

## 'For the People of Prattville'

### Arrests, Beating

BY SANDRA COLVIN AND FRANKLIN HOWARD

PRATTVILLE -- What began as a meeting of SNCC leaders and Prattville Negroes turned into the beginning of a week of violence and demonstrations.

Three law officers were injured by shotgun pellets, but the most serious casualty was Dan Houser, Prattville civil rights leader.

Houser was injured last Sunday night, when the National Guard was called into Prattville. He said policemen broke in to his house, and took him downtown.

"I was beaten by a man who claimed I owed him some money," Houser said this week from his hospital bed. "He told me that white people stick together and niggers don't. Then they took me home and hit me some more--in the face, in my nose, and one of my eyes.

"They told me to get out of town or they would kill me. I made it by crawling, stumbling, and falling for five miles into the woods, until I reached a friend's house. He took me to another friend's house, who took me out of Prattville."

At mid-week, doctors said Houser had a fractured jaw, nose, and skull. He was still in a hospital, undergoing treatment for an injured eye. It was feared that he might lose his sight in that eye.

The meeting Sunday was called chiefly to discuss Prattville's assistant police chief, Kenneth Hill, Earliler, Prattville Negroes had asked Mayor C. M. Gray to fire Hill, who shot and killed Charles Rasberry, a Negro, last February.

When Houser asked Carmichael how Hill could be removed from the force, the former SNCC chairman answered, "We advocate that all black people get some guns and learn to use them. The only way to get Kenneth Hill off the force is to organize the black power in this area, and use your guns."

A police car passed by the site of the meeting, and Carmichael shouted, "Black power!" The car passed by a second time, and again Carmichael yelled, "Black power!" This time the car stopped, and three Prattville officers--including Hill--jumped out.

"Listen, you," said Hill. "You don't go around shouting and going on, hear?"

"Would you like to speak to me?" replied Carmichael. "I'm Mr. Carmichael."

"I don't give a damn who you are, you've got no business shouting like that," said Hill. Carmichael started talking to the crowd, but Hill told him,

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KENNETH HILL (HANDS ON HIPS) AND OTHER PRATTVILLE OFFICERS ARREST STOKELY CARMICHAEL

### Jackson to Hire Negro Officers?

BY ROBIN REISIG

JACKSON--A lot has happened since 19-year-old Johnny McKenzie was killed by a city policeman on June 2.

Jackson Negroes held emotional rallies June 4, and that night there was a bottle-throwing melee in a Negro neighborhood. Then McKenzie, a Negro, was given a solemn, police-escorted funeral procession that stopped for a minute in front of City Hall.

The city council promised to hire Jackson's first two Negro policemen, and last Tuesday, a bi-racial committee was formed to screen applicants for the jobs.

County NAACP President Frank Dean said city officials acted because "they want to be assured Negroes don't throw any more bottles."

"Well, we accomplished something," he said after Tuesday's council meeting. "Not really much, but something."

Meanwhile, Mayor G. B. Esby suspended Police Chief John Champion for a week, Negroes had been sharply critical of Champion, saying his policemen hung out in Negro neighborhoods and harassed Negro residents.

But Champion's suspension had nothing to do with Negro complaints, according to the mayor. In last Tuesday's council meeting, as 30 Negroes and a dozen whites packed the fire-truck garage, Esby said the chief had been suspended for "directly disobeying a reasonable order."

After the bottle-throwing began June 4, the mayor explained, "I told him (Champion) a patrol should ride through

every 30 minutes... and I found out a patrol had not been through at all."

Over the mayor's protest, the city council voted to pay Champion for this week off.

According to Jackson Negroes, the June 4 violence started after--and because--a police car filled with white officers drove through the tense black neighborhood. After that, about 50 young Negroes threw bottles and bricks at passing whites' cars.

Two days later, the mayor told the people that "he was willing to forget everything, even his car being fired into," said Dean.

At that meeting, Dean recalled, "the mayor kept talking about how he would have hired Negro policemen if he could get Negroes to meet the qualifications... I asked, what were the qualifications for a policeman in Jackson? He said honesty, no police record, and rambled on with a lot of other qualifications."

"Finally, he admitted that he himself and no member of the city council and no policemen met all the qualifications he asked for."

Will Champion accept Negro policemen? "The right ones, yes," he said. But he "couldn't answer" whether they would serve in Negro neighborhoods.

In nearby Mobile County last Sunday, two Negroes were seriously wounded by shotgun pellets. The victims--A. C. Wimbley, 20, of Millry, and John L. Williams, 31, of Citronelle--were shot as they drove along the highway.

### Marches Held In Capital

BY SANDRA COLVIN, FRANKLIN HOWARD, AND MICHAEL S. LOTTMAN

MONTGOMERY -- The Rev. Richard Boone invited Montgomery Negroes to take "a little walk downtown" last Tuesday night. It was the second in a series of marches "in sympathy with the people of Prattville."

After the third march Wednesday night, the demonstrators were still trying to reach their goal--the Capitol steps. Mrs. Idessa Williams, a leader in the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), said she would ask state officials for permission to assemble on the steps.

"They're our steps, too," she said. After two false starts, about 150 marchers headed downtown Monday night, protected by almost the entire city police force. The police had agreed to let the marchers proceed on the sidewalks to the Capitol, without a parade permit.

But when the demonstrators reached Court Square--several blocks from the Capitol--they were blocked by National Guardsmen with bayonets. The Guard had apparently been summoned by Governor Lurleen B. Wallace.

When the march was halted, city officials--including Assistant City Attorney Ira DeMent, Police Commissioner L. B. Sullivan, and police Major George Owens--appeared surprised and angry. They told march leader Roosevelt Barnett that they could not protect the demonstrators any further.

DeMent said later that the city had asked the Guard to "stand by," but had never requested it to stop the march.

The marchers knelt on the sidewalk after being stopped. Miss Lula Williams told them that "the problem in Prattville, Ala., is not only there, but it is right here in Montgomery, Ala., as well."

"Let the time come when all men can be alive," said Miss Williams. "Let the time come when men are not judged by the color of their skin, but by the contents of their heart."

The next night, the National Guard was nowhere in sight, and the marchers had a permit to go as far as Decatur St., one block from the Capitol.

Before the Tuesday march, Boone told the demonstrators that just that day, a Negro girl had been attacked by white boys on the street.

(Miss Gladys Williams said later that a white boy had hit her on the head with a stick, after she admitted being in the Monday march. She said she was on the way to mostly-white Lanier High School, where she was taking make-up courses so she could be a senior in the fall.)

(On Wednesday, she said, Lanier Principal H. H. Adair told her he was not going to "tolerate" her conduct, and expelled her from school. Adair refused to comment on the matter.)

In his talk before the Tuesday night march began, Boone was critical of SNCC's tactics in Prattville. "If I was a violent nigger," he said, "I know what I'd do. I wouldn't stand around and talk

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RAP BROWN, REV. RICHARD BOONE, CARMICHAEL AT BARRICADES

### Inter-Racial Marriage Legal, Says U.S. Court

WASHINGTON, D. C.--The U. S. Supreme Court ruled this week that state laws against inter-racial marriage are unconstitutional.

In a decision announced last Monday, the court specifically struck down the Virginia law prohibiting marriage between races. But the court made it clear that it would no longer uphold any such law, including those in Alabama and Mississippi.

The Virginia case involved Richard Loving, a white man, and his wife Mil-

dred, who is part Negro and part Indian. They had pleaded guilty to violating the Virginia law, but their one-year sentences had been suspended after they agreed to stay out of the state for 25 years. Later, they decided to return and appeal their conviction.

The Supreme Court said the Virginia law prevents marriages "solely on the basis of racial classifications," in violation of the 14th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

In Gulfport, Miss., former Governor Ross Barnett said the ruling is "without question the most flagrant, irresponsible, and frightening decision ever decreed by the Warren Court." He said it "may lead to chaos, strife, and dissension never before equalled on this earth."

In another decision announced Monday, the Supreme Court said seven Negro ministers--including the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth--must go to jail for five days and pay \$50 fines for violating a court order four years ago in Birmingham.

The ministers had held marches on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, 1963, after a state-court judge had ordered them not to. They were then convicted of contempt of court.

The Supreme Court said Monday that the ministers should have appealed the no-march order to a higher Alabama court, instead of defying it.

Besides King and Shuttlesworth, those convicted were the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, the Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, the Rev. A. D. King, the Rev. J. W. Hayes, the Rev. T. L. Fisher, and the Rev. J. T. Porter.

The local ministers will probably be subject to arrest when the Supreme Court decision officially reaches the state court. The out-of-state defendants cannot be arrested unless they come into Alabama.

The day after these rulings were announced, the Supreme Court got its first Negro member--Thurgood Marshall. As an NAACP lawyer in 1954, Marshall helped convince the court to make its famous school-desegregation decision.

### People Criticize Bullock Food Plan

## 'Took All My Money for Stamps'

BY MARY ELLEN GALE

UNION SPRINGS--"If I didn't raise a little hoghead and greens, I reckon we'd pass," said Mrs. Lorena Davis of Pine Grove in rural Bullock County.

And so, Mrs. Davis said, she was glad when she heard that Bullock County was handing out food stamps to poor people.

Mrs. Davis knew she would have to put up some money. But she was dismayed to learn that it would cost her \$19 for \$42 worth of stamps.

"I went on and bought 'em," she said. "But I been sick all year. I'm supposed to take medicine, but I didn't buy none last week, because it took all my money for the stamps."

Mrs. Davis, a tenant farmer, borrows money from the federal government to work her small cotton field. "The welfare don't give us a dime," she said proudly. "The food stamps is the first thing I ever took I didn't earn. I took that for my five grandchildren."

But her borrowed income is only \$20 a month, she said, and she was told to come back to the food stamp office in two weeks with another \$19 for more stamps.

"I don't see how I can get \$19 every two weeks," she said. "I can't scrap up that much money."

Mrs. Davis said, however, that she didn't tell the food stamp supervisor she had to buy medicine, "because



LORENZO ROBBINS AND HIS FAMILY

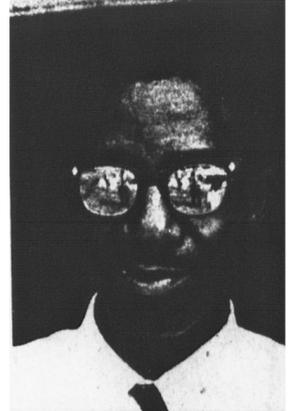
sometimes people be rude to us when we cause too much trouble."

But now, she said, she plans to ask if there is any way that the price can be lowered so she can buy both medicine and food stamps.

Mrs. Davis is one of several people who have discovered that the new food stamp program is complicated and ex-

pensive. Lorenzo Robbins of Midway said the stamps cost so much he can't afford them.

Robbins, a tenant farmer with ten children, had to use nearly all his earnings to pay his rent last year. This year, he said, his only regular income is the \$100 a month he is paid for attending adult education classes.



DAN HOUSER

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**Editorial Opinion**

**The People's Choice**

Lowndes County Sheriff Frank Ryals has resigned, because he says there isn't enough crime in the county to keep him in business. (The sheriff's income has to come from the fees he gets for making arrests and serving legal papers.) If Ryals had worked harder on the county's many unsolved beatings and burnings, he might have made more money.

But now Governor Lurleen B. Wallace has a chance to appoint a new and more energetic sheriff. There is no question who this man should be. In last November's election, Sidney Logan of the Lowndes County Freedom Party was the choice of 1,643 voters--about 40% of the electorate. He should now be the choice of Governor Wallace.

**White Politicians Ask A Negro Leader to Run**

BY GAIL FALK  
WAYNESBORO, Miss.--A. J. Woodard was called to the Wayne County Courthouse last week. About 20 white men, including the sheriff and county supervisors, were holding a meeting there.

When he arrived, Woodard--a Negro--found out the meeting was about him. "They told me nobody was running for county surveyor," Woodard said later in the day, "and they wanted to draft me. They said they knew I was well qualified for the job."

Woodard, a solidly-built man with steel-gray hair, works as a forester for St. Regis paper company. "They also told me they thought I was the proper person to have the job," he continued, "on account of I had done a very good job keeping peace between the races."

Woodard said some of the politicians showed him around the county surveyor's office, and the supervisors all promised to support him in their beats. "They seemed to have been very eager for me to run," he recalled with a smile. But Woodard refused.

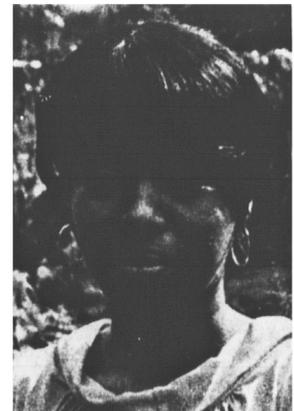
For one thing, he said, "The Wayne County Voters League had voted that we (Negroes) would not run any candidates this year. We thought it was a little early. You see, we had never voted before."

And, he said, "They (the politicians) may have had some point I didn't know about. . . I don't know whether they were trying to make the Negro happy and get his mind off the real issues, or not." According to Woodard, 2,000 Wayne County Negroes have registered to vote since last fall, under his leadership. He said he was sure he wouldn't have been offered a spot on the ticket except for the stepped-up registration.

Circuit Clerk DeCell Dyess wouldn't

**Mississippi's View of Boston Violence**

**'Riot Was Not Anti-White, but Anti-Cop'**



MISS BETTIE MANUEL

BY BETTIE MANUEL  
(Miss Bettie Manuel is a girl from Meridian, Miss., who has been going to school in Boston, Massachusetts. She was in Boston from June 2 to June 4, while riots were going on in the mostly-Negro community of Roxbury. This is the story of what she saw and heard.)

BOSTON, Mass.--At about 6 p.m. on June 2, a friend and I were going over to Roxbury. On the way, we were passed by some paddy wagons filled with cops. They were followed by three or four fire engines. When we got to our friend's house, we were told that a riot had broken out in the Grove Hall section of Roxbury.

The riot had started in front of the welfare building, where Mothers for Adequate Welfare (MAW) had been peacefully picketing. At approximately 5:30 p.m., that Friday afternoon, the po-

**Evers Memorial 'Too Easy To Forget'**

BY PATRICIA JAMES

MERIDIAN, Miss.-- The Meridian NAACP held a memorial service last Sunday for Medgar Evers, the NAACP field secretary who was killed in 1963. The Rev. R. S. Porter, president of the local NAACP, spoke on "The Unfinished Revolution."

"It is too easy for us to forget from whence we've come," Porter told the 40 people gathered in the First Union Baptist Church.

"This revolution is incomplete--it is in this Meridian community. Many (barriers) remain unbroken. Many of the changes that have taken place have not meant integration at all. They have just meant token desegregation."

"Medgar," he said, "sometimes I wonder if it's really worth your life. Sometimes I wonder if enough people are awakened to the problem of this age."

"Your revolution, I say, is unfinished," he told the people. "You're sleeping. And while you're sleeping, you're slipping back in the pages of history."

Lucius D. Amerson, the Negro sheriff of Macon County, Ala., had been asked to be the guest speaker at the service.

Obie Clark, an officer of the NAACP, said Amerson turned down the invitation. "Amerson told me that he would not come for less than \$200," Clark said. "He said that speaking was not his occupation."

**Dick Gregory Is Serious At Anniversary Meeting**

BY ROBIN REISING

TUSCALOOSA--"America is probably the number-one most racist country on the face of this earth," said Dick Gregory. It sends a black soldier "to give some foreigner instant freedom, when his Mammy has to get hers on the installment plan."

The comedian and civil rights activist was at the Barnes YMCA here last Sunday night, for the anniversary of the beatings and tear-gassing that occurred June 9, 1964, at the First African Baptist Church. The occasion was sponsored by the Tuscaloosa Citizens for Action Committee (TCAC).

Except for an opening joke (about a white friend who was in trouble--he moved to a colored neighborhood and had a watermelon burned on his front lawn), Gregory talked seriously to his audience of about 300. His chief target was America, and he tried to shock the gathering, often scolding them for laughing at the problems he described.

"Nobody on the face of the earth wants this country, with our record, to guard their freedom. Don't nobody want

**Political Groups in Miss. Make Plans for Elections**

BY YVES SAVAIN

MILESTON, Miss.--Leaders of local political organizations met here last Sunday to make plans for electing Negro candidates. The meeting drew representatives from 11 counties, most of them in the Delta.

Lawrence Guyot, chairman of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), distributed copies of a letter to be sent to Mississippi Attorney General Joe Patterson.

The letter demanded the appointment of "Negro election officials, in substantial proportional relationship to the percentage of Negro registered voters in the county." These officials, said the letter, should be "chosen or approved by . . . Negro political organizations."

"Negro illiterate voters who need and seek assistance at the polls must be

**Bullock Gets Head Start After Dispute Over Site**

BY MARY ELLEN GALE

UNION SPRINGS -- After several weeks of confusion and delay, it looks as though Bullock County will have a summer Head Start program after all. Gene Schroeder, director of the Bullock-Pike-Coffee Community Action Program (CAP), said he received word of approval this week.

Schroeder said he didn't know whether federal anti-poverty officials had agreed to CAP's entire \$115,346 proposal to operate a center for 360 children.

But, he said, "we're going to have something." Job applicants will be screened this week, Schroeder added, "and we should start classes on Monday morning at South Highland Elementary School."

It was the choice of South Highland--an all-Negro school in Union Springs--that caused the delay in approval of the Head Start program.

Edward M. Lindbloom, chairman of the Bullock County CAP advisory committee and superintendent of the county schools, said South Highland was the only school "with room for 400 children."

But Negro parents--and representatives from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)--were doubtful. "They only have about four buses bringing white children in to summer school (in Union Springs)," said Rufus



EDWARD M. LINDBLOOM  
C. Huffman, head of the local NAACP. "I don't think the white schools are filled."

School officials plan to transfer Negro summer school students from South Highland to Carver High School to make room for the Head Start children, Huffman said. "Why couldn't they do that with the white schools?" he asked.

At a meeting of the Bullock CAP advisory committee Monday night, Lawrence Deramus, CAP's assistant director, said OEO had "asked that Head Start be put in a white school to get more white participation."

Schroeder said that was true. "But a representative came down from Washington last week," the director continued. "He saw that everyone was sincere--that this was a new school, the best school available, and the only one big enough."

Huffman said that by now, he and other civil rights leaders were more interested in getting the program than in arguing about the center.

"Our main concern is the welfare of the child," he explained. "To hold it (the program) up because we can't get in a white school would be denying the children because of the prejudice of someone else."

The Bullock County Head Start program isn't the only one that ran into problems. Schroeder said OEO turned down a program sponsored by the Coffee County Board of Education "after we thought it had been approved."

But the Progressive Men's Club, a Negro group, was granted funds to run Head Start for 105 children in Enterprise, and the Pike County school board is operating a program for 300 children at four schools--three white and one Negro. Both programs began last Monday.

Meanwhile in Bullock County, another summer program was having trouble finding centers. Dean P. B. Phillips, head of the Tuskegee Institute Community Education Program (TICEP), said school officials had tentatively rejected TICEP's request to use abandoned school buildings.

R. E. L. Cope Sr., a school board member, said the problem is that "our plans are more or less in an indefinite state."

The board doesn't know which of the old schools will be available, Cope said, because it is still trying to decide whether to turn them over to the county for use as voting places.

Even if TICEP can't use the schools, Phillips said, "We're going to stay in the county. We'll use store-fronts or churches, and do what we can."

**Boycott Pushed**

HAZELHURST, Miss.--After six weeks of boycotting, Negro leaders say their buying campaign is still 100% effective. "Four stores and the theater has closed down," said Rudy Shields.

"We submitted a list of demands, and gave them (officials and businessmen) 40 days to act. Nothing was done, so we launched our boycott, and it has been and still is 100% effective," said Shields.

In their demands, the people asked to have a Negro deputy sheriff, two Negro policemen, as well as Negro clerks or cashiers in all stores. They also demanded that public officials use the courtesy titles.

Shields said, "We have our two Negro policemen, we'll get our deputy sheriff by our votes, and whether courtesy titles are used is left with the individual." There are still no Negro clerks or cashiers in the stores, he said.

How much longer will the boycott last? Shields said, "That depends on the store owners."

**Grenada Teachers Request Changes in Negro Schools**

BY GAIL FALK

GRENADA, Miss.-- When classes ended in Grenada this year, the members of the Grenada Municipal Separate School Teachers Association told their superintendent and principals that they hoped the county's four Negro schools would be a little different next year.

In a note called a "Buzz Session," sent to the principals of the Willa Wilson, Tie Plant, Carrie Dotson, and Reed schools, the teachers suggested these changes:

"One thing which needs our immediate attention is the beginning of a reading program employing a reading specialist. The students' inability to read is a contributing factor to many school problems.

"Each elementary teacher should have some unassigned teaching time each day. Such time should not include the teacher's lunch period.

"A teaching load of from 30 to 52 children makes it very hard, almost impossible, to do a really effective teaching job. Won't you pull for a teaching load of 25 students?"

"Is there anything you can do about our overcrowded buses? Why is it necessary for us to have an early shift and a late shift?"

"Why do you demand that we attend

all professional meetings and you do not attend?"

And, so the principals wouldn't feel left out, the teachers said each principal should have a full-time private secretary.

**Tuskegee Group Endorses U.S. Viet Nam Role**

TUSKEGEE--On several occasions this spring, Tuskegee Institute students and faculty members have opposed the war in Viet Nam. But last week, for the first time, a group of Institute people publicly endorsed the United States' conduct of the war.

In a resolution published in the June 8 issue of the city newspaper, the Tuskegee News, 77 faculty and staff members expressed "support of the Johnson Administration in the Viet Nam conflict."

The signers resolved "to uphold and support . . . the effort to thwart communist encroachment and aggression in South Viet Nam, to bring about a cease-fire, and to assist in the negotiations of a just and honorable peace."

An accompanying statement said that peace should be sought "as immediately as conditions will allow." But the signers agreed that "ultimate peace" must come through "a bilateral agreement," not "a unilateral cessation of war."

The statement seemed to put the group in opposition to 141 students and faculty members who signed an anti-war petition last April.

The anti-war protest charged that "our government is fighting an oppressive war 10,000 miles from home while failing to defend the rights of black here."

It also demanded "a unilateral cease-fire, an immediate end to the bombing of North Viet Nam, and negotiations with the National Liberation Front (the Viet Cong)."

James H. M. Henderson, the faculty member who wrote the statement in support of U. S. policy in Viet Nam, said one reason he did so was that "a resolution had been conducted around the campus by the peace-movers, under the motto of Martin Luther King."

"This was meant to give people of a different persuasion the equal opportunity in a democracy to express their opinions," he said, "I had the idea as far back as March."

lice began dragging the ladies away. The way they handled the ladies offended some of the men who had been watching, so the men tried to protect the ladies from the cops. And that's what started the riot.

Burglar alarms and fire engines could be heard throughout the Grove Hall community, so I decided to walk down toward the riot. Windows of the white-owned businesses were broken. People had looted most of the stores.

When I was about two blocks from the center of the riot, I was surprised to see a Negro chick and a white chick in a telephone booth together. A block further down I got another shock. There were a couple of white kids standing with some Negro kids. They were yelling at the cops.

But the biggest shock was right in the middle of the riot. There was an inte-

grated couple in a car, watching. At this point I decided that the riot was not anti-white but anti-cop.

Later in the evening, I went back down to the riot. There were still some integrated groups. About five minutes after I got there, a white guy drove by. Some of the people began throwing rocks at his car. He tried to run over a few of them, but he couldn't hit anybody. So he left out of there as quick as he could.

Until Saturday night, there was not any organization in the riot. A black nationalist told friends on Friday night that he and some other guys would participate in the riot. The next night, there were some people shooting at cops from an apartment building. By the time the cops surrounded the building, the snipers had moved to another one. Later we found out that the black nationalists had been doing the shooting.

THE SOUTHERN COURIER welcomes letters from anyone on any subject. Letters must be signed, but your name will be withheld upon request.



# The GOSPEL TRUTH

Text by Ralph Featherstone

The sound of soul, the big beat, the hand-clapping, and the foot-stomping: All of these ingredients are found in gospel music, through which people can express their feelings toward their God that they worship or their Christ that they adore.

Gospel music has many moods. It has more soul than any other type of music. What other kind of music can make a person feel happy, and cause him to react with a shout? What other type of music that can burn the soul, make people forget their problems, and give them hope, faith, love, and that which really can not be explained with our limited

vocabulary?

What other type of music can make a person forget his whereabouts, and do strange things that even he can not explain--except to say that it makes you run when nobody is after you, it makes you cry when nobody has hurt you, it makes you love your enemies, and it makes you want to treat everybody right when everybody seems to be against you?

If you take a close look at gospel music and how it has influenced rock 'n' roll and rhythm and blues, you could honestly say that gospel music is the grand-daddy of all music. Most of the great sing-

ers in the field of pop, rock, and blues got their soul and start by singing in a choir back home. Many of the most outstanding singers in the nation prefer gospel singing, for they realize the impact it has on them and the good it spreads wherever it is played.

You will find in these photos various moods of expression. Some feel it and they must shout, for they will tell you, "I simply can't hold my peace." Others will be still and shed a tear. Others may express their feelings by dancing--no particular dance in mind, just the way they feel.



Photos by Jim Pepler



# The Story of the Last Slave Ship African Descendants Still Live in Plateau

BY ROGER RAPOPORT

MOBILE -- There is no marker at Magazine Point to show where the ship *Clotilde* sank to the bottom of the Mobile River 108 years ago.

But the *Clotilde* played a part in an important chapter in American history. In 1859 the ship sailed into Mobile Bay with the last load of Africans brought to America to be sold as slaves.

Most of the *Clotilde's* unwilling passengers escaped the yoke of slavery. They were saved by a combination of events--including the outbreak of the Civil War.

Many of the Africans fled northward to freedom. But about 30 of them settled in the Plateau community where their descendants still live just up Baybridge Road from Magazine Point.

Over the past century, Plateau has grown into a community of 5,000 people as other Negroes moved in to join the original settlers. But the children and grandchildren of the *Clotilde* passengers--Joyful and Lemuel Keeby, Motley Lewis, Charlie Field, and others--still take a special pride in their history.

And so does Augustine Meaher Jr., grandson of Timothy Meaher, the steamboat captain who arranged the arrival of the *Clotilde* with its forbidden cargo in the summer of 1859.

"The children of slave-holders are usually ashamed of their heritage and don't like to talk about it," Meaher explains, "but the grandchildren are usually proud of their past."

And the Negro residents, led by Henry Williams, have founded a Progressive League to make sure that Plateau's history is remembered.

This is the story of the *Clotilde* and its passengers: The United States had outlawed the importing of slaves in 1808. In the late 1850's a new, stricter law was passed to make the slave trade a crime punishable by death.

A Northerner riding on Captain Timothy Meaher's steamboat in 1858 claimed that the law had wiped out the importing of slaves. But Meaher rose to the Yankee's challenge. The steamboat captain made a bet that he could land a cargo of slaves in the South within two years.

Meaher returned to Mobile, bought the *Clotilde* for \$35,000, and spent still more money to make her one of the fastest ships on the sea.

The *Clotilde* set sail, posing as a lumber ship bound for the Virgin Islands. But instead she sailed on to Dahomey on the west coast of Africa.

There Captain Meaher's men bought 130 black Africans for \$10 to \$20 apiece from the people of Dahomey.

The Africans, natives of a village near Dakar, were the survivors of a raid by the Dahomeans. Many of the villagers had seen their families murdered. But there was still more trouble to come.

As the Dakar Africans boarded the *Clotilde*, their cotton clothes were torn from their backs by the Dahomeans. Then the naked and frightened Africans were shut away into the darkness of the ship's hold.

Although there was little space and no light, they were luckier than some African prisoners. Most slave ships carried their passengers in cargo holds only two or three feet high. Inside the *Clotilde*, there was enough room for the shorter Africans to stand.

The ship dodged an English vessel and headed west. But there was another kind of trouble brewing. The crew mutinied, and for several days the men in charge were busy trying to get the ship under control.

After 13 days the mutiny was over, and the Africans were taken out of the hold. Crew members helped them walk around the deck and stretch their cramped muscles.

In August, 1859, the ship arrived at the lower end of Mobile Bay and went into hiding. Green boughs were dropped into the hold to let the Africans know that the voyage was nearly over. Word was sent to Meaher, at his home near Mobile, that "the niggers have come."

Then the Meahers began a game of hide-and-seek to outwit the federal government officials who were watching and waiting for the arrival of a slave ship in Mobile.

Captain Meaher's brother, Byrnes Meaher, took his boat, the *Czar*, to the mouth of the Spanish River about four miles east along Mobile Bay. Captain Meaher boarded a tugboat and headed for the *Clotilde*, which was towed up the bay to the Spanish River and the waiting *Czar*.



HENRY WILLIAMS

The Africans were transferred to the *Czar*, taken up the river to Jim Dabney's plantation near Mt. Vernon, and hidden in the canebrake.

At that awkward moment, mutiny broke out again among the *Clotilde's* crew. Meaher locked the men in a room on the tugboat with liquor and cards. (Later the crew members were placed on a closed train car bound for New York, where they were finally paid--and promptly discharged.)

After dealing with the crew, Meaher traveled on the *Czar* to another of his boats, the *Taney*, which was on her way to Montgomery. As he began eating a late supper on board the *Taney*, the *Clotilde* was being towed up the Mobile River. Her rigging was set on fire, and the blazing ship was sunk to the bottom of the river off Magazine Point.

Federal agents soon began tracking down the Africans. The agents chartered the steamboat *Eclipse* to go after the black men and bring them back to Mobile to appear in court in the government's case against Meaher.

But Meaher's friends brought him word of the government's plans, and the captain gave an employee \$50 to buy liquor for the *Eclipse* crew. While Meaher slipped away on

as much as \$2,000 for a field hand, and \$5,000 for a butler. You could get a cow for \$2 then."

In the end, federal agents finally caught up with about 30 of the Africans, and took Timothy Meaher and Jim Dabney to court on charges of importing slaves.

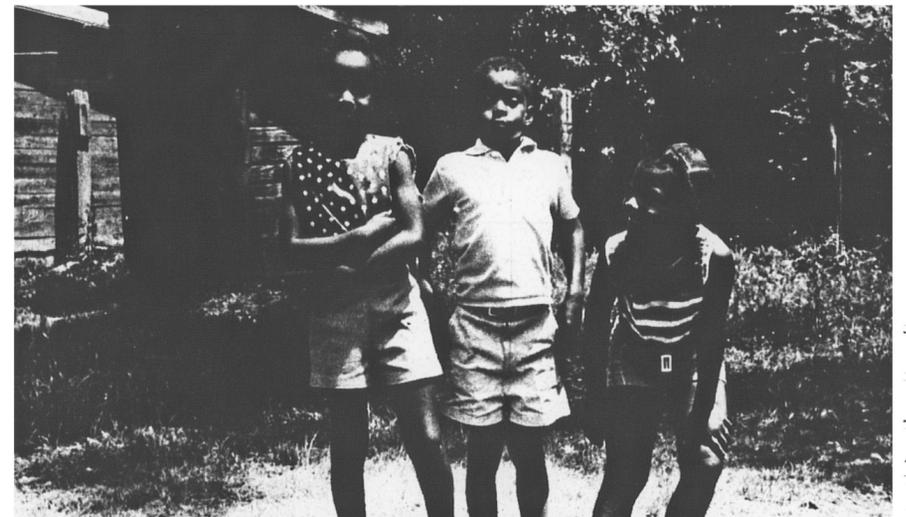
But Captain Meaher said he was innocent. He told the court he had made every trip on his steamship and did not have time to deal in slaves. He said he had been on board the *Taney* eating supper the night the Africans were transferred from the *Clotilde* to the *Czar*.

Before the case was completed, the Civil War broke out. Afterwards, the federal government did not continue to prosecute the former slave-trader.

The 30 Africans who had returned to Mobile for the trial moved out to Plateau. Captain Meaher later gave each of them about five acres of land and a small shack to live in.

The people settled down to life as American Negroes. They worked at Meaher's sawmill and shipping docks. Local residents nicknamed the area "Africa Town."

Some of the descendants of the *Clotilde* passengers still rent shotgun houses from Meaher's grandson. The Negroes in Plateau have erected a monument in memory of Cudgel Lewis, the last survivor of the *Clotilde*, who died in 1959.



TWO PLATEAU HOUSES



LAYING FLOOR IN NEW CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## Grandson of Slave Ship's Captain Rents Houses to Negro Families

BY ROGER RAPOPORT

MOBILE--The Meaher family has rented shotgun houses to Negro families in Plateau for nearly 100 years. At one time, about 500 of the narrow shacks lined the dirt roads of the area.

But in recent years industry has replaced the narrow frame dwellings. And by the end of this year, nearly all of the remaining shotgun houses will be gone.

The man who owns the houses now is Augustine Meaher Jr., grandson of Timothy Meaher, the wealthy steamboat captain, land-owner, and slave-trader who shipped the last load of Africans into Mobile in 1859.

It was those Africans who first settled in the Plateau region of the city after the Civil War, on land owned by Captain Meaher. Around 1880, the Meahers began erecting rows of three-room frame houses for the Negro families.

According to Augustine Meaher, the houses cost about \$300 to build and rented for \$1 a week. They came equipped with a water pump, and as the years went by, the Meahers supplied electricity to their tenants.

There were many advantages to the homes, Meaher says. "They are good economical houses. As long as you keep a good roof on them, they keep forever."

From his youth, Meaher remembers the Negro tenants as "very frugal people" who surrounded their homes with small gardens and raised a few hogs and chickens.

"They always had a great time out there in Pla-

teau, laughing and singing from Saturday night to Monday morning," he recalled. "I used to go there myself sometimes on the weekend and had some of the best times ever."

But the way of life that the shotgun houses represented was coming to an end. In 1926, the Meahers



AUGUSTINE MEAHER JR., rented 375 acres in Plateau to the International Paper Co., and ten years later the Scott Paper Co. leased another 750 acres to build a mill.

Now Scott plans to lease another 17 acres, crowding the shotgun houses off the land.

Many Negro residents won't be sorry to see them go. They claim that, in past years, white people living nearby would sneak in at night and dump their garbage on the front lawns of Negro homes. Some Plateau residents say their neighbors put stiffs in

the shacks to make moonshine whiskey.

While other sections of Mobile were getting public services, Plateau was without sewers, water lines, and garbage pick-ups.

After complaints from the Plateau residents, health officials began to enforce city regulations. The city paved some streets, and the federal government gave \$300,000 to help pay for sewers. Last year the city began regular garbage pick-ups in the area.

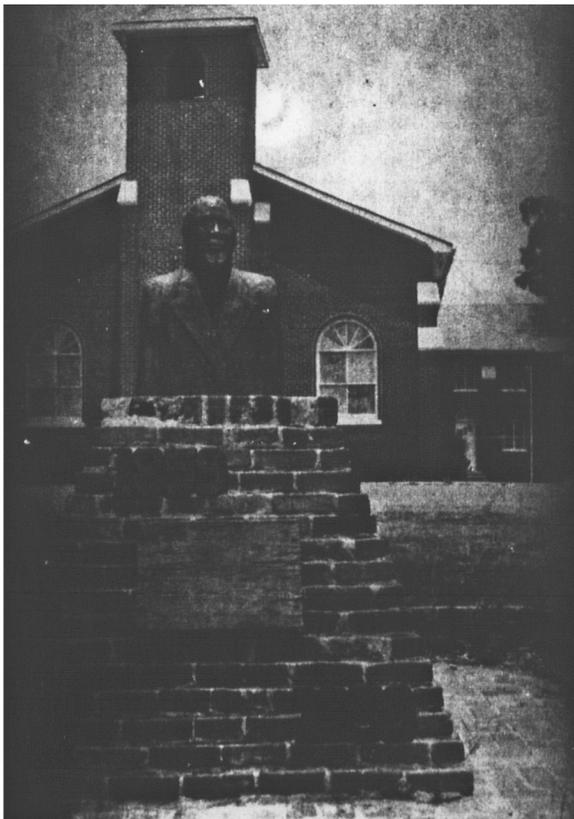
Meaher has doubts about all these improvements. He says they cost him about \$1,000 per house in tax assessments. And he thinks the improvements could cost the tenants more money than they have to spend. "The water and sewage bill could easily run as high as the rent," he said. "Besides, people have lived perfectly healthy and happy for years without running water and sewers."

And so, Meaher is knocking down 80 of the remaining 100 shacks and moving most of the rest into the country north of Plateau. The houses will be re-settled near small towns like Axis and Saraland.

By fall, Meaher said nearly all of the shotgun houses will be gone from Plateau. "Of course we'll probably leave a few there for the old darkeys that worked for us," he said.

Meaher said he doesn't charge these elderly tenants any rent. But sometimes, he regrets it.

"The government has softened them up in their old age these days," said the wealthy land-owner, sitting in his 26th-floor office in the new First National Bank Building. "With those old-age pensions, you can't get them to work as hard any more."



MONUMENT TO CUDGEL LEWIS

In Marion County School

Four Teachers for 12 Grades

BY MICHAEL S. LOTTMAN

MONTGOMERY--In the Guin High School in rural Marion County, four teachers are assigned to handle all 12 grades.

"A few yards" from the high school, said St. John Barrett of the U. S. Justice Department, is Guin Elementary School, where 363 white students are taught by 11 teachers.

Food Stamps

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

H. O. Williams of Union Springs, "It cannot benefit the people who need it most--the ones with no money at all."

But Law said the program was working. "We've approved 491 households with 2,387 persons" he said, "and more are coming in."

Mrs. Bertha Groom of Great Hope, who feeds a family of five, said that's what she is doing.

"This is the best thing that ever happened to me," Mrs. Groom continued happily. "I've got more food than I ever bought in my life. I even got a steak."

"I sold two hogs to get \$10, and they gave me \$60 in stamps," she said. "I'd sell the hogs anyway when I got hungry, and I wouldn't get \$60."

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white students, Last Friday, Barrett asked a three-judge federal court to do something about this situation, and others like it.

Marion County officials defended their school system. "Guin (the Negro school) compares with just about all our rural schools," said Superintendent Estes Hudson.

But, Barrett asked, "are any of these schools . . . located within a few hundred yards of another school serving the same grades?"

"No, sir," Hudson answered. Rankin Fite, speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives and attorney for the Marion County school board, said Guin High students in the upper three grades would be transferred to Marion County High School next fall.

Hudson also said the board tried to get Negro teachers to teach in white schools, but the Negroes said "they prefer not to move. . . . One said he would resign."

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The Justice Department also asked the court to order the city of Jasper to desegregate its school system.

About 500 Negro children who live in Jasper are assigned to schools run by the Walker County board of education, Barrett said.

John D. Petree Jr., attorney for the Jasper board, said 85 Negro children will be going to city schools next fall.

Judge Rives said the court was "impressed with the good-faith efforts" of Marengo County and Linden. Both systems were given additional time to re-

port on the results of their desegregation plans.

The judges reserved a ruling on the Thomasville system. Of the city's two 12-grade schools, Barrett said, one is all-Negro and the other has 785 white and two Negro students.

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2. WHY AM I TREATED SO BAD--Bobby Powell (Whit)
3. TO BE A LOVER--Gene Chandler (Checker)
4. I DON'T WANT YOU CUTTIN' OFF YOUR HAIR--B. B. King (B. Way)
5. PUT YOUR TRUST IN ME--Joe Simon (S. Stage)
6. THE GRASS IS GREENER--Ella Washington (Atl.)
7. TRAMP--Otis & Carla (Stax)
8. SOUL FINGER--Bar-Kays (Volt)
9. HIP HUG HER--Booker T. & M. G.'s (Stax)
10. 7 ROOMS OF GLOOM--Four Tops (Motown)
11. A WOMAN WILL DO WRONG--Helen Smith (Phil, L.A.)
12. WHO'S LOVIN' YOU--Brenda & the Tabulation (Dionn)
13. DOWN IN TEXAS--Don Varner (South Camp)
14. MAKE ME YOURS--Betty Swan (Money)
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WANT ADS

ARKANSAS--The Arkansas Council on Human Relations has affiliate councils in Conway, Fayetteville, Pine Bluff, Fort Smith, and North Little Rock.

SWAFCA JOBS--If and when its federal money comes through, SWAFCA will be hiring the following: one horticulturist, ten agricultural field specialists, one assistant co-op manager (trainee), two administrative assistants (trainees), one comptroller, secretaries, clerk-typists (trainees), truck drivers, loaders, and graders.

JOB OPENINGS -- The Interagency Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners for South Alabama and Northwest Florida is holding an examination for mobile equipment operators--like chauffeurs, bus drivers, light and heavy vehicle operators, and engineering equipment operators.

JUST OUT--New issue of Spartacist, Contains "Black and Red--Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom," and "Anti-War Sellout." Single issue 10¢, 12 issues \$1. Order from Spartacist League, P. O. Box 8121, Gentilly Station, New Orleans, La. 70122.

JEFFERSON COUNTY CITIZENS--Citizenship School will begin registration for classes on Tuesday, June 20, from 7 to 9 p.m., at 1105 Seventh Ave. N.

FEDERAL JOBS--The Interagency Board of Civil Service Examiners is holding examinations for the positions of cook, commissary worker, and meat cutter. The jobs are located in South Alabama and Northwest Florida.

CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS -- "Is the Universe, Including Man, Evolved by Atomic Force?" This is the subject of the lesson-sermon to be read in all Christian Science churches on Sunday, June 18.

HELP DAN HOUSER--Dan Houser needs money for medical expenses, after being beaten in Prattville. Contributions can be sent to him in care of WRMA, 135 Commerce St., Montgomery, Ala. 36104.

BAHA'IS--The Baha'is of Montgomery will have as the subject of this week's informal public discussion, "Is Man His Brother's Keeper?"

HELP DAN HOUSER--Dan Houser needs money for medical expenses, after being beaten in Prattville. Contributions can be sent to him in care of WRMA, 135 Commerce St., Montgomery, Ala. 36104.

FOR A BETTER ALABAMA--The Alabama Council on Human Relations has active chapters in Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery, Huntsville, Florence-Tuscumbia-Sheffield, Auburn-Opelika-Tuskegee, Talladega, and Tuscaloosa. It has a staff that works throughout the state.

KEMPER COUNTY JOBS--CDGM Head Start centers in Porterville, DeKalb, Bethlehem, Little Zion, and Preston all have openings for a social service aide. The aide's job will be to involve parents and other community members in the activities of the center.

NEWSPAPER JOB--The York Gazette, one of the last of the really turned-on and tuned-in liberal daily newspapers in the country, is looking for a bright and hip young person who could be trained for a responsible job on the city desk.

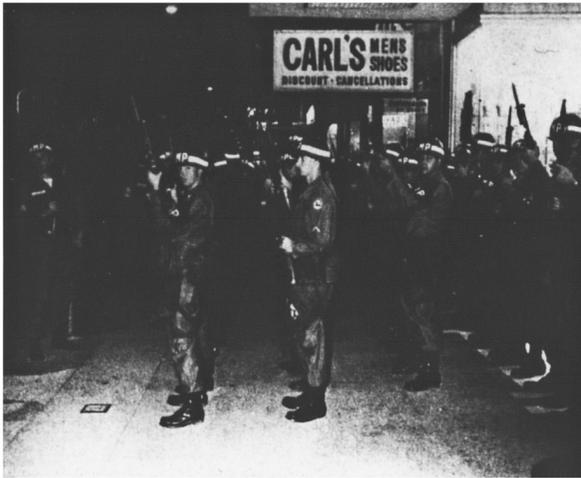
ROOMS NEEDED--Rooms are needed for some of the 7,000 delegates expected for the district convention of Jehovah's Witnesses, to be held Thursday, June 29, through Sunday, July 2, in Montgomery.

HELP WANTED--Southwest Alabama Self-Help Housing, Inc., an OEO-funded program, is looking for people to fill the following positions: one staff director (must be an experienced organizer and licensed building contractor); one construction supervisor (must be an experienced builder, able to organize and teach people); two construction helpers (carpenter and bricklayer, able to teach); and one secretary-bookkeeper (must be skilled in typing and record-keeping, and able to take dictation).

MFPD MEETING -- The Meridian (Miss.) Freedom Democratic Party invites members and friends to the Michael Schwerner-James Chaney-Andrew Goodman Memorial Service at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 25, at the FDP office in Meridian.

BIRMINGHAM MEN'S DAY -- The Rev. Edward Gardner, first vice-president of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, will be the guest speaker at Men's Day at St. Mark's CME Church, Tittusville, Ito Ave. and Third St., at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 18.

EARN MONEY--If you are interested in making \$10 or more in your spare time by selling The Southern Courier in Prattville, call 262-3572.



NATIONAL GUARDSMEN ON DUTY MONDAY NIGHT

## Montgomery Marches

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)  
about being violent--I'd do something about it."

In Prattville, he said, "police kicked in the door and dragged Dan Houser out--and no Negro struck."

But when the marchers got to Decatur St., they were met by Rap Brown and

## Prattville

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

"Shut up, boy, I'm the law around here."

Carmichael asked Hill to "take off that tin badge and drop your gun. That's all I'm asking you to do, hunkie!" Shortly thereafter, Carmichael was arrested, and charged with disorderly conduct.

During the incident, Prattville policemen ripped two cameras away from Southern Courier photographer Jim Pepler, and snatched a tape-recorder microphone from WRMA radio newsman Norman Lumpkin. The cameras were later returned.

While claiming his cameras at the police station, Pepler was punched in the face by a white bystander. He signed a warrant charging Curtis Tucker with assault and battery.

Later Sunday, shots were fired around Houser's house. Police blocked off all roads into the neighborhood.

"We had to break and run and hide on the floor," said Houser's sister, Mrs. Celeste Williams. "It went on all night long. It was daylight when the last whuppin' stopped."

During the night, police raided Houser's home and arrested ten men--Stanley Wise, Ulysses Nunnally, Will Rogers, and Theophilus Smith of SNCC, and local residents James E. Harris, Mark A. Rudolph, Julius Robinson Jr., Haywood P. Robinson, Horace Meredith, and Charles Levine.

The ten were charged with unlawful assembly. They were released on \$500 bond each on Tuesday, about 40 hours after their arrest. Carmichael was released at the same time, after refusing to post his \$500 bond until the other men could.

Stokely Carmichael of SNCC.

"All these white-helmeted cops around here are your enemies," Brown told the crowd of about 200 demonstrators, mostly teen-agers. "The only reason . . . they're not into your heads is they don't want a Watts--they don't want a Tampa. We can give it to 'em!" Carmichael added, "If a hunkie puts his hand on you, you try your best to kill him."

DeMent said the SNCC leaders' remarks "came close" to being illegal. But no arrests were made.

On Wednesday night, the marchers advanced to Bainbridge St., just in front of the Capitol steps. The 250 demonstrators saw something new behind the police barricades--about 15 Negro policemen, mostly auxiliaries, who had not been on duty the first two nights. Several of the marchers were shouting "Black power!" and there was talk of trying to go over the barriers. But no one moved when Boone said, "All folk who want to be bad, who want to go around and confront the police--you have my permission."

Boone said the marchers want to confer with "our governor, in our Capitol, on our terms." If not, added Mrs. Williams, "we might be marching every night the rest of this summer."

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## Tuskegee Mayor, TCA Trade Compliments

BY MARY ELLEN GALE

TUSKEGEE--At times during the past 32 months, said Mayor Charles M. Keever, "your city officials have said to themselves, 'Why did I ask for this?'"

But most of the time, he added, "the first integrated city council in Alabama in this century" has considered its job "a challenge to do something constructive for the community."

Keever made his report on the state of the city to some 60 people at a Tuskegee Civic Association (TCA) meeting last Sunday.

He told the mostly-Negro audience that the worst set-back in nearly three years of progress was "the cross-fire from both sides" after a Tuskegee Institute student was fatally shot by a white man in January, 1966.

"If we had not made the progress we had," said the mayor, "it could have shattered us."

But instead, he reported, the city has moved ahead to provide more services for all its citizens.

Among the city's successes, Keever said, were the integration of Tuskegee High School, and of the city police force, housing authority, planning board, and new recreation board.

He reminded the TCA members that the city had initiated financial support for the county's anti-poverty program, the city-county hospital (which handles most of the welfare patients), and the surplus food program.

"Do you know why a Negro sheriff was elected to office here (in Macon

County) with little or no difficulty?" Keever asked. "It was because of all these fore-runners. . . and because of the goals set forth years ago by the Tuskegee Civic Association."

But Keever asked the TCA members to set another goal: "When we can find what we want in Tuskegee at the same price," he said, "buying it will help your city. . . . Your city government will have more money to spend to do the things we need to do."

After the mayor finished speaking, several people praised him. "I've lived in Tuskegee since Sept. 7, 1931," said Mrs. Beulah C. Johnson. "This is the first time we have ever had a report from a mayor."

William P. Mitchell, executive secretary of the TCA, said, "I have one complaint of the present city government--they pick up my trash too often."

### FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

In Alabama all our yesterdays are marred by hate, discrimination, injustice, and violence. Among the organizations working for a better tomorrow on the principle of human brotherhood is the Alabama Council on Human Relations. Membership in the Council is open to all who wish to work for a better tomorrow on this principle. For further information, write the Alabama Council, P.O. Box 1310, Auburn, Alabama.

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Midnight-6 AM "Little Walter" Anglin  
(Friday--Johnny Jackson)

BIG D WAKE-UP SHOW  
6-8 AM Sam Double "OO" Moore  
OLE GOSPEL SHIP  
8-11 AM Willie McKinstry  
SAM MOORE SHOW  
11 AM-3:30 PM Sam Double "OO" Moore

LARRY HARGROVE SHOW  
3:30-8 PM Larry Hargrove  
OLE GOSPEL SHIP  
8-10 PM Willie McKinstry  
LATE DATE  
10 PM-Midnight Johnny "Jive" McClure

#### Saturday

ALL-NIGHT SHOW  
Midnight-6 AM Lewis White  
WEEKEND SPECIAL  
6 AM-Noon Larry Hargrove  
SATURDAY SESSION  
Noon-6 PM Johnny "Jive" McClure  
SATURDAY EXPRESS  
6 PM-Midnight "Little Walter" Anglin



#### Sunday

ALL-NIGHT SHOW  
Midnight-10 AM Johnny Jackson  
FAVORITE CHURCHES  
10 AM-4 PM "Little Walter" Anglin  
SONGS OF THE CHURCH  
4-6 PM Willie McKinstry  
JOHNNY JACKSON  
6 PM-Midnight

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