

# SCLC

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

## Newsletter

Volume 1

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No. 3

### CONVENTION ISSUE

#### **SCLC Convention In Nashville, September 27-29**

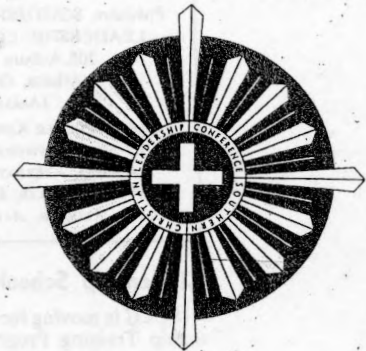
The Annual Convention of SCLC is scheduled to open in Nashville Tennessee with a scintillating benefit concert billed as a 'Tribute to the Freedom Riders' starring Harry Belafonte and the Belafonte Folk Singers. The show will be augmented by Miriam Makeba and the Chad Mitchell Trio. The intermission of the benefit will provide one of the high moments of the three-day meeting when ten young collegians who decided to continue the Freedom Ride after it was stopped by mob violence at Anniston and Birmingham will be especially honored. Dr. King and Mr. Belafonte are scheduled to make the awards.

The top names of the civil rights struggle in the Deep South will grace the platforms at the Nashville meeting. The Rev. James Lawson has been named as keynote; James Farmer, National Director of CORE will address the plenary session as will Spottswood Robinson, Dean of the Howard University Law School and member of the Civil Rights Commission. William

Kunstler of the American Civil Liberties Union will address the Lawyer's Forum and Seminar on Friday. Dr. King will speak at the city-wide Freedom Rally at the War Memorial Auditorium Wednesday evening.

The Nashville Christian Leadership Council serves as host affiliate with its president, Kelly Miller Smith as Coordinator. All sessions (day) will be held at the Clark Memorial Methodist Church with the exception of the Lawyer's Forum and Seminar on Friday that will meet at First Baptist Church. The Belafonte concert will be held in the Ryman Auditorium.

The theme of the three-day meeting is "The Deep South in Social Revolution." In addition to the annual business session on Thursday morning, workshops will be conducted daily in Nonviolence, Voter Registration, Community Organization and the Rural South as they relate to the present sharp change in social patterns across the South. More than two hundred registered delegates are expected to attend from the seventy affiliates of SCLC and other human relations organizations around the nation.



Martin Luther King, Jr., President of SCLC



James M. Lawson, Keynote, Nashville



Spottswood Robinson, III, Dean Howard University Law School, Member Civil Rights Commission



William Kunstler, ACLU lawyer and author



James Farmer, National Director CORE

## SCLC Newsletter

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### Citizenship Schools in Action

SCLC is moving forward in its Leadership Training Program. In the July workshop thirteen were trained from three different states: Louisiana, Georgia and South Carolina. Four of the persons are now able to operate centers training others to teach. Others in the class are setting up local classes. In August fifteen persons attended from Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia. The September class has participants coming in from Prince Edward County, Dinwiddie, and Petersburg, Virginia and from Atlanta, Georgia.

—Mrs. Dorothy Cotton, Mrs. Septima Clark and the Reverend Andrew Young will tour key area Louisiana and South Carolina during the month of October explaining the Citizenship Program and recruiting persons to take the five-day intensive training course at Dorchester Center, McIntosh, Georgia. All churches and organizations affiliated with SCLC are participating in this effort to help all of our people become fully participating citizens. Other groups which share our basic aims and philosophy are invited to join hands with us. Our staff and program are at your service.

Recent statistics have shown that in ten or twelve southern states there are over two million illiterates. Your help is needed if we are to effectively erase the cause of much of our suffering. Not only must we have basic reading and writing skills, but we must know something about Social Security, health benefits available, how equal job opportunities and better housing facilities are acquired, how government is run and those who control it. There are not enough governmental jobs to go around, but one way in which we can all participate in government is to register and vote.

For detailed information on the Citizenship School contact Mrs. Dorothy F. Cotton, Educational Director at SCLC. Join Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his noble efforts to reach all of our people—wherever they are.



### HARRY BELAFONTE AND MIRIAM MAKEBA STAR IN BENEFIT CONCERT

Harry Belafonte has become one of the world's best known artists through his individuality as a singer of folk songs and distinctiveness in choice of material and method of presentation.

He has emerged not only as a name of stature among the few "real stars", but as a unique combination of creative artist and commercial success — a man who has discovered the formula for maintaining a great mass appeal without compromising his art.

He has been called the "true musical historian of our times" and "the man who has brought folk singing into its own with other musical forms such as jazz, opera, and the classics".

The Belafonte repertoire knows no bounds of locale or geographic limitations. His songs are the songs of people all over the globe, of all fields of endeavor and every area of expression.

Miriam Makeba, a favorite performer in her native Union of South Africa, is a unique blending of singer, actress and visual historian of a great culture who has stirred music enthusiasts of the United States to extreme heights of praise within the short period that she has been in this country. Miss Makeba, an Xosa tribeswoman, lived most of her life in Prospect Township, Johannesburg, South Africa before coming to this country.

## VIGNETTE OF THE MONTH

### Shuttlesworth of Birmingham

The nationally televised 'CBS REPORT', *Who Speaks for Birmingham*, described the Reverend Fred L. Shuttlesworth of Birmingham, "... the man most feared by southern racists and the voice of the new militancy among Birmingham Negroes..." Friend and foe alike, with understandable respect, agree that this Alabama-born-and-bred Baptist minister is probably the most courageous man on the civil rights scene in the Deep South.

Fred Shuttlesworth has been pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church for the past eight years. It has been the focal center of the fight for freedom in Birmingham ever since 1956 when the NAACP was enjoined from operating in Alabama. In May of the same year, the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights was born with Fred Shuttlesworth as president. ACMHR bridged a gap that was desperately needed in the wake of the NAACP's forced exit from Alabama.

Shuttlesworth's civil rights biography reads like something akin to an Horatio Alger story: Christmas 1956, Shuttlesworth home bombed and completely demolished; winter 1957, Bethel Baptist dynamited by racists; late 1957, Shuttlesworth and wife, mobbed, beaten, and stabbed; jailed eight times—four times during the Freedom Rides; sued for three million dollars by state officials of Alabama; automobile and personal property sold at public auction; drivers license revoked for a whole year; the three Shuttlesworth children illegally arrested and beaten at Gadsden (Alabama).

Dixie's most fearless freedom fighter is currently involved in twenty-seven criminal and civil actions. He has received sentences totaling three and a half years in time and \$5,000 in fines. Fred Shuttlesworth is without a doubt the most abused and arrested minister in the nation.

Birmingham has been described as the 'worst city this side of Johannesburg, South Africa.' Despite the likes of Eugene (Bull) Connor and deeply entrenched habits of segregation in both the Negro and white community, Fred Shuttlesworth and the ACMHR have had an impact that Birmingham will long remember. The desegregation of the city buses, delayed through seemingly endless litigation and police harassment, is now a reality. Visitors to Birmingham today are shown street lights, paved streets, Negro policemen—all credited to Shuttlesworth and

ACMHR. In the north Birmingham section, residents will point out 'Shuttlesworth School', 'Shuttlesworth Park' and 'Shuttlesworth Pool', each hurriedly built to stave off the persistent demands of Shuttlesworth and Company for adequate tax supported facilities.

Standing shoulder to shoulder with the dynamic leader is Mrs. Ruby Shuttlesworth. They have been the 'one-two punch' of Birmingham. Their three children have already demonstrated their mettle in the Greyhound incident at Gadsden. Mr. Shuttlesworth has high praise for the hard-core of faithful workers without whom, he confesses, "we couldn't have a movement". W. E. Shortridge, Treasurer of ACMHR and stabilizing force, Reverend Billups, the President's right-hand man, the George Prices, Mrs. Lola Hendricks, the Reverend Nelson H. Smith, are but a few of the dedicated and courageous people who have helped Fred Shuttlesworth make Birmingham a little better place to live.

Nationally famous in the civil rights struggle, Mr. Shuttlesworth is in demand all over the nation. His personal magnetism attracts great crowds wherever he speaks. He has traveled and lectured in Europe. He is a founder and Secretary of SCLC.

The anti-climax of this vignette is the fact that Fred Shuttlesworth, whose name has become synonymous with Birmingham, is leaving Birmingham. Late last month, Fred formally severed his ties with the faithful congregation of Bethel to accept the pastorate of the Revelation Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. The hard and cold reality of educating three children on the modest salary of a southern pastor influenced Mr. Shuttlesworth's decision to leave. ACMHR unanimously requested him to continue as president. He is determined to see the Birmingham struggle end in victory. Although he has accepted the new church in Cincinnati, Mr. Shuttlesworth commutes weekly to insure positive leadership in Birmingham. He continues to serve as Secretary of SCLC and on the Board of the Southern Conference Educational Fund. Everyone is agreed that the loss of Fred Shuttlesworth's full-time energies is difficult for the struggle to sustain. It will be a long time before we find another 'man for Birmingham'.

The most recent issue of the *Movement Newsletter* of Birmingham had this to say: "... the South has not finished with Shuttlesworth,—nor has Shuttlesworth finished with the South!"

## Mob Wins Again In Alabama

Eleven freedom fighters, ten clergymen and one graduate law student, succumbed to Alabama's brand of 'justice before the law' on September 15. Judge Alex Marks of the Montgomery County Court found all eleven guilty of two charges of 'breach of the peace' and 'unlawful assembly' with single exception of SCLC director, Wyatt Tee Walker, who was acquitted of the first charge.

Evidently operating under the logic of 'jailing the bank president instead of arresting the bank robber', Judge Marks imposed fines and/or jail terms on each. Counsel for the defendants argued brilliantly on every point of law producing the incontrovertible evidence from the Federal Court that General Graham testified under oath that the eleven were arrested because he was 'disgusted'. Despite the introduction of several Federal questions that established violations of the 1st and 14th amendment and the presentation of the Federal Judge Johnson (Middle District of Alabama) ruling that the arrests were made 'solely to enforce segregation', all were convicted. The group included the Reverend Ralph D. Abernathy, SCLC treasurer and Montgomery Improvement Association President, Fred L. Shuttlesworth of Birmingham and SCLC Secretary, and Bernard Lee, Special Assistant to Mr. Walker. In addition to SCLC personnel, four New England professors tasted Alabama justice; William Coffin and Gaylord Noyce of the Yale University Faculty and John David Maguire and David Swift of Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. The other three are graduate students; George Bundy Smith of the Yale Law School and Clyde Carter and Joseph Charles Jones of the Divinity School of Johnson C. Smith University at Charlotte, N. C. Dr. Abernathy and Bernard Lee were fined \$100 and sentenced to ten days in the county jail; the others were meted the same fine and sentenced to fifteen days in the county jail with the exception of SCLC Director Wyatt Tee Walker who was not fined but sentenced to ninety days in jail. All of the cases were appealed to the Circuit Court.

The defendants were represented by Fred Gray, Charles Conley, and S. S. Seay, Jr. of Montgomery, Louis Pollack of the Yale Law faculty, and Jack Greenberg and Norman Amaker of the Legal Defense and Education Fund.





Members of Kenya Legislative Council, Kadu Party, visit SCLC. Left to right, Daniel T. Moi, Secretary of Education; Wyatt Tee Walker, Executive Director of SCLC; Wafula Wabuge, Deputy General Secretary; J. K. Oletipis, Secretary of Agriculture; and Fred Van Cort, State Department. They conferred with Dr. King for two hours discussing the problems of Kenya and the Deep South.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

I wish to contribute to the work of SCLC and the social struggle in the South.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

(street)

(city & state)

Amount of Contribution .....

Send to: SCLC

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Atlanta 3, Georgia

### Briefs . . .

Good luck and best wishes to Ed King who has resigned as Executive Secretary of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) to continue work toward a law degree at Wilberforce University in Ohio . . . Welcome to SCLC staff: Andrew Young, a minister of the Congregational Church who comes to us with high recommendations from the National Council of Churches; Andy will be working with the Field Foundation Project, namely the Citizenship Schools . . . *Stride Toward Freedom* is now on

the newsstands in a paperback edition . . .

The dismissal of the Reverend Virgil Wood (Lynchburg, Virginia) from the faculty of Virginia Seminary has caused a stir in civil rights circles all over the South; it is alleged by administration officials that he is 'too involved' . . . Best wishes to Sammy Davises and Harry Belafontes on their new arrivals; both are ardent SCLC supporters . . . Freedom Ride Scholarships are available through home office of SCLC; applications must be in writing including need, academic standing, involvement in struggle, and the college or university in which you are (or will be) enrolled.

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