the Negroes' way of life. Moreover, the Negro people had become adjusted to being in the spotlight. Within the space of one year, no less than a dozen nationally known Negroes had spoken to Montgomery audiences. They included such prominent men as Dr. Archibald Carey, Congressman Adam C. Pow-

ell, Thurgood Marshall, Dr. Samuel Procter, Kelly Miller Smith, J. Pious Barber, Benjamin Mays, Congressman Charles Diggs, Clarence Mitchell, Vernon Johns and many others. There can be no doubt that these great leaders of the Negro race did much to arouse and to stimulate the desire for first class citizenship among the Negroes of Montgomery.

NAACP Banned in Alabama

In 1909, as a result of a series of race riots which had shocked the nation, and under the leadership of Mary White Ovington, William English Walling, Dr. W. E. B. Dubois, Dr. Henry Moskowitz and Oswald Garrison Villard, the NAACP was founded. In the first year of its existence, the NAACP launched a program to widen the industrial opportunities for Negroes, to seek greater police protection for Negroes in the South, and to carry on a crusade against lynching and lawlessness.

Down through the years, it championed the cause of the Negro in his struggle for equal opportunities. In 1915, in the case of *Guinn vs. United States*, the Supreme Court, after hearing the arguments of Moore Field Storey, declared the Grandfather Clauses in the Maryland and Oklahoma Constitutions to be repugnant to the Fifteenth Amendment. In 1917, in the case of *Buchanan vs. Warley*, the court declared unconstitutional the Louisville Ordinance requiring Negroes to live in certain sections of the city. In 1923, in the case of *Moore vs. Dempsey*, the court ordered a new trial in the Arkansas Courts for a Negro who had been convicted of a murder.²⁴

The Association undertook to secure in the courts the rights which Negroes could not otherwise obtain. Encouraged by its success in the cases involving the Grandfather Clauses, residential segregation, and the Arkansas peons, it sought to break down the practice of the Southern States of excluding Negroes from democratic primaries. It succeeded in the case of *Nixon vs. Herndon*, in having the Supreme Court of the United States declare null and void a Texas Statute which excluded Negroes from the democratic primaries

in the State. In 1944, the Association won a victory for Negro Suffrage in the case of *Smith vs. Allwright*, when the Supreme Court decided that the exclusion of Negroes from the Democratic Primary was a clear violation of the Fifteenth Amendment. Thus, many Negroes came to regard the Court as the most reliable safeguard of the rights of all citizens, and the NAACP as an agent of protest, for their rights.

Though there had been many unfavorable expressions about the operations of the NAACP, there had never been such an effort on the part of a Southern state to curb its activities, as was made during the first six months of 1956. Perhaps, it was because the NAACP was threatening the Southern way of life and seemed to be biting at the core of southern pride—white supremacy.

As a part of this southern move against the NAACP, and at the request of Attorney General John Patterson, Circuit Judge Walter B. Jones issued a temporary injunction against the NAACP and declared it would remain in effect until further notice. Patterson said, the NAACP has "never qualified under the law of this state to do business in Alabama as a foreign corporation." The injunction, among other things, charged the NAACP with helping to organize and support the boycott of the Montgomery Bus Lines by Negroes, also with employing or paying two Negro women to enroll in the University of Alabama. Patterson also charged that the activities of the NAACP "are causing irreparable injury to the property and civil rights of the residents and citizens of the State of Alabama," and that "they tend to bring about violations of the law and breaches of the peace."²⁵

On June 2, 1956, the Alabama Chapter of the Association for the Advancement of Colored People stated that it would comply with the court order, temporarily banning NAACP activities in the State. Most of the state officials of the NAACP claimed that they would abide by all provisions of the injunction which was handed down by Judge Walter B. Jones. In reply to Attorney General John Patterson's charge that the

NAACP never qualified under the law of Alabama as a foreign corporation, Roy Wilkins said copies of the NAACP's certificate of incorporation and constitution were mailed "some-time ago" to Patterson, who had requested them. Wilkins said further "We received a letter thanking us for these items and asking for some names and addresses to complete my files." There was no mention of compliance with or violation of Alabama Law.²⁶

Reactions to the anti-NAACP injunction were immediate and varied. Ruby Hurley, regional secretary of the NAACP, said that "insomuch as we are law abiding citizens, we will abide by the injunction handed down by Judge Jones." Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary of the NAACP, said the Association "did not organize the Montgomery Bus Protest, but we joined the rest of the country in hailing the people who did." He continued, "Nor did the NAACP employ Autherine Lucy or Polly Myers Hudson to enroll at the University of Alabama." Wilkins also declared about Patterson's petition and charges that "These allegations appear to be efforts to deny the right of protest against intolerable and degrading treatment of citizens and to deny also the right of organized protest and legal action in the courts to serve admission of a qualified and accepted applicant to a tax supported school."²⁷

Dr. G. A. Rodger, Jr., of Anniston, State NAACP President, commented that the Attorney General "cannot quench the quest for full citizenship by 900,000 Alabama Negroes through injunctions." Nor will it make Negroes ride segregated buses in Montgomery.

In Birmingham, Alabama on June 5, 1956, more than 500 "cheering, handclapping Negroes" met and organized the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. This movement was dedicated to wiping out racial segregation. Rev. F. L. Shuttleworth said "The only thing we are interested in is uniting our people in seeing that the laws of our land are upheld according to the constitution of the United States." He continued, "Our citizens are restless under the dismal yoke of segregation."²⁸ The

formation of the new group seemed to have been in answer to the temporary injunction granted by Circuit Judge Walter B. Jones of Montgomery, in which the NAACP was outlawed in Alabama.

The real answer to the anti-NAACP injunction came on June 12, 1956 when it was announced by the Board of Directors of the NAACP, that the organization would not be intimidated by the Alabama injunction and promised to fight the ban in the courts and in the arena of public opinion. Dr. Channing Tobias directed the NAACP Attorneys to take the necessary legal steps to obtain a hearing on merits of the Alabama injunction at the earliest possible time with a view of dissolving the courts restraining order. The NAACP Board declared the injunction was a direct violation of the American tradition and Constitutional Principle of Freedom of Association.²⁹

The Field's Episode

On June 11, 1956 Rev. U. J. Fields, secretary to the Montgomery Improvement Association, was reported to have resigned his office. He accused the members of the Association of misappropriating funds, and "misusing money sent from all over the nation." He stated that the workers were "irresponsible" and declared that he could no longer be identified with a movement in which "the many are exploited by the few." He felt that the Association no longer represented what he stood for and that it had taken on a "bigness, which many of the persons involved were not used to." Moreover, he thought the leaders of the movement had become "too egotistical and interested in perpetuating themselves." Fields said industries, labor unions and churches all over the nation, plus, "all kinds of social and political organizations," have been sending contributions to Montgomery Improvement Association to support the boycott and much of it is being kept by the persons who handle it and are "using it for their own purposes."³⁰

This accusation against the MIA by Rev. Fields, made many Negroes fear that this was the beginning of the end, for the passive resistance

movement in Montgomery. Until now, the Negroes had stood as a stone wall against a common foe. That had been the secret of their strength. It had been impenetrable without one little leak. Time after time, the whites had attempted to seek out a weak link and destroy the Movement, but without success. This accusation then, was more than the pro-segregationists could bargain for. Rev. U. J. Fields, Pastor of the Bell Street Baptist Church and one of the founders of the MIA, had turned traitor. It is understandable then why the pro-segregationists show little enthusiasm for the issue; they must be shrewd and diplomatic lest they lose their treasure. One small bit of overt anxiety might send the prize—scrambling back into the fold.

The next two weeks were weeks of diplomatic maneuvering and under cover agreements. The Rev. M. L. King, President of the MIA was out of the city at the time. He and the Rev. Abernathy, pastor of the First Baptist Church, had gone to California to vacation, preach, and attend business obligations. The psychological unrest forced upon him after hearing the decision, and his pressing desire to be in Montgomery at this crucial time, caused him to cancel his appointments and returned immediately to the city.

In the meantime, the perturbed emotions of the Negroes to the announcement, were being overtly expressed — on the streets, in the churches, in the schools, in the cabs and almost every place they assembled; they talked about the "damnable Fields, the 'modern Judas.'" A Negro maid remarked "I jest wish I could git my hands on 'im." Another exclaimed "He must be a fool." Still another exclaimed "The white folks have been stealing from us all this time and ain't nobody said nothing." The members of the Bell Street Baptist Church of which he pastored, expressed their sentiment in a very convincing way—they kicked him out. Even the school children knew him as a traitor to the cause, and as a villain with a "smiling cheek." This personal interest in the Movement, increased by the accusation of Fields, explains

why the Negroes began to gather at the Beulah Baptist Church June 18 at 3 p.m. for a 7 p.m. Mass Meeting. By five o'clock, the Church was filled, and in the ninety degree temperature, which was considerably hotter in the church, they sat there, singing, praying and waiting . . . About 7 o'clock, the Rev. M. L. King entered the Church with Rev. Fields. The King received a standing ovation. They, the Rev. King and Rev. Fields, sat on the stage together. A Negro said, "Look at that devil sitting right next to Rev. King." King addressed the people with an eloquence that swayed the audience therein, he told the crowd "I guess I know more about the M.I.A. than anyone else, and I know of no misappropriations of funds—not one cent." He expressed his regret that Fields' statement had been publicized because it opened new avenues of investigation; but what had been done, could not be undone: He asked the crowd, in the light of the true spirit of the passive resistance movement, to be forgiving toward Rev. Fields. He reminded the crowd of the words of Christ:

"Let he who is without sin cast the first stone."

Again, he innoculated the audience with a serum of "love" and explained that the non-violence movement meant not only no physical violence, but no spiritual violence. One can kill a man in his heart. He appealed to the crowd to be forgiving as God had been. Thus, when he introduced the Rev. Fields, instead of the expected boos and sneers, there was a strange, hushed silence in the Church.

Fields stood before the audience and began to pray. "Lord, help us to live in such a way from day to day, that even when we kneel to pray, our prayers will be for others . . ." An occasional "Amen" was heard throughout the audience. He asked the audience to forgive him for making the mistake and assured them that the statement was not true and that he had no available evidence that money meant for the M.I.A. had been misplaced, or misused. The magic spell seemed to have engulfed the audience, and instead of booing him, they cheered him. The prodigal son had returned. Hundreds of per-

sons who were gathered about the Church talked of many things. Some agreed that they had witnessed a great event and a great man. An old man remarked, "He shore got guts." Another man said he was a fool to go before the audience because only a fool would have such a thing. Still others expressed the sentiment that all the "perfumes of Arabia" could not cleanse him of this deed.

Those who had hoped for a break in the Movement may find a lesson in history. History is rich with instances in which substantially unlike interest and diverse personalities find themselves working for a common object. One such instance was the breach between Frederick Douglass and William L. Garrison, in their struggle for the emancipation of slaves.

Garrison had found Douglass and had secured him to lecture for the Abolitionists and there had developed a strong friendship between them. When Douglass raised money to purchase his freedom, many of the Abolitionists criticized the transaction as a tacit recognition of the right "To Traffic in Human Beings." Garrison had justified the Negotiation. However, while on a speaking tour of the West, the hardships of the trip — exposure to rains, finally overcame Garrison and he became ill in Cleveland and was unable to proceed on schedule. He insisted that Douglass continued the tour. Douglass failed to write and inquire about Garrison's health. The Breach had come.

Later, Douglass started a new paper, *The North Star*, against the will of Garrison, who accused him of using money given to fight slavery for his personal recognition, and, who disagreed with him on some constitutional problems. The breach was irrevocable.

Thus, two great men fought diligently for a common cause—Garrison with his *Liberator* and Douglass with the *North Star*—would hardly speak when they chanced to meet.

Economic Effect of Boycott on Negro Population

Since the early days of the American Republic, money has been the hub of our economy. Perhaps the

most important effect of the boycott on the community life of Montgomery is the pecuniary readjustments it is making among the people. Wealth that had for decades been flowing in one stream, is changing its course. Today instead of flowing from Negro to white, it flows from Negro to Negro. There is no doubt that this economic factor played a major role in the dissension and protest in Montgomery.

During the early phase of the boycott, taxicab service formed the cornerstone of the movement. Their increase in number is an index to the pecuniary upsurge in the business. Evidence will support the fact that there are many new and additional cabs on the streets of Montgomery. It is probably the "cabbiest" city of its size in the United States. There are no less than eighteen Negro cab companies in Montgomery.

<i>Negro Cab Companies Spring 1956</i>	
<i>Approximate Number of Cabs</i>	
New Deal	26
People Cab Co.	17
Original Queen	15
Dependable	8
Blue and Gray	7
Watts Cab Co.	7
Porter Cab Co.	6
Town Service Cab Co.	5
Blue Diamond	5
State Cab Co.	5
Lane Cab Co.	4
Henderson Cab Co.	3
United Cab Co.	3
Quick Service	3
Scott Cab Co.	2
Community Cab Co.	2
Fair Price	1
Sims Cab Co.	1

Outside Aid to Transportation

The transportation system in Montgomery which was severely torn up during the early phase of the protest, was reconstructed, to a large degree, with the aid of more than fifteen new station wagons. These brand new 1956 cars, which were the property of the Negro churches, lifted the Negroes' spirit as well as their feet. The name of a church was painted on the front and sides of each station wagon along with a cross. The mere sight of these "rolling churches," as they are called, because many of the passengers sing

hymns on their way to work, gave Negroes the spiritual uplift they needed. One old lady walking along the streets saw a loaded station wagon pass her by. With a smile on her face she exclaimed "Dat's my church going thar," and began walking faster than ever. These station wagons were more than just rides for the Negro to and from work, they represented a moving symbol of the spirit of the protest that was in the hearts of all Negroes. This spirit burned anew with the sight of a station wagon, keeping alive the flame of protest from mass meeting to mass meeting.

Of no less importance was the upsurge in Negro business. It was common knowledge that many Negroes found it difficult to get downtown and found it easier to shop at the neighborhood stores, particularly if they were owned by Negroes. Negro theaters located in the downtown area felt the sting of the protest. Even Wild Bill Hickcock wasn't worth walking two miles to see. Thus the neighborhood business, be it gas station or grocery store, got a new front or was able to buy fresher vegetables and meats because of the quick turnover. Moreover the thousands of dollars per week which had left the Negroes' hands and perhaps went to the bus company was now being spent among Negroes. The clubs, the stores, the cleaners and almost every Negro business shared directly or indirectly in the new income. Even the newspaper boys got a share of the profit. Sometime there were as many as ten newspaper boys working the various mass meetings selling the *Afro-American*, the *Courier*, the *Defender*, *Jet* and other Negro publications. One professional Negro asked a newsboy what the *Afro-American* stood for in the front page of the paper. The newspaper boy replied "I don't know what dat is, but here is Rev. King's picture on the front page, Wanna buy one?"

Achievements of Boycott

It is obviously too early to evaluate the accomplishments of the Negroes and Democracy in this passive resistance movement. Moreover, the fluid situation at the time makes it impossible to see the protest in its

proper perspective, however, it may be reasonably safe to make these statements:

1. During the boycott, the Negroes of Montgomery became of age. As James E. Pierce, Professor of Political Science at the Alabama State College, stated, "The Negro matured in a space of four days. On December 1st, he was a boy, but on Monday December 5 he had become a man. This complicated matters for the white man; he knew how to deal with the boy but could not handle the man." Perhaps this lack of understanding stems from the fact that there had been little contact between the races in the south for almost a hundred years. The maximum contact most whites have with Negroes is through the house servants or unscrupulous politicians. Thus, they must judge all Negroes by the actions of these persons. Moreover, the house servant is a confused Negro who must possess a dichotomous personality and be a master at "common psychology." He lives in the luxurious white home during the day and in many instances sleeps in shacks at night. He eats the best of food at work, watches TV in color, walks on expensive rugs and lounges on soft chairs. He uses the extension covered telephone and good perfume. He hates whites who are not as wealthy as his employers and with his small salary tries to live as his employer, trading at exclusive downtown stores, etc. On the other hand Negro teachers never really know the white teacher and Negro doctors know very little about white doctors in the south. Thus, during the boycott, for the first time in history, the white man sat down to talk with the Negro as a man, which brought them to the shocking realization that the Negro had grown up "while they slept."

2. A second interesting observation is the fact that the Negro leaders finally caught up with the masses. The lower elements the proletariat, were ready and waiting for the leadership of the educated and intelligent groups.

3. A third vital accomplishment of the protest was the solidifying of the ministry, which had been divided a-

long many lines. They are united as one and willing to follow their chosen leader with an enthusiasm which is astounding. Moreover it has bridged the gap of religious denominations in Montgomery. The Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Lutherans, Seventh Day Adventists and Presbyterians and many others sang and prayed together, perhaps for the first time in America's history.

4. Dr. M. L. King has given new interpretation to the fight. He has insisted on a spiritual and moral movement, with love as the guiding light, and people of humble birth and limited training can understand. Love and suffering can be the tools in the struggle for the dignity of oppressed people throughout the world. Rev. Ralph Abernathy, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Montgomery, expressed the true spirit of the movement when he urged the Negroes to "Keep alive the spiritual side of the movement. If we concentrate on the political side, we are lost . . . but the long arm of God extends to everybody. We have as much access to Him as they."

5. It has closed the gap between the Negro groups based on education, income and position. In Montgomery, there is unity, the lowest person doing her humble task, rides to work in a Cadillac, a jalopy or a truck. The college professor talks with the maid and the drunkard with the minister, but with a common interest that brings them together.

Even more significant than these achievements was the projection of the Negroes' struggle, for the dignity of man, into the international sphere. Oppressed people throughout the world saw the boycott as a fight for the hope of the human race. It is of utmost importance to the people of the world, that American Democracy withstand the slings and arrows of segregation and the vicissitudes of world affairs and emerge strong. The Montgomery boycott has aided in shocking America into a realization of this urgency and helped to discipline her to become worthy of world leadership.

Footnotes:

- 10 Chicago Daily Defender, February 23, 1956.
11 Montgomery Advertiser, March 20, 1956.

- 12 Alabama Journal, March 20, 1956.
13 Alabama Journal, March 2, 1956.
14 Ibid.
15 Alabama Journal, March 2, 1956.
16 Montgomery Advertiser, March 2, 1956.
17 Alabama Journal, March 23, 1956.
18 New York Times, March 23, 1956.
19 New York Times, May 25, 1956.
20 Chicago Daily Defender, March 4, 1956.
21 New York Tribune, March 5, 1956.
22 Montgomery Advertiser, March 1, 1956.
23 Alabama Journal, April 25, 1956.
24 John H. Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*.
25 Alabama Journal, June 2, 1956.
26 Alabama Journal, June 2, 1956.
27 Ibid.
28 Montgomery Advertiser, June 6, 1956.
29 Montgomery Advertiser, June 12, 1956.
30 Montgomery Advertiser, June 1, 1956.

Student Contest

Registration has been opened for the 31st Annual High School Contest on the United Nations. The Contest (formerly the League of Nations Contest), sponsored by the American Association for the United Nations, seeks to challenge the high school student's knowledge of the United Nations and the United States position in the U. N. The winning student receives \$500 or a trip to Europe, planned in cooperation with the Experiment in International Living and the American Youth Hostels; the second place winner will receive \$200 or a trip to Mexico. In addition, many local prizes are offered.

Last year, approximately 3,000 schools participated in the Contest. Study for the Contest is conducted both in the classroom as well as through special after school sessions and U. N. programs. Students register for the Contest through a teacher, who in turn registers the school. There is no entry fee, and one free kit of study materials is sent upon registration on the appropriate form. Additional study kits may be purchased at a nominal cost. Registration forms may be obtained from the American Association for the United Nations, 345 East 46th Street, New York 17, N. Y. Final date for filing registrations is February 15, 1957. The examination, combining short-answer and essay questions will take place on Wednesday, March 4, 1957.

The American Association for the United Nations is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which seeks to promote a greater understanding of the United Nations. The Contest is but one of its educational activities in its program for schools, colleges and teachers.