Copy of the letter sent to Mayor Gayle

Honorable Mayor C. A. Gayle
City Hall
Montgomery, Alabama

May 21, 1954

Dear Sir:

The Women's Political Council is very grateful to you and the City Commissioners for the hearing you allowed our representatives during the month of March, 1954, when the "city-bus-fare-increase case" was being reviewed. There were several things the Council asked for:

1. A city law that would make it possible for Negroes to sit from back toward front, and whites from front toward back until all the seats are taken.

2. That Negroes not be asked or forced to pay fare at front and go to the rear of the bus to enter.

3. That busses stop at every corner in residential sections occupied by Negroes as they do in communities where whites reside.

We are happy to report that busses have begun stopping at more corners now in some sections where Negroes live than previously. However, the same practices in seating and boarding the bus continue.

Mayor Gayle, three-fourths of the riders of these public conveyances are Negroes. If Negroes did not patronise them, they could not possibly operate.

More and more of our people are already arranging with neighbors and friends to ride to keep from being insulted and humiliated by bus drivers.

There has been talk from twenty-five or more local organizations of organizing a city-wide boycott of buses. For it is felt that forceful measures are necessary in bargaining for a convenience which is right for all bus passengers. We, the Council, believe that when this matter has been put before you and the Commissioners, that agreeable terms can be met in a quiet and reasonable manner to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Many of our Southern cities in neighboring states have practiced the policies we seek without incident whatever. Atlanta, Bees and Savannah in Georgia have done this for years. Even Mobile, in our own state, does this and all the passengers are satisfied.

Please consider this plan, and if possible, not favorably upon it, for even now plans are being made to ride less, or not at all, on our busses. We do not want this.

Respectfully yours,

The Women's Political Council

Ann Robinson, President

JUL 25 1954

Alabama State Lines, Inc.
POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF MONTGOMERY

Date: 12-1-55

Complainant. J.P. Flake (wm)

Address 27 No. Lewis St. Phone No.

Offense Misc. Reported By Same as above.

Address Phone No.

Date and Time Offense Committed 12-1-55 6:06 pm

Place of Occurrence In Front of Empire Theatre (On Montgomery Street)

Person or Property Attacked

How Attacked

Person Wanted

Value of Property Stolen Value Recovered

Details of Complaint (list, describe and give value of property stolen)

We received a call upon arrival the bus operator said he had a colored female sitting in the white section of the bus, and would not move back.

We (Day & Mixon) also saw her.

The bus operator signed a warrant for her. Rosa Parks, (cf) 624 Cleveland Court.

Rosa Parks (cf) was charged with chapter 6 section 11 of the Montgomery City Code.

Warrant #14254

THIS OFFENSE IS DECLARED:
UNFOUNDED
CLEARED BY ARREST
EXCEPTIONALLY CLEARED
INACTIVE (NOT CLEARED)

Officers F. B. Day D. W. Mixon

Division Patrol Time 7:00 pm
12-1-55
POLICE DEPARTMENT

Date of Arrest 12/1/33

Charges Robbery and Maiming

Disposition #10

Nationality Negro

Age 2 Height 5' Feet 3 Inches

Complexion Black

Build Small

Scars and Marks None

Employed by

Occupation

Remarks

Case No. 44/464

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

Arrested by Day & Minor

Residence 234 Cleveland Court

Place of Birth Tennessee

Date of Birth Feb. 4, 1913

Weight 140

Hair Black

Eyes Brown
Another Negro woman has been arrested and thrown in jail because she refused to get up out of her seat on the bus for a white person to sit down.

This is the second time since the Claudette Colbert case that a Negro woman has been arrested for the same thing. This has to be stopped.

Negroes have rights, too. If Negroes did not ride the buses, they could not operate, three-fourths of the riders are Negroes, yet we are arrested, or made to stand over eighty seats. If we do not do something to stop these arrests, they will continue. This must stop. We must be free, or your daughters, or mothers.

This woman's case will come up on Monday. I am, therefore, asking you to come to picket on Monday. Don't ride the buses to work, to town, to school, anywhere on Monday.

You are asked to stay out of school for one day if you have no other way to go except by bus.

You are also asked to stay out of town for one day. If you work, take sick, or work. But please, children and grown-ups, don't ride this bus at all on Monday. Please stay off of all buses.
Analyze a Written Document

Meet the document.

Type (check all that apply):
- Letter
- Speech
- Patent
- Telegram
- Court document
- Chart
- Newspaper
- Advertisement
- Press Release
- Memorandum
- Report
- Email
- Identification document
- Presidential document
- Congressional document
- Other

Describe it as if you were explaining to someone who can’t see it.
Think about: Is it handwritten or typed? Is it all by the same person? Are there stamps or other marks? What else do you see on it?

Observe its parts.

Who wrote it?

Who read/received it?

When is it from?

Where is it from?

Try to make sense of it.

What is it talking about?

Write one sentence summarizing this document.

Why did the author write it?

Quote evidence from the document that tells you this.

What was happening at the time in history this document was created?

Use it as historical evidence.

What did you find out from this document that you might not learn anywhere else?

What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this event or topic?
Complainant  Robert Clare, white male
Address       Montgomery City Lines Bus Inc. Phone No. 7321
Offense  Ch. 6, Sec. 11 Reported By Above
Address Phone No.
Date and Time Offense Committed 3/2/55-3:41 P.M.
Place of Occurrence Bibb and Commerce St's
Person or Property Attacked See Below
How Attacked
Person Wanted
Value of Property Stolen Value Recovered

We received a call at Bibb and Commerce St's, in regards to seeing a bus driver of the Highland Gardens Bus. When we arrived there we were informed by the driver of the Highland Gardens Bus that there were two colored females sitting opposite two white females, that refused to move back with the rest of the colored. They were sitting forward, left side, of the rear entrance. An unidentified colored female that was sitting in this disputed seat moved to the rear when we asked her to, but Claudette Colvin, age 15, colored female, refused. We then informed Claudette that she was under arrest. She struggled off the bus and all the way to the police car. After we got her in the police car she kicked and scratched me on the head, also kicked me in the stomach. Witnesses: Mr. Collins, Cameron, 623 W. Shawnee Dr., (WM) Mr. Glen N. Seabury, 1st Nat. Bank Bldg., Ph. 2-5911, (WM)

Unfounded
Cleared by Arrest
Exceptionally Cleared
Inactive (Not Cleared)

Officers Paul Headley-T. J. Ward
Division Patrol Time 5:25 P.M.
POLICE DEPARTMENT

Date of Arrest 3-2-55
Charges A+B D.C. Chb Sec 11 Cc.
Disposition

Nationality Negro
Age 15
Height
Feet
Inches
Complexion Dark
Build Med
Sears and Marks None

Employed by

Relatives
Mary Ann Calvin
622 E. Dancing

Montgomery, Alabama

Arrested by Ward - Headley
Residence 622 E. Dancing Drive

Place of Birth Birmingham, Ala.

Date of Birth Sept 5, 1939
Weight 115
Eyes Brown
Hair Black

Occupation School

Remarks: Tried in Juvenile Court by Judge Hill. Paid as a Delinquent and placed on probation as a Ward of the State pending good behavior. Appealed to Circuit Court 3-28-56. Case No. 416. Judge Hill ruled:

Judge Will Rule
Dear Professor:

I am so sorry about your book going wandering from place to place and wish there were something I could do or suggest. I am so anxious for it to get published and think it will be such a definite contribution.

Do let me know if Cameron and Kahn take it——they certainly have been smeared on the Nature book but I think they made a great contribution to the sanity of the country. I am sorry Ruberman was so recalcitrant, as I adfired him so much and Sweery too.

I am glad to see you associating with such respectable company as Charles TafT. I am surprised at him addressing the Teacher's Union - he must be better than I have given him credit for.

Your family [censored] (learning to write on an electric typewriter and it sometimes gets away from me) news sounds interesting and since you are such a versatile family what with musicians, politicians, teachers etc. you seem to be a combined threat on every front to the status quo.

Do you think you could get any of your students interested to the point of doing something about it in the way of contributions etc. to a case down here that I am very much interested in? Briefly it is this—about a month ago a group of high school pupils got on a bus here (colored pupils) and acted accordingly to the law, the Negroes filling up from the back and the whites from the front. Since there were many Negroes and few whites, a little fifteen year old colored girl, named Claudette Colvin, was seated in front of the side door. Two other Negro high school students were on the seat on the other side of the bus and a Negro woman who was pregnant was sitting by her. When the bus got down town, the bus driver ordered the Negroes to move to the back although there were no seats available as more white people got on. The other two Negro girls moved, and finally the pregnant woman moved after the bus driver made some Negro man get up and give her a seat, but the little 15 year old girl would not move. She simply kept saying "I done paid my dime, I aint got no right to move." (Sorry I cant help but be accurate in this) and then the bus driver stopped the bus and got two big white policemen and then a motor cycle cop and they got on the bus and threatened her and still she WOULD NOT MOVE and they had to take her off the bus, then they handcuffed her and took her to jail. The NAACP is appealing the case and need money for it, and also any support in a moral sense that can be obtained. I just cant explain how the little miss girl was so brave—it was a miracle and she cant explain it either—just says "I done paid my dime—I aint got no right to move." She looks like a little chicken that just hatched and is thin and so childish looking and inarticulate, but even after being deserted by her other companions she still WOULD NOT MOVE. In this setting and in this town and with four big, burly white men threatening her—isnt that amazing? They only hit her once—although when they brought her to the jail the policemen on duty there said all she need was a good "whupping." If you think any of your students would write to her or would send any money write to her Claudette Colvin—in Care of Mrs. Rosa Parks—Cleveland Court Apartments, Montgomery, Alabama. I know how many claims there are on the sympathy of mankind right now, but she is so brave.

Life here gets more interesting all the time and is really fascinating. The struggle that is going on is marvellous and so thrilling. Family all O.K.

Writing going badly as there is never any time. I am sending you a book that someone gave me about speech in the Ozarks—you like the Ozarks and you might like the book. Personally I think it dull.

Love to all the Macs—VA. D.
Minutes of Montgomery Improvement Association Founding Meeting, by U. J. Fields

5 December 1955
Montgomery, Ala.

The one-day bus boycott on Monday, 5 December, exceeded the organizers’ expectations. Only a few black passengers rode the buses. That morning, after her brief trial at the city recorder’s court, Judge John B. Scott found Rosa Parks guilty of violating the state segregation law and fined her fourteen dollars. Attorney Fred D. Gray appealed the verdict to the state’s court of appeals.1 That afternoon, Montgomery’s black leaders gathered at Rev. L. Roy Bennett’s Mt. Zion AME Zion Church to plan the evening mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church. A smaller group withdrew to Bennett’s study and, as these minutes by Rev. U. J. Fields indicate, created an organization called the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA).2 Rufus A. Lewis, a businessman and active member of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, moved that his pastor become chairman,3 and King was elected without opposition. After choosing other officers and forming committees, the group “agreed that the protest be continued until conditions are improved” and decided on the agenda for that evening’s mass meeting.

1. Fred David Gray (1930–), a native of Montgomery, was one of two black lawyers in the city. He earned his B.A. from Alabama State College (1951) and his LL.B. (1954) from Ohio’s Case Western Reserve University. Ordained as a teenager, Gray ministered to the Holt Street Church of Christ during the boycott. After he filed a federal suit challenging the constitutionality of the bus segregation laws, the local draft board reclassified Gray’s exempt status as a minister and ordered him to report for induction into the armed services. The situation was resolved only after the director of the Selective Service intervened, indefinitely postponing Gray’s induction. Gray served as a lawyer for both the local branch and the state conference of the NAACP and for the Montgomery Progressive Democratic Association. Gray later wrote an account of the boycott titled Bus Ride to Justice (1994).

2. L. Roy Bennett, pastor of Mt. Zion AME Zion Church, was president of Montgomery’s black Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance. On the day after Park’s arrest he had chaired a meeting of ministers and other leaders at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church to plan the one-day boycott. He was also among the ministers indicted for participating in the boycott. During the boycott Bennett was called to the First AME Zion Church in San Francisco, where he served until 1965.

Uriah J. Fields (1930–), born in Sunflower, Alabama, served as a chaplain’s assistant in the army during the Korean War. He received his B.A. (1955) and M.Ed. (1956) from Alabama State College and his M.Div. (1959) from Atlanta’s Interdenominational Theological Center. Inspired by Montgomery leader E. D. Nixon’s campaign for a local office, Fields ran successfully for student body president of Alabama State in 1954. When the boycott began Fields was interim pastor of Bell Street Baptist Church. He later published The Montgomery Story: The Unhappy Effects of the Montgomery Bus Boycott (1959).

3. Rufus Andrews Lewis (1906–), born in Montgomery, graduated from Fisk University. A librarian and athletic coach at Alabama State College from the mid-1930s to 1941, he later taught World War II veterans in night school. In 1958, after his wife’s death, Rufus began operating her family’s company, Montgomery’s largest black funeral business. A member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity and the NAACP, Lewis organized the Citizens Club, a social club that provided voter registration assistance and required members to be registered voters. Lewis also headed the Citizens Education Committee and traveled throughout Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi training voter registration workers. During the Montgomery bus boycott he headed the MIA’s transportation committee and co-chaired its committee on registration and voting.
A group of 18 persons met at the Mt. Zion A.M.E. Zion Church at 3 P.M. Officers were elected:

Chairman—Rev. M. L. King
Vice Chairman—Rev. Roy Bennett
Recording Sec.—Rev. U. J. Fields
Corresponding Sec.—Rev. E. N. French
Financial Sec.—Mrs. Erna Dungee
Treasurer—E. D. Nixon

NAME
The Montgomery Improvement Association
Moved and second that the 16 persons here and a suggestion that 9 names be brought in making 25 which constitute the Executive Committee
It was recommended that resolutions would be drawned up.
Resolution Committee & Recommendations

Rev. Abernathy Chairman
Rev Alford
Mr Gray

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4. Edgar Nathaniel French (1921–1979), born in Mount Gilead, North Carolina, received his B.A. from Livingstone College, M.Div. from Hood Theological Seminary, and M.A. from Columbia University. During the bus boycott French served as pastor of Hilliard Chapel AME Zion Church in Montgomery and was a member of the NAACP. He was indicted for his participation in the boycott. He later served as dean of Livingstone College and pastor of Trinity AME Zion Church in Greensboro, North Carolina.

5. Erna A. Dungee (ca. 1909–1984) was born in rural Alabama. She moved to Montgomery in the 1920s and graduated from the Montgomery Industrial Schools and Alabama State College. After teaching for several years in rural black schools she married Dr. A. C. Dungee, participated in voter registration efforts in the 1930s and 1940s, and helped found the Women’s Political Council. A member of the local NAACP, she served on the MIA’s finance committee.

6. Edgar Daniel Nixon (1899–1987) was born in Lowndes County, Alabama. As a Pullman porter (1923–1954) based in Montgomery, Nixon organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters’ local union and served for many years as its president. His union experience, his involvement in the March on Washington movement of the 1940s, and his observations of nonsegregated facilities inspired his fight for racial equality in Montgomery. He served terms as president of both the state and Montgomery NAACP and organized voting drives. After bailing Rosa Parks out of jail on 1 December, Nixon organized the meeting the next day of the city’s black leadership that endorsed the one-day boycott. His union contacts and organizing ability helped the MIA raise thousands of dollars in support of the boycott. Nixon was among the black leaders indicted for violating Alabama’s antiboycott law.

7. Ralph David Abernathy (1926–1990), born in Linden, Alabama, was chair of the MIA executive committee and was among the ministers indicted for their role in the boycott. He also chaired the MIA’s program and public relations committees, co-chaired the committee to establish a bank and savings association, and was a member of the strategy committee. He assumed leadership of the MIA (1960–1961) when King became co-pastor of Atlanta’s Ebenezer Baptist Church. Abernathy served as pastor of Montgomery’s First Baptist Church (1952–1961) and then of Atlanta’s West Hunter Street Baptist Church (1961–1990). Upon the formation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957 Abernathy became secretary-treasurer and took over as president following King’s death in 1968, in which capacity he served until 1977. He later wrote an autobiography, And the Walls Came Tumbling Down (1989).
5 Dec 1955

Mr. Nixon
Rev. Glasco

The president, Rev. M. L. King, attorney Gray and attorney Langford is on the committee. The program would be tape recorded at its Holt Street Baptist Church.

It was agreed that the protest be continued until conditions are improved.
Transportation Committee
Finance
It was passed that the recommendations from the committee be given to the citizens at the night meeting.

AGENDA

1. Opening Hymn — Onward Christian Soldier
2. Prayer — Rev Alford
3. Scripture — Rev. Fields
4. Occasion — Rev. King
   Presentation of Mrs. Parks — Rev. French
   Fred [Daniels]
5. Resolutions — Rev. Abernathy
   Vote on Recommendations
6. Offering — Rev Bonner
7. Closing Hymn — My Country Tis of Thee
8. Benediction — Rev. Roy Bennett

TD. AAGR-A-Ar: Box SG 8425.

8. Roseby James Glasco, Sr. (1916–1986), born in Muskogee, Oklahoma, earned his B.S. (1939) from Tuskegee Institute, B.D. (1941) from American Baptist Theological Seminary, and M.Th. (1951) from Central Baptist Theological Seminary. A member of the NAACP, Glasco served as director of the Alabama Negro Baptist Center (1951–1957) and as pastor of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Alabama (1953–1957). During the boycott he was an officer of the transportation committee, chaired the MIA's finance committee, served as secretary of its housing committee, and was a member of the committee on registration and voting. When the MIA hired a staff to run the office, Glasco became King's executive secretary. He was also among the indicted boycott leaders. He left Montgomery in 1957 to continue his work in religious education at churches in Kansas City and St. Louis. He was pastor of Mount Bethel Baptist Church in St. Louis from 1967 until his death.

9. Charles D. Langford (1912–), born in Montgomery, received his B.A. (1948) from Tennessee State University and his LL.B. (1952) and J.D. (1967) from Catholic University of America. Langford and Fred D. Gray provided legal services to King and the MIA until 1960. In 1968 Langford joined Gray's legal firm as a partner.

10. Willie Frank Alford (1915–1989), born in Flora, Alabama, had served several churches in Alabama before becoming pastor of Montgomery's Beulah Baptist Church in 1953, where he remained until his death. An underwriter with the Atlanta Life Insurance Company and a public school teacher, Alford was a member of the MIA's committees on resolutions and on relief. An indicted boycott participant, he advocated an early end to the boycott and later resigned from the MIA because of disagreements over tactics.

11. J. W. Bonner was pastor of the First CME Church of Montgomery. A member of the MIA's executive board, he also chaired its speakers' bureau and served on the committee charged with drafting the MIA's constitution. He was among those indicted for participating in the boycott.
Tell It to Old Grandma

Lesson From Gandhi

EDITOR, THE ADVERTISER—Not since the First Battle of the Marne has the taxi been put to so good use as it has this last week in Montgomery. However, the spirit animating our Negro citizens as they ride these taxis or walk from the heart of Cloverdale to Mobile Road has been more like that of Gandhi than of the "taxicab army" that saved Paris.

As you remember, Gandhi set out on his "Salt March" from Sabarmati to the sea — about 150 miles — as a boycott against the government's salt monopoly. He took with him only a loincloth, a bamboo walking stick, and a consuming idea. He vowed that he would not return until India was independent. Depending on their point of view, people laughed, sneered, or shook their heads, but 17 years later India was free. Passive resistance combined with freedom from hate is a power to be reckoned with.

The Negroes of Montgomery seem to have taken a lesson from Gandhi and our own Thoreau, who influenced Gandhi. Their own task is greater than Gandhi's, however, for they have greater prejudice to overcome.

One feels that history is being made in Montgomery these days, the most important in her career. It is hard to imagine a soul so dead, a heart so hard, a vision so blinded and provincial as not to be moved with admiration at the quiet dignity, discipline, and dedication with which the Negroes have conducted their boycott. Yes, there have been "incidents," but the actual damage inflicted has been rather less than that done by the Lanier students in their protests against the abolition of sororities and fraternities. And a great deal less than in most strikes.

Of course, the fewer "incidents," the stronger the case for the Negroes. Their cause and their conduct have filled me with great sympathy, pride, humility and envy. I envy their unity, their good humor, their fortitude, and their willingness to suffer for great Christian and democratic principles, or just plain decent treatment. The other side is willing to fight all right, say cruel things, and to make others suffer, but the case is such that it calls for no suffering or sacrifice on their parts. That weakens their case,
IT IS PAINFUL indeed that the most reasonable and moderate requests presented to the bus company and City Commission by the Rev. M. L. King were met with such a "Ye rebels! Dispersed!" attitude as voiced by their attorney and others. No, the law must be enforced with all quaherical zeal and inflexibility. Well, I say the law ought to be changed. And I recommend to those in authority Edmund Burke's Speech on Conciliation with the Colonies.

I am all for law and order, the protection of person and property against violence, but I believe the Constitution and Supreme Court of the United States constitute the supreme law of the land. I find it ironical to hear men in authority who are openly flouting this law speak proudly of law enforcement.

I also find it hard to work up sympathy for the bus company. I have ridden the buses of Montgomery ever since they have been running. I have ridden them from once to four times a day for the past 14 years until this October. Personally I have received courteous and friendly treatment. I consider many of the drivers my good friends. With no exception I have never seen any human being give such excellent service to the public as Mr. Alton Courtney. Mr. Ellot I. Newman and others are fine too. On the other hand, I have heard some bus drivers use the tone and manners of mule drivers in their treatment of Negro passengers. (Incidentally Negroes pay full fare for fourth class treatment.) Three times I've gotten off the bus because I could not countenance treatment of Negroes. I should have gotten off on several other occasions. Twice I have heard a certain driver with high seniority mutter quite audibly "black ape." I could not tell whether the Negro heard or not, but I did and felt insulted.

IT IS INTERESTING to read editorials on the legality of this boycott. They make me think of that famous one that turned America from a tea to a coffee drinking nation. Come to think of it, one might say that this nation was founded upon a boycott.

The likening of the bus boycott to those of the White Citizens Councils is misleading. The difference in the causes and the spirit behind each is vast. Just compare the speeches delivered at Selma and here in the City Hall with those at the Holt Street Baptist Monday night. Read them side by side as reported in The Advertiser—and blush. Joe Azbell's account of the Holt Street meeting is the best reporting I have ever read.

Instead of acting like sullen adolescents whose attitude is "Make me," we ought to be working out plans to span the gap between segregation and integration to extend public services—schools, libraries, parks—and transportation to Negro citizens. Ralph McGill's is the best advice I've heard: "Separation is on its way out, and he who tries to tell the people otherwise does them great disservice. The problem of the future is how to live with the change."

This may be a minority report, but a number of Montegomersians not entirely inconsequential agree with my point of view.

Montgomery JULIETTE MORGAN.
EDITOR, THE ADVERTISER—Several years ago I was the only white person occupying one of 10 vacant seats at the front of the bus. Standing back of them the car was packed with Negroes returning from the day's work. "Why," I asked the driver, "Can't you let these people sit down?" "I don't mind," he said, "but I'm afraid someone will criticize me."

In the years since this incident in which I have talked about the bus situation, I have yet to find one white person who feels that it is right that a Negro be made to stand while a white person may sit.

We in the South like to think of ourselves as a courageous people with the courage not only to face danger in war, but the moral courage to face issues and adverse public opinion. Isn't it time that those of us who really believe in Christian and democratic principles of consideration of others and of fair play to speak out and help create a public opinion which will make possible a solution of the present situation that will be satisfactory to all. The bus company must move within the framework of the law, but much improvement can be made if the public demands it.

Montgomery, MRS. T. B. RUTLEDGE.
Date: Jan. 21, 1956
Place: 701 N. McDonough St.
Occup: Manager Montgomery City Lines Offices

Interviewer: Anna Holden
Respondent: Mgr. J. H. Bagley
V. D. King, Chief Clerk

Sat., Jan. 21

General Statement: Arrived at offices about 11 AM and asked man at outside
desk if it were possible for me to speak to Mr. Bagley. He said that Bagley was
in the adjoining conference room talking to his "boss" (or one of his bosses, I am
not sure) and that he was pretty busy. I gave him my name and said that I would
wait a while. He called them on outer office phone, Bagley came out to see what
I wanted - I told him I would like to talk with him and that if he were busy perhaps
I had better make an appointment - He said he could talk with me then and wanted
to know what I wanted. I explained that I was working on a community study in
Montgomery and that I was interested in the bus situation as part of the total
picture and would like some information from him about it.

Bagley looked about in his mid-fifties, spoke like a Southerner - will try to
get more on his background. Showed wear and tear of the situation, physically,
but was under complete control - gave impression of tired.

Respondent: I am sorry, but we have orders not to talk about that anymore -
Everybody in the country has been down here asking questions and
printing articles and it hasn't helped matters any - We will never
get this thing settled if people don't quit coming down here.

Interviewer: I know you are tired or reporters and questions but I did want some
information that I don't believe I could get from anyone else
(shakes his head) I might also say that we are just trying to study
the community as it is and are not taking sides in the bus matter,
we are trying to find out what is happening -

Respondent: I can tell you that we have 67 buses and that 1/2 of them are
are laid up now, but that is about all.

Interviewer: That was part of what I wanted to ask you - We are interested in
going the old lines and the changes that have been made in the
routes and schedules - if you could give me that -

Respondent: We haven't made any changes except to drop the South Jackson and
Washington Park lines - those were our only buses going into
their part of town - they carried about 90% of our passengers.

Interviewer: I understood you had changed some of the other routes and that you
had added a new line out in the Peary Hills Homes section.

Respondent: I'll show you the maps and you can see those changes -

Interviewer: Would you have any figures you could give me that would show how the
traffic ran on different lines - that is how many passengers
you carried on how many buses you ran.

Respondent: No I couldn't give you anything like that - but you can figure it
out from the no. of buses we have laid up - that should tell you
how it ran.
Interviewer: One other point, I was wondering if you had had many complaints from Negroes about the bus service and treatment they got on the buses - that is before the Parks incident-

Respondent: Oh, we had had some - we have complaints on all the lines, but nothing to make us think they would do this -

Interviewer: Had there been any committees or delegations about treatment on the buses.

Respondent: Well, they came down after a guy was arrested last summer. They came down and asked us to change the seating arrangement and we told them to go to the city commission and change the city laws and go to the state legislature and change the state laws, but not to come to us. We don't have anything to do with making the laws - you see we operate under the city commission and they regulate the seating and what they ask for is against the law - We do what the law says and if they change the laws we will change - this is between them and the city commission and the laws of Ala., the bus company has nothing to do with it.

Interviewer: You mean this back to front and front to back seating they are asking for is against the law?

Respondent: Oh, yes, it's against the law. The city commission gave our drivers police power to enforce the law - We didn't ask for that, but they gave it to us and our drivers can have the power to arrest on the bus - they can't do it off the buses and they don't usually use it on the buses - they generally send for the regular police - In the case the girl was involved in, the sent for policemen to arrest her, the driver didn't do it -

Interviewer: The seating arrangements are the heart of the matter, aren't they?

Respondent: (Who has been backing away to get back to his business) They asked for more courtesy from the drivers too. But if you check the court record you will find that they got a statement from her saying the driver and the police were both courteous - That is in the record -

Interviewer: One more question -

Respondent: I think you have gotten enough now (makes excuses; leaves)

I was given maps of the old and new bus routes by a Mr. King who must be Asst. Mgr. to copy and began writing at a desk in another office adjoining the conference room - I don't know whether the same man who was in the office before was doing the talking with Bagley, but I could here snatches from time to time "white" and "niggers" and "nigras" - in practically every sentence. They talked about 45 min. and I remember these phrases coming thru the door.

"Well in Michigan -------

"You have them in your kitchens and around the house but that's not the same as sitting by them on the buses -------"

"If they can do it in South Georgia -------"
"Roosevelt"

"Well look what Truman did ---- he started all this-----"

When Bagley's "visitor" finally left he said in parting thru the door -- "Well if I can do anything more to help you just let me know.

One of the girls in the office wanted to know who he was and another said she was dying to know too and had gone out and looked at the tag to see where he was from - She said that he had a Montgomery number on his tag - After that Bagley and King had a closed door session and all I heard coming out was figures and figures - which what if $3.50 a month - other figures

Later Mr. King hung around a little when I was working, but didn't feel inclined to chat much. He said the situation was certainly "revolting", that all these people from everywhere were down here trying to find out what was going on and that they had bought up all the maps - cleaned them out and he was trying to plot the new routes to present to the city commission on Tues. and they could hardly ever get a map to draw the routes on -

I asked him about the survey the bus co. had taken to get reaction to the new rates - if they were any more complete report available than than what they had put in the paper - He replied that the Mayor had asked people to ride the buses to keep the niggers from winning and that they had been glad to help out -

Mr King

AHI: You haven't had any complaints about the new fares -

King:

On a few gripes - But you see people are glad to help out and they don't mind paying a little more - Montgomery fares were the lowest in the country anyway and now they are about up to par -

While I was waiting for a bus to leave the garage, I talked with a of the drivers who were sitting around waiting for their buses -

The first one I talked to looked about in his late 30's, told me he had been driving 19 years - did not attempt to identify him as far as name was concerned - I began talking with him as King edged away and started out by asking him whether business was picking up on the lines - He said Saturday used to be one of their best days but that this one had been pretty bad - Went into lengthy discussion of how everybody had cars now and wanted to drive them in town no matter how long they had had to look for a place to park and how many times they had to send their kids back to put money in the parking meters - He wouldn't be bothered with all that worry about the meters but people didn't seem to mind - They were car crazy and were going to drive their own cars no matter how much it cost them or how much trouble it was -

AHI: This boycott has hurt a lot, hasn't it?

Driver:

Sure has and I don't know what they're going to do about the fares when the Nigras start riding again - they can't pay that much but I don't think the co. will want to come down.
AH: I guess nobody ever thought it would last this long.

Driver: No - When I heard about it, I said well, it'll only be a day or two and they'll be riding again. But you'll have to hand it to 'em - they've done a good job with it.

AH: It's been way over a month now and they still seem to be going strong.

Driver: They'll come back though and I'll tell you what I'll do it lady - There are two things about Migras - first, they don't trust each other - none of 'em - and they'll to fighting pretty soon - You see lots of the money for this has been coming in form the outside and lots of it has been misappropriated - Well, people get tired of giving and they'll quit and then they'll begin getting in trouble in these misappropriated funds - And the second thing about Migras, they love their cars - they take good care of them and they're proud of them - You notice how they keep their cars shined and polished? Well, they won't keep this up when their cars begin to depreciate - they're running their own cars like taxis now and not getting anything for it and when their cars begin to get worn, they'll quit - When you have all kinds of people using your car like a taxi, they wear out the seat covers and get it dirty and they won't stand for that.

AH: Where is all this outside money coming from?

Driver: From all over - this NAACP is what started it. Now don't get me wrong lady. I'm for right and I think they have kicks, but they went about it wrong - They should have come to the bus co. and told them what they didn't like first.

AH: They didn't try to talk things over first?

Driver: No, they just quit riding the buses - Now I think that's o.k. if they had to do it that way, but they should have threatened the company first - If they had come down and threatened the company with a boycott - put it on the line that they would quit if they didn't get a better deal, the company would have come through, but they quit first and that's not right.

AH: This has been hard on the drivers - how many have been laid off?

Driver: I don't know, but lots - They're done pretty well with jobs - Some of the construction people have taken some on - how they aren't busy this time of year, they didn't have enough work to keep their own people busy till around March 1, when building picks up, but they've taken them on to help out - Lots of people are helping out - Surprised me how many have gotten jobs with business so bad.

AH: Is business bad now?

Driver: Things are slow this time of year but people are helping out - (launched off on another tangent on how bad the bus business is with so many people driving cars) mentioned a teacher who sometimes rides the bus but usually gets ride with friends who have car pool - cites this as instance of people who used to ride buses and now -
paying more for cars and making the bus co. suffer.

AH: That sounds almost like the car pools in the boycott.

Driver: The Nigras will be back though - they'll have to come back - I think they have their rights but this isn't doing them any good. You know the old diehards that didn't want them to have anything are dying off and the younger people coming along are getting educated and were beginning to see they are human too and they have their rights, but then they go and do something like this and it sets everything back - When they get something they act so important - the young ones especially - I was in a store the other day and a young Nigras just pushed me aside, wouldn't give me room - Now they shouldn't be so important, it ruins everything.

About this time, I noticed a driver leaving and asked him if he were going toward town - the driver I had been talking to walked away to talk to King and a driver who was going off duty asked me if I wanted a ride to town in his "old wreck" He spoke with Southern accent - looked about 37 or 38 (Note: saw him Feb. 10 at WCC rally)

AH: You mean you would deprive the bus co. of $15?.

Driver: Oh, it won't hurt them - Well on second thought, maybe it will - Maybe this will be the straw that breaks the camel's back.

AH: Are they still losing money, even with the new fares -

Driver: They're not in as bad shape as they were, but you see how many buses are laid up -

At this point, walking from the lot to the bus as we passed drivers coming in thru the gates - He asked them how much money they brought in and I think one said $27 and another said he was "up a few dollars that day" but still "under". They all shook their heads indicating things were bad -

AH: What about the franchise? I noticed in the paper they are still working on it -

Driver: They say it's almost through now, just some little something about the money - You know there's a national company that has the franchise and they have agreements with the local co. on taxes and percentages of what the co. takes in and they say they are still working on that angle - I don't know, but personally I wouldn't be surprised if they didn't sign it - I don't see how they can keep losing money like they are now - After all this is a business and you can't keep losing money.

AH: The paper sounded like it was pretty well agreed on -

Driver: Yes, but I still wouldn't be surprised if they just pull out - National Trailways had a bid in for the franchise and they withdrew it - It would take about a million dollars to set up a new company here and nobody wants to put that much money in a mess like this.
AH: It looks to me like the colored people are the ones to be pleased if they are the ones that bring in the money - from a business standpoint that is.

Driver: You'd think so and you'd think that if this company, being a national outfit and all would lean more that way than we do down here - Now the vice president for the South - Mr. Hern? - has been down here and he lives in Elmoke? or somewhere near Chicago - that's where their headquarters are - You should have heard him holler when he first found out about this - He was flat footed and talking just like the people down here. Now lady, I'll tell you the whole thing in a nutshell - they are just trying to cram this down the people's throats and do it in a hurry - and they won't swallow it - You look at all the progress they have made in the last 20 years by going slow. They could get it somewhere but they won't do it fast.

AH: I am thinking about the different places in the South where I have ridden the buses and what they do about seating - I know that in Atlanta where I lived several years they used this list served plan like they are asking for here.

Driver: It might work some places but I don't know about here - Now they say they do it down in Mobile and it works there, but the reason they say it works is that they have a real tough judge on the bench and when there's trouble he really throws the book at them.

AH: You don't think it could work here?

Driver: I just don't know - They are going to have to do something to get 'em back on the buses. Those buses are my bread and butter lady and I want this thing settled. I have been driving 15 years and I don't want to start looking for another job - I want to keep on driving the buses - (Let me off on corner at this point)
DATE: January 20, 1956
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE: 650 South Decatur Street
Job: Maid
Age: 45
Sex: Female

Respondent: Mrs. Charles, as Mr. Pierce told you last night, I am interested in getting directly from the people and not from the newspapers what is happening here and what has been happening here. He appreciate it if you'd tell me all about it.

Respondent: "No Miss Lee, I don't mind at all. I had heard about Rosa Parks getting put in jail because she would not get up and stand so a white man could sit down. Well, I got a little mad, you know how it is when you hear how white folks treat us. And after that day it just sort of slipped my mind. So things rocked on 'til that Sunday night, (the Sunday following Mrs. Parks' arrest) and the man next door who is a Mason went down to the Tijuana Club. When he came back, he came by my house and showed me these slips of paper that somebody gave out at the club. It said that one of our ladies had been arrested and the next time it may be you, so don't ride the buses monday."

"I felt good, I said this is what we should do. So I got on the phone and called all my friends and told them, and they said they wouldn't ride."

"I didn't have to work the next day and my insurance lady came by, and I asked her did she ride the bus and she said yes. Then I showed her the slip of paper. She said she hadn't seen one and asked me if she could have it so she could pass it along to her friends. That's why I don't have it. If I did, I'd let you see it."

Interviewer: Thank you very much for what you've told me, but now tell me this. Had anything like this ever happened before Mrs. Parks was arrested?

Respondent: "Oh yes, honey, this stuff has been going on for a long time. To tell you the truth, it's been happening every since I came here before the war (World War II). But here in the last few years they've been getting worse and worse. When you get on the bus they yell: "Get on back there"(very emphatic and expressive person), and half of the time they wouldn't take your transfer, then they make you get up so white men could sit down where there were no seats in the back. And you know about a year ago they put one of the high school girls in jail cause she wouldn't move. They should have "boy-cotted" the buses then. But we are sure fixing 'em now and I hope we don't ever start back riding. It'll teach them how to treat us. We people, we are not "dogs" or cats."
I cannot help but remember how pleased I was when I learned about the "boycott". I was when I learned about the "boycott" I was downtown when some landed me one of their leaflets, and I said "At last it has come."

Interviewer: Since it has come, hasn't it had any affect upon you business?

Respondent: "None at all. I have been in this business since 1931 and I know quite a few white people and none of those I've sent employees to have fired any (employees) since this protest started. I have not had a single case, where a person reported having been fired because of the protest, and I've only heard of one. I heard that one lady asked her maid did she ride the bus and when the maid said that she did not, the lady said that she could not use her anymore; however, the maid was hired immediately after leaving by the next door neighbor. It may interest you to know that plenty white persons are giving money personally. I don't know of any who have given through organizations.

Interviewer: Speaking of organization, do you belong to any which aids in the movement?

Respondent: "Why yes. I'm a member of the Sara Anderson Charity Club. I'm president of the lend-a-hand club and of the Builder's Club. We have given and will give as long as it is necessary. I also belong to the Omega Five which has contributed, and of course, I give in the special collection at my church."

Interviewer: Well, tell me how do you think this will affect future relations between Negroes and whites?

Respondent: "For one thing, it is favorable toward the colored people. Sales are falling off as well as the bus company's great loss and this is making the white's aware of the strength of the colored people. The colored people have learned, on the other hand, where the white man can be hurt most - in his pockets. To show you what I mean. it was rumored that Mrs. Parks had been fired and in one day approximately 100 accounts were closed at "Montgomery Fair", (very large department store), and a similar thing happened at one of the dairy companies. The president of the dairy company made a public statement that he did not say that Negroes should ride the busses. The people started back buying milk and Mrs. Parks was brought back from the smaller store to the main Montgomery Fair.

Interviewer: About how long do you think this protest will last?

Respondent: "I really don't know, however, I don't feel that there will ever be a complete recovery. You see people are buying cars now as never before and more people will ride with neighbors. People are getting to know more people, therefore, people who usually go home alone won't fear asking people about their direction and giving them a lift."
"You people started it way back in slavery. If you had'd wanted segregation, you shouldn't get us all mixed up in color."

'Beatrice, you don't know anything about that, and it's not happening now.'

'That's what you say. I read about, and my aunt told me about it, and right now I can sit on my porch and when it starts getting dark. I can look down the street by those trees and see colored women get in the cars with policemen. And what about that colored boy who had to leave town 'cause that white woman cut here was going crazy about him. So you can't tell me that it's over.'

'You know Beatrice, Clyde Sellers (City Commissioner) is a very good friend of mine.'

"You sure have a poor friend."

'I'm going to tell you this, Beatrice, because I know you can keep your mouth shut. In the White Citizen Council meeting, they discussed starving the maids for a month. They asked me to lay our maid off for a month, they'll be glad to ride the buses again. If they do it I still want you to come one day a week."

"Well, Mrs. I just won't come at all and I sure won't starve. You see my husband is a railroad man, my son and daughter have good jobs, and my daddy keep plenty of food on his farm. So I'm not worried at all, 'cause I was eating before I started working for you."

'Beatrice, that ole Rev. King and Ole Greitz should be run out of town. They keep this mess going. You know I heard that Rev. King is going to take all your money and go buy a Cadillac with it. He's going from door to door asking for $2, Beatrice don't you give him $2.

'The other day you told me a lie, but if he did, it ain't no more for me to pay $2 than it is for you to pay $3.50 for that White Citizen thing.'

'And you know Beatrice, Ole Rev. King want people to go to church together and I just can't see it.'

'I didn't ask you to come to my church and I ain't particular about going to yours, but a church is a house of worship and the doors should be open to everybody. You don't want to go to church with us when down in the 5th Ward until a couple of years ago, you couldn't go in or leave after dark 'cause all those white men and women were down there after those colored people. (Intimate racial mixing) . . . (She stood there looking at me like a sick "chicken"), then hurried off, talking about she had to go to town. She didn't say anything after that, I came right home and called Rev. Abernathy, my pastor and told him about them talking about firing the maids. You know our pastors tells us what to do. They lead us in a Christian way. We just act nice and quiet.'
Interviewer: You have been very helpful, however, there are just two more questions. I'd like to ask you.

Respondent: "Go right a head, I'm glad to help."

Interviewer: Are there any colored people against this thing?

Respondent: "Oh yes, there is Rev. Wright's wife. She talks about 'these "niggers" don't know what they are doing, they are going to get in trouble.' She's with the white folks. All she needs is for someone to fix her back end up with a nice board so she can't sit for a while and she'll be alright. I'm going to give you her address so you can talk to her. You'll have to be sneaky to get the truth out of her though."

Interviewer: "Tell me how do you think things will be between white and colored when the colored start back riding the buses?

Respondent: "I tell you the truth, I think for a while they'll be very nice 'cause they'll be getting out of the hole, but after that they'll probably get worse than before, 'cause they are building up hatred in their hearts right now. That's why I go to all the meetings and pay what I can so we can stay off the buses. I didn't ride but a little when they were running. Most times except one or two my boss picks me up."

Interviewer: Mrs. Charles, you have been most helpful, and I appreciate your taking time out from your work to tell me all about this movement.

Respondent: " Didn't mind at all and if I can help any more do come back."

Interviewer: Thank you very kindly. Good-day.

General Statement: Mrs. Charles keeps all Negro papers and Magazine in order to keep up with what the presses say about Montgomery. She sends clippings to her children in California. She also subscribes to one of the Montgomery dailies.

She is a tall stately woman; expressions are very impressive; appearance neat, complexion dark-brown.
DATE: January 19, 1956
PLACE: 717 So. Holt Street
AGE: 65-70
SEX: Female
OCCUP: Run's an Employment Bureau

INTERVIEWER: Willie M. Lee
RESPONDENT: Mrs. Mary Kinney

As it is stated in the letter from Mr. Pierce, I am doing research on the bus protest. I have been reading the newspaper, but I feel that they are a bit biased and incomplete, therefore, I came down here to get information directly from the people involved. I'll appreciate it very much if you'd tell me just what has been happening and what is happening now.

Well, having my business here in my home. I don't ride the buses much and even less now than I did ten years ago when I was younger; however in my business, I deal with people from all walks of life, so I usually know what's going on most of the time. From my own experiences over a period of years I have witnessed several incidents wherein the bus drivers were quite nasty to Negro patrons, and I've also witnessed very nice bus drivers. In fact the drivers in this vicinity are very nice to me. Several times they've pulled away from the stop, but will wait across the street if the should see me coming, and I always thank them with a smile because he didn't have to stop. On the other hand, there are two cases I remember very distinctly. In the first case I was going out Maxwell Road, and there were four young colored ladies sitting on the first two horizontal seats and two white airmen got on the bus. The bus driver yelled 'let me have these seats.' There were no other seats in the back, so the girls had to stand. The airmen were very much embarrassed. They didn't care to take the seats, and said do every one could hear them; 'I never heard of such . . . women stand while men sit.'

In the next case, the two seats across the aisle from a colored lady was vacant, but the driver demanded that she move, because a white man could not sit opposite a colored lady. In this case, however, there was a seat or at least part of a seat back. I say part of a seat because the woman sitting there weighed around 250 pounds which means she left only about half of the second seat vacant, and the woman whose the driver asked to move back weighed nearly 200. Anyway she refused to move. The driver called her a few nasty names and asked her to come up to the front of the bus.

She told him, 'If you want me, you'll have to come back here, and if you do, the undertaker sure will dress you.' The other people on the bus told her to move back that there was no use in getting in trouble over something like that. So she finally moved back.

Now about five years ago there was a teacher by the name of Wingraye who had a teen-age daughter to be arrested because she refused to move. I don't know exactly how the case came out, but I do know they left town.

So you see, things have been piling up over a period of year, and these people are not going to give up easily. The people are still on levels of helping. Even the drunks will not ride the buses. They say they'll walk and use bus fare far more whiskey
I cannot help but remember how pleased I was when I learned about the "boycott." I was when I learned about the "boycott" I was downtown when some landed me one of their leaflets, and I said "At last it has come."

Interviewer: Since it has come, hasn't it had any affect upon you business?

Respondent: "None at all. I have been in this business since 1931 and I know quite a few white people and one of those I've sent employees to have fired any (employees) since this protest started. I have not had a single case, where a person reported having been fired because of the protest, and I've only heard of one. I heard that one lady asked her maid did she ride the bus and when the maid said that she did not, the lady said that she could not use her anymore; however, the maid was hired immediately after leaving the next door neighbor. It may interest you to know that plenty white persons are giving money personally. I don't know of any who have given through organizations."

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Interviewer: Well, tell me how do you think this will affect future relations between Negroes and whites?

Respondent: "For one thing, it is favorable toward the colored people. Sales are falling off as well as the bus company's great loss and this is making the white's aware of the strength of the colored people. The colored people have learned, on the other hand, where the white man can be hurt most - in his pockets. To show you what I mean. it was rumored that Mrs. Parks had been fired and in one day approximately 100 accounts were closed at "Montgomery Fair", (very large department store), and a similar thing happened at one of the dairy companies. The president of the dairy company made a public statement that he did not say that Negroes should ride the buses. The people started back buying milk and Mrs. Parks was brought back from the smaller store to the main Montgomery Fair.

Interviewer: About how long do you think this protest will last?

Respondent: "I really don't know, however, I don't feel that there will ever be a complete recovery. You see people are buying cars now as never before and more people will ride with neighbors. People are getting to know more people, therefore, people who usually go home alone won't fear asking people about their direction and giving them a lift."
"Oh, I do know that these buses are financed by a concern in Chicago and that the franchise is out in March, so something will have to be done before then because stockholders begin to withdraw their money when they start losing as they have been doing here.

Interviewer: You have been very helpful and I appreciate it very much, but what I want to know now is, who are the leaders of this movement?

Respondent: "Well the ministers are. This is the first time in history I suppose where all of the minister have joined together for a worthy cause for the people."

Interviewer: I see. Now what are they striving for?

Respondent: "They want Negro bus drivers in areas where there is a large number of colored people; courteous drivers and a first come first serve policy."

Interviewer: What does this first come first serve policy involve?

Respondent: "They want the colored people to start in the back and fill up toward the front and the whites from the front toward the back and that no person should have to get up and give his seat to someone else."

Interviewer: Are there any colored people still riding the buses?

Respondent: "From what I hear, and my source is very reliable because I deal with a wide range of people, there are very few persons still riding, and I feel that if their conscious don't bother them, let them ride."

Interviewer: Speaking of bothering people, I read in the papers that there are goon squads operating to keep people from riding the buses. Do you know anything about them?

Respondent: "Those are Sellers (city Commissioner)'s lies. He'll do anything to save his face. Everything they do back fires. After hearing about the boycott and that there was going to be trouble when it started he placed policemen behind each bus. The colored people thought they were there to keep them from riding the buses, so you can see what that did. When the newspapers publicized it, it served to let people know about who had not heard about it."

Interviewer: I thank you very much for your cooperation, Mrs. Kinney, you have been most helpful.

General Statement: Mrs. Kinney neatly dressed, dignified lady with silvery hair. Has warm personality and is easy to talk with.
NEW BLOW AT JIM CROW

Lending weight to the contention of a White Citizens Council spokesman that "they're gonna come down here and git us", a Federal administrative agency on Nov. 25th took a cue from the Supreme Court and struck down segregation on interstate railway and bus facilities.

In an order effective Jan. 12th, the Interstate Commerce Commission by an 8-1 vote ordered rail and bus companies to remove racial restrictions on interstate passengers in coaches and terminals. The originator of the "separate but equal" policy 62 years ago, the I.C.C. had ordered integration of Pullman cars in 1941 and dining cars in 1950. Reaction in Alabama came in two forms. Alabama Public Service Commissioner Jimmy Hitchcock quickly asserted that Alabama's transportation laws requiring separation of races will still govern Alabama's facilities. The other reaction came in the form of an unpublicized directive from the Southern Railway on Dec. 12th ordering removal of "colored" and "white" signs from waiting room entrances in at least Birmingham's Terminal Station and the Attalla station, which serves Gadsden.

This writer inquired of the change from an Attalla station agent who stated that they had been instructed to replace the old signs with "Interstate" and "Intrastate". The new signs had not been put up, he explained, because "the doors just aren't wide enough." Obviously, the plan would call for three waiting rooms, one for interstate and two for colored and white intrastate passengers. When asked how this would be managed with only two rooms available, the agent replied, "You figure it out!" This writer was then loaded with other passengers onto a mixed coach bound for Birmingham.

Compliance with the new I.C.C. order can be readily determined by the absence of the signs above train and bus station doorways on Jan. 12th. We ask recipients of the Newsletter to write the state office on what course their local services take at this time and a report will be carried in the next issue.
- 2 -

PROGRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY ADMISSION SUIT

The appeal of the University of Alabama admissions case was argued in New Orleans before the Circuit Court of Appeals on Dec. 7th. The decision of the three judges is expected at any time. Barring a highly unlikely negative decree, Negro students are prepared to enroll in Tuscaloosa as well as in at least one of the outlying Extension Centers on Feb. 1st.

MOVE UNDERFOOT TO ABOLISH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A reliable source has stated that for the past several weeks certain state legislators have been working quietly, building up support among colleagues for the Boutwell "Freedom of Choice" plan.

This plan which embodies as one of its features provision for the abolition of the public school system died on the House calendar at the end of the last regular session. In reviving the issue proponents hope to muster the support of a 2/3 majority of both Houses, which would enable them to introduce it in the special session of the Legislature opening on Jan. 3rd.

MONTGOMERY BUS PROTEST AT A GLANCE

On Thursday evening, Dec. 1st, Mrs. Rosa Parks, a Negro Montgomery seamstress, was arrested for violation of segregation laws when she refused to give her seat to a white person. Four days later, on Monday, approximately 50,000 Montgomeryans protested, and the transit company suffered a loss of practically all of its 75% Negro patronage. Three weeks later the protest showed no signs of weakening.

For what is probably the largest Negro demonstration for civil rights in the history of the South, there is no simple explanation. However, with resort to question and answer form certain observations will be made without claim for comprehensiveness.

What caused the protest? Accumulated grievances against the bus company over a period of many years, with the arrest of Mrs. Parks serving as the precipitating emotional stimulus. To conclude that her arrest was the sole cause is a gross overstatement.

What accounts for the near unanimity? Doubtless each Negro in Montgomery has suffered personally from bus company practices, giving each an individual motivation.
What do the Negroes ask? As adopted at the first mass meeting: (1) More courtesy from bus operators, (2) seating on a "first come, first serve" basis with "Negroes sitting from rear to front and whites from front to rear" without reserved sections for either, and (3) employment of Negro drivers on predominantly Negro lines as driver vacancies occur. The segregation law is not involved.

What is the bus company's answer to each? (1) No recent reports to the company of discourtesy, although they are welcome, (2) failure to reserve seats for whites or Negroes would not fulfill legal "separate but equal" requirements and, therefore, the company is "helpless" between the boycott and the law, and (3) the company will not hire Negro drivers within the next ten years or more.

What has been the role of the City Commission? It has appointed a "representative" citizens committee to make recommendations to it. This committee appointed on Dec. 17th was composed of eight Negroes and ten whites (reported in the press as 8 and 8). The protest group was permitted to select only six of the eight. They bitterly opposed the selection of one of the other two personalities. The white members include "a labor representative" (who turned out to be the president of the bus company local), a prominent minister (G. Stanley Frazier, famous as one of the founders of Methodism's pro-segregation faction) and Luther Ingalls (organizer of Montgomery's White Citizens Council).

What has been the role of the Alabama Council? When it became apparent during the first week of the protest that the bus company, the City Commission and the Negro leadership, each were hesitant to approach the other, Rev. Thomas R. Thrasher, of the Episcopal Church, Pres. H. C. Trenholm, of Alabama State, and Rev. Robert E. Hughes, A.C.H.R. Executive Director, offered the "good offices" of the Council to arrange negotiations. This resulted in the conferences subsequently held. One A.C.H.R. member, Lutheran Pastor Robert Graetz, has sent all ministers in the city weekly newsletters on factual developments. Other members are working indirectly.

What has been the result of the conference? Presentation of positions previously unclarified. Assurance of more courteous treatment by bus drivers. Release of frustration (the five instances of violence occurred during the first week before negotiations got under way).
What is the prospect of further usefulness of the committee as presently constituted? Practically none. Participation by Negro leaders in this particular committee will probably end at any time.

How are Negroes getting to work? Negro taxis charge bus fare rates (10c), some 200 car owners haul without charge from pick-up stations and cruise zones in early morning and late afternoon (one Negro service station donates gas), and white employers transport their maids.

What is the role of law enforcement agencies? Many instances of indirect and direct intimidation. Sudden and strict enforcement of minimum cab fares (45c), closely "tailing" pick-up cars, etc. A college student was arrested for "pulling a Negro lady off of a bus." Actually, he was assisting her down from the curb as they were crossing the street, at which time a bus arrived on the corner. She was dressed in a housecoat and personally arranged for his defense. A sheriff's officer retained a minister at the jail for half an hour and when unable to prove he was operating a "taxi without a license" proceeded to preach a sermon on Biblical segregation.

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How long will the Negroes continue? The answer was given at a recent mass meeting - "Until next summer or a year from now if necessary."

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What is the role of the press? You may answer this yourself by noting the differences between this account and those you have read in your local newspapers. The Advertiser is generally pro-bus company, but has not been bitter toward the Negro position editorially.

And finally, does the state law prohibit the Negro seating proposal? If so, the City of Mobile has been violating the law for 15 years. According to Mayor Joseph P. Langan, there have never been any complaints by whites or Negroes, that he is aware of, claiming unequal facilities because no section of seats was reserved for either race.

STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEET

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2. Send the State Office names of persons who would be sincerely interested in receiving the Newsletter free each month.

DATE: January 23, 1956
PLACE: 1405 Marguerite Street
AGE: 55-60
SEX: Female
Occ: Music Instructor

INTERVIEWER: Willie M. Lee
RESPONDENT: Mrs. Edna King

Interviewer: I'm Willie Lee, and I came from Nashville to study this bus protest since newspaper reports are not always reliable. I go into different neighborhoods and ask persons about the protest. In this block I chose your house, so I'd appreciate it if you'd tell me all about the protest. . . . What has happened and what is happening now.

Respondent: "I know very little about it except what I've read in the papers, however, I can tell you how I feel about it. I don't think the people know what they are doing. They want such this thing in the wrong way and secondly, they asked for too much. They knew the southern tradition and they should have asked for one thing instead of being like the dog with a bone and his shadow. He was so greedy that he tried to get the bone his shadow had and he ended up with out a bone. I said that to say, Miss, asking for three things they are not going to get anything.

Interviewer: What three things did they ask for?

Respondent: "Oh, they want first come, first serve. Negro bus drivers and more courteous white drivers."

Interviewer: Which do you think they could have asked for?

Respondent: "I think first come, first serve is all they should have asked for. I'm for that if they do it in the right way. I was embarrassed once on the bus. Two white men asked me to get up, and I didn't move, then the bus driver asked me up. I got off the bus, went down to the bus company and reported the driver, and I asked the manager where colored people suppose to sit. He was very nice and that driver was taken off the Jackson Street line. And since this was started, I started through Oak Parks and the policeman yelled 'Good Lord, don't come through here.' If my daughters had no pleaded so I would have kept on through. When I got home I called Sellers and his secretary told me that he did not handle that information, so she gave me the name of the person to see. When he first started talking he said:

'Yes man, no, man.'

But when I said, I'm a colored citizen; his tone became very indignant. I told him I was a good citizen. I owned almost a block out here, have been living here all my life and have been going through "Oak's Park". I pay taxes just like white citizens, and I wanted to know why? I wouldn't go through that Park.

He said: 'Niggers can go through that park.'

"I asked him to repeat what he said, and he said the same thing again. I was really angry by then, so I told him that I am not a nigger and that he was acting more like a nigger. Then he apologised saying that he said Negro and I must have misunderstood him. I haven't had any more trouble coming through the Park since then."
Interviewer: You have mentioned several times that the people did not go about this thing in the right way. What do you suggest they should have done?

Respondent: "Well, in the first place the ministers have no business in this and turning the church into a political organization. Some academic building over on the Campus (Alabama State Teachers College) should be used for meetings and the white and colored intellectuals could decide this thing. These poor white folks and some of these ministers don't know what they are doing. The principals and teachers should run it. They should get together discuss it then vote on it and do what ever the majority says. I sure wish it would end. I'm tired of it. I've lost about half of my music students. And other business people I've talked to are losing too. I bet the minister wouldn't want the members of their churches to do to them what they are doing to the bus company. I wonder how they would feel if their member refuse to come to church and to pay dues. They wouldn't like it at all. And the people are only holding themselves down by not riding the buses. They should go on and end this thing. I'm sick of it. I'm losing money everyday.

Those minister should stop telling people what to do. They should let the buses run and let those ride who want to. The first day they struck, my boy was fixing to get on a bus and a lady dared him to get on, she said that she would out him if he did. Way out on the out-skirts of town, I have heard that quite a few folks have been beaten up, but I don't know how true it is. I just don't believe in telling people what to do. I think for myself, and if I want to ride a bus, I ride. That's why I don't go to any of the meetings because I'll speak my mind. You know I'm a member of Rev. King's church. I play the organ. One of my friends told me that if I want to a meeting and told them how I felt, that they would throw me out. So I take no part in it. This is a democratic country and I have a right to say what I want to. If the people could hear me now, I know they'd crucify me, but I've always thought for myself and I teach my children to think for themselves. My daughters came home one day and said;

"Mother I'm never going to buy from the Fair (Montgomery Fair Department Store) again. The people are going to boycott it because they fired Mrs. Parks."

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Interviewer: Do you think this is favorable to the Colored people at all?

Respondent: "Well, yes, it is. For one thing it shows that they can stick together. What ever they want I'm for them because it's my race however, like I said, I would have done things differently. My church, Dexter Avenue Baptist and most of the clubs play big parts
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**Interviewer:** What do you think the accomplishments will be?

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**Interviewer:** I see. Well tell me this, how do whites in stores and various place treat you since this thing started?

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Interviewer: It has been a pleasure talking with you, Man, and I appreciate you helpfulness. Thank you very much.
NEW BLOW AT JIM CROW

Lending weight to the contention of a White Citizens Council spokesman that "they're gonna come down here and git us", a Federal administrative agency on Nov. 25th took a cue from the Supreme Court and struck down segregation on interstate railway and bus facilities.

In an order effective Jan. 12th, the Interstate Commerce Commission by an 8-1 vote ordered rail and bus companies to remove racial restrictions on interstate passengers in coaches and terminals. The originator of the "separate but equal" policy 62 years ago, the I.C.C. had ordered integration of Pullman cars in 1941 and dining cars in 1950. Reaction in Alabama came in two forms.

Alabama Public Service Commissioner Jimmy Hitchcock quickly asserted that Alabama's transportation laws requiring separation of races will still govern Alabama's facilities. The other reaction came in the form of an unpublished directive from the Southern Railway on Dec. 12th ordering removal of "colored" and "white" signs from waiting room entrances in at least Birmingham's Terminal Station and the Attalla station, which serves Gadsden.

This writer inquired of the change from an Attalla station agent who stated that they had been instructed to replace the old signs with "Interstate" and "Intrastate". The new signs had not been put up, he explained, because "the doors just aren't wide enough." Obviously, the plan would call for three waiting rooms, one for interstate and two for colored and white intrastate passengers. When asked how this would be managed with only two rooms available, the agent replied, "You figure it out!" This writer was then loaded with other passengers onto a mixed coach bound for Birmingham.

Compliance with the new I.C.C. order can be readily determined by the absence of the signs above train and bus station doorways on Jan. 12th. We ask recipients of the Newsletter to write the state office on what course their local services take at this time and a report will be carried in the next issue.
PROGRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY AdMISSION SUIT

The appeal of the University of Alabama admissions case was argued in New Orleans before the Circuit Court of Appeals on Dec. 7th. The decision of the three judges is expected at any time. Barring a highly unlikely negative decree, Negro students are prepared to enroll in Tuscaloosa as well as in at least one of the outlying Extension Centers on Feb. 1st.

MOVE UNDERFOOT TO ABOliSH PUBLIC SCHOOLs

A reliable source has stated that for the past several weeks certain state legislators have been working quietly, building up support among colleagues for the Boutwell "Freedom of Choice" plan.

This plan which embodies as one of its features provision for the abolition of the public school system died on the House calendar at the end of the last regular session. In reviving the issue proponents hope to muster the support of a 2/3 majority of both Houses, which would enable them to introduce it in the special session of the Legislature opening on Jan. 3rd.

MONTGOMERY BUS PROTEST AT A GLANCE

On Thursday evening, Dec. 1st, Mrs. Rosa Parks, a Negro Montgomery seamstress, was arrested for violation of segregation laws when she refused to give her seat to a white person. Four days later, on Monday, approximately 50,000 Montgomerians protested, and the transit company suffered a loss of practically all of its 75% Negro patronage. Three weeks later the protest showed no signs of weakening.

For what is probably the largest Negro demonstration for civil rights in the history of the South, there is no simple explanation. However, with resort to question and answer form certain observations will be made without claim for comprehensiveness.

What caused the protest? Accumulated grievances against the bus company over a period of many years, with the arrest of Mrs. Parks serving as the precipitating emotional stimulus. To conclude that her arrest was the sole cause is a gross overstatement.

What accounts for the near unanimity? Doubtless each Negro in Montgomery has suffered personally from bus company practices, giving each an individual motivation.
What do the Negroes ask? As adopted at the first mass meeting: (1) More courtesy from bus operators, (2) seating on a "first come, first serve" basis with "Negroes sitting from rear to front and whites from front to rear" without reserved sections for either, and (3) employment of Negro drivers on predominantly Negro lines as driver vacancies occur. The segregation law is not involved.

What is the bus company's answer to each? (1) No recent reports to the company of discourtesy, although they are welcome, (2) failure to reserve seats for whites or Negroes would not fulfill legal "separate but equal" requirements and, therefore, the company is "helpless" between the boycott and the law, and (3) the company will not hire Negro drivers within the next ten years or more.

What has been the role of the City Commission? It has appointed a "representative" citizens committee to make recommendations to it. This committee appointed on Dec. 17th was composed of eight Negroes and ten whites (reported in the press as 8 and 8). The protest group was permitted to select only six of the eight. They bitterly opposed the selection of one of the other two personalities. The white members include "a labor representative" (who turned out to be the president of the bus company local), a prominent minister (G. Stanley Frazier, famous as one of the founders of Methodism's pro-segregation faction) and Luther Ingalls (organizer of Montgomery's White Citizens Council).

What has been the role of the Alabama Council? When it became apparent during the first week of the protest that the bus company, the City Commission and the Negro leadership, each were hesitant to approach the other, Rev. Thomas R. Thrasher, of the Episcopal Church, Pres. H. C. Trenholm, of Alabama State, and Rev. Robert E. Hughes, A.C.H.R. Executive Director, offered the "good offices" of the Council to arrange negotiations. This resulted in the conferences subsequently held. One A.C.H.R. member, Lutheran Pastor Robert Graetz, has sent all ministers in the city weekly newsletters on factual developments. Other members are working indirectly.

What has been the result of the conference? Presentation of positions previously unclarified. Assurance of more courteous treatment by bus drivers. Release of frustration (the five instances of violence occurred during the first week before negotiations got under way).
What is the prospect of further usefulness of the committee as presently constituted? Practically none. Participation by Negro leaders in this particular committee will probably end at any time.

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on your calendar.
National News Editor
TIME Magazine
TIME & LIFE Building
9 Rockefeller Plaza
New York 20, New York

Subject: Bus protest in Montgomery, Alabama

Dear Sir:

I am writing this letter to you, because I have long been impressed with the fair and unbiased treatment you give in your news stories. (I am a regular cover-to-cover TIME reader.) I have been particularly impressed with the bold and courageous way in which you have handled the extremely touchy subject of race relations.

There is a story in the making here in Montgomery, Alabama, that may be just as explosive as the Till case, before it is over and done. I am referring to the protest which the Negroes (and many whites) of Montgomery are making against the local bus company. Undoubtedly you have received some reports about this over the AP and UP wires.

What you may not know is that only part of the story is actually reaching the public through the normal channels of communication. The local newspapers have consistently printed one-sided stories about the developments in this protest. They have at times (purposely, or otherwise) omitted pertinent facts that would have put a much more favorable light on what the Negroes are asking for.

In addition, all of the "law-enforcement" agencies in the city and county have been doing everything possible to break the back of our campaign. Laws that have rarely been enforced are now being pulled out of the books and being used against the Negroes (but, we hear, not against the whites). For example, hundreds of people double-park on the downtown streets while waiting for parking places or while waiting for a passenger to get out, do some quick shopping and return. Recently, however, many people have been charged and fined for blocking traffic, if they happened to be picking up or letting out Negroes.
I am a white Lutheran minister, serving a Negro congregation. I cannot even give my own members a ride in my car without fear of being stopped by the police and accused of running a taxi. On last Monday Sheriff Butler himself watched me put several Negroes in my car, while parked in a legal parking zone. Then he stopped me, accused me of running a taxi, took me in for questioning, searched my car (without showing me a warrant or indicating that he had one), and finally released me. The same thing is being done over and over in this city every day.

If you want a good look at the way a one-race press and a one-race police force band together to discredit fifty thousand people who are tired of being treated like animals on the city buses, and who are registering their feelings by refraining from riding those buses, then I urge you to send a reporter to Montgomery as soon as possible.

There are many more discriminatory factors that have been introduced into this whole picture, in some cases by rather high officials. But the worst factor of all is that it has become almost impossible to tell our story to the people of the city without having it distorted and turned against us.

For further information, you may contact:

Dr. K. L. King, 309 S. Jackson Street, Phone 3-5179
Pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Phone 3-3970

Attorney Fred Gray, 2307 W. Jeff Davis Street, Phone 2-0625
Office - 113 Monroe Street, Phone 3-9360

Rev. Robert Graetz, 1110 Cleveland Avenue, Phone 4-6456
Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church

I respectfully request that the contents of this letter be kept confidential until such time as they have been verified by you. Please advise me as to your reaction to my request that you have story covered by your own staff member.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Graetz

Copies: Dr. King
       Atty. Gray
       Rev. Hughes
February 10, 1956

Interviewer: Anna Holden
Respondent: Clyde C. Sellers

General Statement: Commissioner Sellers is a man of about 50, a native of Tallepoosa County, Alabama. Didn't inquire into his background, but had learned earlier from other sources that he attended Auburn about two years, his father was deputy sheriff (of Talledoosa County) for a while, but was so mean to whites and Negroes there that the voters refused to reelect his father until he signed a statement saying he would not push Clyde back as a deputy; represented Montgomery County in the state legislature; worked his way up in the state police but was kicked out because of his conduct; runs a divorce company on the side. Sellers was elected to the Commission last spring; defeated Dave Birmingham. He made the statement during that race that he "would not trade his Southern birthright for any number of Negro votes"—a statement that he now repeats on all occasions when he gets before a large audience. Made a dramatic entry into the Citizens Council in January of this year, spoke at the NCC rally when Eastland appeared February 10th.

Sellers is well-groomed and well-dressed, wears expensive-looking, conservative suits. Somewhere along the line he has acquired an outward polish that I did not expect, considering what I had heard of his background. There is no doubt in my mind that he is exploiting the situation to his best advantage, but at the same time, I think he is exploiting in terms of something he believes in. He impressed me as a supreme egotist, anxious to get plenty of attention and basking in what he gets.

Presented myself as from Fisk, working on a study of Montgomery, interested in the bus situation. (Don't think Fisk registered anything—either he didn't recognize it or he didn't pay any attention to what I said)

Interviewer: I have been here several days now and have talked with a variety of people. I have been impressed with the tension in the community and would like for you to comment on it, if you will.

Respondent: "I think most of the tensions are caused by rumors. Whites and Negroes both blame everything that happens now on each other. We are doing the best we can to keep the situation in hand. I would like to show you the memo that I sent to the Police Chief—it will show you our policy in the police department."

(Hands me memo to Police Chief Ruppenthal dated January 25, 1956, "Re Negro Boycott situation" Memo stresses the importance of taking steps to make certain no incidents arise. Asks Ruppenthal to stress that with all men. "We are desirous of maintaining the best of peaceful relations with the Negro and we want to be particularly careful that enforcement is carried out in a fair, impartial manner to all people, regardless of their color or beliefs.")

"That is just a restatement of our regular policy, but it is important to emphasize it now and I wanted you to see it."

Interviewer: It has been my impression that people have been quite concerned about the boycott, particularly since the bombings.

Respondent: "This thing could have been settled long ago, but for outside agitation. Money and help are coming from people who do not understand and do not want to understand and it is keeping the thing going—adding fuel to the flames. There there is some radical support from whites in
the city who won't stop at anything. I mean a few people like
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. went up to Boston and made a speech on this the
other day. That sort of thing is shifting up more trouble."

**Interviewer:** I have gotten the impression that people are very much afraid of
violence at this point. Does it seem like there will be violence?
I know there have already been the two bombings, but I mean violence on a larger scale.

**Respondent:** "That's something nobody knows. We are doing our best to prevent it,
of course."

**Interviewer:** I understand there have already been some instances of rock and egg-
throwing and attacks on persons—enough to cause concern.

**Respondent:** "Well, there have been a few instances of juveniles throwing rocks and
mud. They are over-enthusiastic teen-agers on both sides who think they
are helping. We have settled those cases outside the courts since they
are juvenile and kept it from getting in the papers. I don't think it's
fair to bring a boy into court for something like that and have it go
down on his record. He might be applying for a job years from now and
think that he didn't have a police record and then when they checked,
they would see that he had an offense. He would have an offense on his
record, even though it was something like this, and I don't think that's
fair."

**Interviewer:** Have there been other instances of violence that haven't gotten to the
papers?

**Respondent:** "Whites and Negros are blaming everything that happens on each other,
but there haven't been many cases. It's gotten so that people make
something out of the slightest thing that happens. If a white person
bumps into a Negro on the street, or vice versa, each one thinks the
other one did it on purpose. People don't think anything about something
like that before the boycott. Let me give you an example to show you
what I mean. This is off the record. A few days ago a five year old
Negro boy was run over by a hit-and-run driver and when the police got
there, there was a Negro man who said he had been standing on the corner
and had seen it and that a white man was driving the car. When we in-
vestigated the case, we got five more witnesses who said the driver
was a Negro and it turned out to be a Negro driver who had two Negro
women in the car. But the Negro who saw it blamed it on a white person.
That works both ways, of course. I had a case the other day of a white
lady reporting that four Negro men had broken into her house and hit
her on the head. She had a bad blow on the back of her head, and she
said that they were sitting down at the table when she heard a noise in
the back of the house. She said she thought it was the people who came
to take her maid home and didn't think anything about it. The next
thing you know, she heard a lot more noise and went out and found four
Negro men throwing bricks and rocks in the house. She said that one of
them hit her on the back of the head. That was her story. We sent some
men out to investigate and when they got to the house, they found a
broken flower pot on the porch with the dirt scattered around it and a
broken window between the porch and the inside of the house. There were
no signs of bricks and rocks or a struggle inside and all the evidence
showed that the flower pot had been thrown from the inside out. We
hold of her husband and he said that he had hit her. He said he had come home and found her in bed with the Colonel (Maxwell people?) and had hit her a few times and she fell against a table(?) You see how it is? People are blaming everything that happens on the other race, and lots of things that haven't happened."

Interviewer: Are you doing anything to check that? Is there anything you can do?

Respondent: "We are trying to run down all the rumors, We check all the rumors that we hear."

Interviewer: How do you find out about them and what do you do when you find out something is a rumor—when do you tell that it is just a rumor?

Respondent: "People call us every time they hear something. Our phone rings constantly. I don't think there are any rumors going around that we don't hear about. We check them right away and the we know it is a rumor and can tell people that. The phone has been ringing ever since thing thing started. My phone at home would be ringing all the time, too, but I had listed under my business and I have closed it out since I came on the commission (/) and the phone isn't listed under my name in the book (/). Most of the calls come to me down here, and that's how I was able to keep the threats I got away from my wife. I have been getting threatening calls since about the second week in December, but my wife didn't know about it until the night King's house was bombed—a called came to the house and she answered the phone. Then, of course, I had to tell her that I had been receiving threats for weeks."

Interviewer: Have many people involved in this received threats—the other commissioner for example?

Respondent: "Well, of course they pick on them, but lots of white people have been threatened who haven't had anything to do with it."

Interviewer: What do you mean?

Respondent: "They just pick names out of the phone book and threaten them. Any white person will do—they call the person eight or ten times and say they will kill him at a certain hour. Then they call back and say they have decided to do it another house and they will call back again, and so on. We are used to that, but it is very upsetting for most people. There is a number of white ladies who have been badly frightened by calls."

Interviewer: Someone just picks out a number and calls for no reason?

Respondent: "That's right. It's a very upsetting experience for some of the women, especially, who have received calls. The person will go over their anatomy, from head to foot, and say what they will do to each part of their body. Some of the ladies who have received calls are sensitive, refined people who are badly disturbed by that sort of thing. They use filthy language, too, that they are not used to hearing."

Interviewer: Do you have any way of knowing where these calls come from?
Respondent: We don't know who they are, but they come from Nigras.

Interviewer: I suppose it works both ways—there are white people threatening Negroes, too.

Respondent: There might be a few white people threatening Nigras, but most of the threats Nigras report are from their own people. King and also Nixon have reported threats and asked for police protection that we were glad to give them. But those threats come from other Nigras. Others have been threatened, too.

Interviewer: Do the person calling identify themselves?

Respondent: No, but they can tell they come from Nigras.

Interviewer: It is really unbelievable that some would pick a stranger's name out of phone book and threaten him like that.

Respondent: "It might be hard for you to believe, but you are young and haven't had experience with this kind of thing. I have been in law enforcement for a number of years and I have found that the world is full of mean, vicious people who seize a situation like this and use it to vent their spleen. They take an opportunity like this to take out their meanness on other people—it doesn't matter who. I don't agree with Father Flannagan's philosophy that there are not bad boys. Some people might be better if they had a better environment, but you when you have that streak of meanness, you can't get rid of it."

Interviewer: This thing has lasted over two months, now. It's surprising it has lasted that long, considering how bad the weather has been.

Respondent: "Ninety per cent of the Nigras want to ride the buses, but they are afraid. I wish you would stand at one of the bus stops downtown and watch to see what happens when a Nigre tries to get on a bus. You see Nigras waiting for buses and when a bus comes up and they start to move toward it, one or two Nigras will come up and stand beside them and say something and they will back away from the bus and when the bus has gone, the man will go on. If you ask them about it, they say that the men wanted to know that time it was or how to get to a certain place. They are afraid to tell you, but those men were threatening them, telling them what would happen if they got on the bus. That is how they have keep them off the buses. They want to ride, but they are afraid of the "goon squads".

Interviewer: I suppose you have a record of cases where persons have been harmed for riding the bus. How many person have been harmed so far?

Respondent: "Well, there was a case a couple of weeks ago. You may have seen it reported in the newspaper. A man was tried and convicted of assaulting a Nigre woman because she rode the bus."

Interviewer: Yes, I did see that. I believe he said that he had gone to her house to buy whiskey.

Respondent: "That's the case. Of course he wouldn't admit the reason, he cooked up that story about buying whiskey. At the time it happened we had five Nigras witnesses who were willing to testify that he beat her for riding the bus. "hen the trial came up, three left town and the other two refuse to testify. Not that will show you what we are up against—they were
afraid to testify. But nobody believed that story about the whiskey—she wouldn't be mixed up in anything like that, she is not that kind."

**Interviewer:** I suppose the family she worked for was able to help her in clearing the charge. (Heard this was the Mayor's maid, trying to find out.)

**Respondent:** (getting suspicious)—what do you mean?

**Interviewer:** I was thinking that if she worked for a family that were known to be decent and law-abiding, their word as to whether she would be in an illegal business would hold some weight.

**Respondent:** (relaxing) "Well, she works for a good family, all right. She works for the Mayor's mother-in-law. (Note: The Mayor lives with his mother-in-law)

**Interviewer:** Then I'm sure that their word would help clear her. What about other cases? How many others have there been?

**Respondent:** "Well, that is the only actual case so far. You see, they are afraid to report them and it's impossible to find out about them. I have never run into such a blank wall as far as investigating and reporting cases are concerned. They won't tell us anything and we can't track cases down if they won't give us any information to work with. They are so afraid, they won't tell us anything at all.

**Interviewer:** I can see where a situation like that would present quite a problem.

**Respondent:** "This boycott has done damage than can never be repaired. It has done more harm to the Negro cause than anything else. It will take twenty-five years to build up the good feeling that it has torn down. You know, the Negroes in Montgomery were treated better than any place else. They got everything from the whites—they went to the whites for everything they wanted and they got it. You should see the schools and the churches that the white people here built for them. They are still giving them money for things, but they are giving it reluctantly now, they don't want to do it anymore. They keep on because they feel sorry for them. They know that most of the Negroes here don't really want this thing and that they are suffering. The leadership—the ones who started it—are not bus riders. They are riding around and it isn't hard on them like it is on the rest of them."

**Interviewer:** What is it that they want—the ones who are keeping it going?

**Respondent:** "Everybody agrees that it is part of a plan to get rid of segregation. King has said so himself. He said in the paper that he wouldn't stop until they got their full rights. The buses are just the first step."

**Interviewer:** I guess at this point, everybody is wondering how it can be settled.

**Respondent:** "We have laws requiring segregation on the buses and if they want to ride the buses they will have to obey the law. They can walk until they are ready to obey the law."
Interviewer: I saw the Commission's stand of two weeks ago that there would be no more negotiations with the boycott leaders. Has there been any change in policy since then?

Respondent: "The Commission will do no more negotiating. They can get back on the buses anytime they want to."

Interviewer: "I thought maybe there might be some change since the bombings—that seems to make a settlement more pressing."

Respondent: "You don't even know who you can deal with. Let me tell you about this. This will show you how they do. The Mayor called a meeting a few weeks ago with three Negro preacher who represented fourteen churches. They agreed to go back to the buses and we thought it was settled. Then when King came in town and found out about it, they were threatened with physical violence. One issued a statement that he had been fooled and didn't know he was making an agreement. The other two didn't withdraw, but they were threatened, too, and all of them asked for police protection to keep their own people from harming them. When they act like that, you don't know who you can believe or who you can deal with. This King has set himself up above everybody else like a God. He wouldn't let the agreement go through. He thinks he's way above everybody else. He won't see anybody except by appointment and he has press conferences and appears on TV shows. He thinks he's the President or something. Well, the Commission is through with that and the only way to settle it now is for them to come back to the buses."

Interviewer: This whole thing puts the bus company in a bad position, doesn't it?

Respondent: "They can't break the law. They have to operate under our state laws. Of course, one of the things the Negroes wanted was courtesy. You know yourself that people return the courtesy you extend. If you are polite, and treat people with respect, they will be polite to you in return. If you act mean, they won't be nice to you. They won't get courtesy from other people until they are ready to mend their own ways and treat other people with courtesy."

Interviewer: (Sellers had another appointment and excused himself at this point.)