

## MESSAGE OF LOVE TO ALABAMIANS

By Tom Johnson, EDITOR  
MONTGOMERY INDEPENDENT  
Dr. Martin Luther King, whose Nobel Prize certifies him to be the supreme reigning force for peace and reason, delivered himself of a love message to Alabama this week.

On national television, he called for an embargo of Alabama products and other measures designed to inflict hurt on the state, forgetting or ignoring — as Lt. Gov. James Allen pointed out — that Negroes would suffer along with the whites.

One of his lieutenants, the Rev. James Bevel, had another idea: Impeach Gov. Wallace.

Love is getting out of hand.

Indeed, love has been getting out of hand for several days. Dr. King was finally forced to make a small acknowledgement of this last week when he was asked about the behaviour of some of the marchers. Said King: "There may be some unfortunate things going on, but I believe this crowd has a higher moral tone than most."

The city has been swarming with rumors to the contrary. Most of them were untrue.

The most persistent report — repeated and enlarged upon in almost every office and gathering place — had it that a white girl marcher was attacked from 25 to 60 times (the number increased with each telling of the story) and that she died at (1) St. Margaret's (2) Jackson's Hospital, (3) St. Jude's Hospital.

If there was any truth to the story, no part of it has been corroborated.

But other things did happen and were witnessed. Since the story of the Selma-Montgomery march has been treated universally as a stainless example of dedicated protest, the actions of the demonstrators who made the march are pertinent.

The Birmingham News verified reports of illicit relationships on the streets of Selma.

Said Selma Public Safety Director Wilson Baker: "There definitely was some of it." He said it happened during an all-night "prayer vigil" on March 10.

To quote the News: "An Associated Press writer, Kelso Sturgeon of Atlanta, was also at the scene that night and he told The News there was 'no doubt about it.'"

"Sturgeon said: 'I saw at least three couples involved in intercourse. There was considerable other hanky-panky.'"

"Baker said it 'was very definitely open in kissing and loving and drinking.'"

"The charge that similar activity took place at the various campsites during the march to Montgomery could not be substantiated. The tents were segregated, the men in one and the women in another. Troops formed a semi-circle around the campsite and marshals on the march staff patrolled the area during the night.

"A reporter for The News also said there was evidence of petting and lovemaking between white and Negro demonstrators. Some ministers were present and witnessed it, he said."

The State House of Representatives passed a resolution accusing out-of-state clergymen of "drinking strong promiscuously" and of "using the most vulgar and profane language on the streets of Montgomery."

The resolution also said that "young women are returning to their respective homes, apparently as unwed mothers."

But the legislature did not make a public record in verification of specific names and incidents.

The organization known as

SNCC (Snick) is invariably described as "militant," even in the Northern press. It is a mild word to describe the intentions as well as the manner of the Snick demonstrators.

It is simply taking judicial notice of a reality to say that the Snick demonstrators could not achieve such personal untidiness, to express it politely, without working at it.

The males exude an odor that is somewhat unlike the Camay soap.

The girls are habitually in a slump, their hair looking as though it were washed up on the beach.

One girl was picked up by the county and held as a juvenile. A county official called her father, an Ohio school superintendent, to inform him of the news. The father was indifferent to the point of being bored.

"Do you know where your daughter is?" the official asked.

"All I know," the superintendent answered, "is that she and a couple of boys drove off for for Alabama a few days ago. I guess that's where she is."

The county official, somewhat aghast, asked if the father was not concerned about the welfare of his daughter.

"I guess she knows what she's doing," the superintendent replied.

He never asked why the girl was being held.

The Snick demonstrators are skilled at taunting police officers hoping to provoke them into anger or an attack. A gash on the head photographs well.

One favorite line to the officers: "Who's your wife with tonight while you're down here watching us." It is a measure of the officers restraint that they just grit their teeth and hold on.

However, Alabama is being painted in the press, the state has held itself in exemplary restraint during days and weeks of provocations.

The National Guardsmen who were federalized found the duty distasteful but performed it faithfully.

One Guardsman finally let himself speak when, on the march, a white boy walked by with a negro girl on each arm. As United Press International reported it, the soldier finally said: "Aw, why don't you just go ahead and kiss her?"

While the government spent \$25,000 a day to shepherd the march, not counting the cost of the Regular Army support forces, airplanes and other equipment, the marchers had a pleasant stroll along Highway 80.

UPI reported on the third day: "The only grumbling came at chow time when early feeders got ham, baked beans, salad, bread and chocolate, and late eaters got fried chicken instead of ham. The ham-fed group wanted to get back in line for chicken and was turned away."

When the marchers got to Montgomery, the informal entertainment turned formal. Live entertainment.

The march was held up an hour beyond Dannelly Field while Dr. King awaited the arrival of entertainers Tony Perkins and Harry Belafonte.

When his plane landed, Belafonte joined the head of the march column and posed for pictures. Then he got a ride into town.

That night Belafonte was but one of several entertainers who performed at the St. Jude's bivouac. Shelley Winters was on hand (saying "this is the most exciting part I've ever played"). So was Sammy Davis, Jr., James Baldwin, Leonard Bernstein and Alan King.

Gov. Wallace was the butt of the jokes.

When Shelley Winters finished her performance, Belafonte embraced her and said, "Boy, if Gov. Wallace could have seen that."

Some of the jokes were not bad.

Dick Gregory: "That wasn't any scientific feat when the Russians sent a man into space last week and had him crawl out of his space ship. What really happened was, the Russians had trouble with the space ship and radioed the pilots that they would have to land in Selma, Ala., and one of those cats said he would rather jump out."

Comedian George Kirby said he saw Gov. Wallace pulling Gregory on a pair of water skis, and a bystander remarked that integration was making progress. Kirby told the bystander: "Integration, hell, they're trolling for alligators."

These are some of the scenes that come to mind from their week's events — multitudes of unwashed beatniks, who if they were not demonstrating in Alabama would be staging motorcycle rumbles in California or otherwise advertising their rootlessness and uselessness in the universe; the entertainers jetting to Alabama to catch the camera's eye; throngs marching through town, many of them sincerely persuaded that this had something to do with voting.

Even from the viewpoint of the most ardent civil rightist, it would seem hard to connect the march with civil rights.

The death of the Detroit housewife was senseless—senseless because the "cowardly act" (as Wallace called it) happened at all and senseless because of the occasion that brought her to Alabama and placed her in the sights of a gunman.

That the whole world is not under a mad hypnosis is indicated by an editorial in The National Observer, which attempted to relate the march and the murder:

The creature who pulled the trigger can count his toes and that is about it; we have him with us always in his senseless-

ness — on Highway 80, at a Black Muslim meeting in New York City, or at a motorcade in Dallas.

"You can't do much about him except what is being done — arrest, trial, punishment. So many have said this is no deterrent, that a creature who pulls a trigger or a knife in his emotion is a sick creature. So he no doubt is. The irony is that so many who readily perceive the sickness of a man in California or New York are so readily vindictive toward a similarly sick creature in Alabama.

"But you can't do much about human nature, either. When emotions run riot, and even the pretense of reason is avoided if the cause be "right" (the Klansman also thinks his cause is "right."), human nature is apt to show its least attractive sides.

"In a situation like that of the oppressed Negro in Alabama, you probably have to have high emotion. But you can't have the revolutions these emotions are used to foment without casualties. You can't stop the isolated murder with all the Federal soldiers, FBI men, marshals, indignant editorialists, and aroused moralists in these United States.

"When the Hollywood stars gather, the airliners and their cargos flock in, the newsmen and photographers and assorted celebrities ride forth, and the prophets thunder, there is no doubt that mountains can be moved and mighty reputations made. In the scope of things, it may well be considered by some that this is more important than what transpired, on Highway 80, between a triggerman from Alabama and a housewife from Detroit."

## Glen Raven Opens New Offices in NYC

New York offices of Glen Raven Mills have moved from 1430 Broadway to larger space at 1450 Broadway, according to announcement from Allen E. Gant, president of the operating divisions of this pioneer North Carolina textile firm.

Marketing, advertising and promotion people for all of Glen Raven's products will be located in the new offices, Mr. Gant said, adding that the New York expansion is part of the company's modernization program.

This program includes Glen Raven's ultra modern circular office building here plus additions and new machinery in all of the company's eight plants.

Glen Raven employs 2,000 with an annual payroll of \$7,500,000 in its North Carolina plants. These plants are located at Glen Raven, Altamahaw, Asheville, Burnsville, Kinston, and Newland. Foreign operations consist of plants in Canada and Holland.

## Veterans Corner

Q — Can the VA assist me in locating my fugitive husband? I know he gets compensation.

A — The VA may forward mail to veterans although it cannot reveal their address without their consent. Send a letter to your husband to the VA office last known to have handled his claim. The VA will forward it to his address of record.

Q — Am I too late to file a claim for illness incurred while in military service?

A — No. A claim may be submitted to the VA at any time.



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