Negro Leader Pays Tribute To Gandhi

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is because India means to me Mahatma Gandhi, a truly great man of the ages. India also means to me Pandit Nehru and his wise statesmanship and intellectual cogency that are recognized the world over. Perhaps above all, India is the land where the techniques of non-violent social change were developed that my people have used in Montgomery, Alabama, and elsewhere in the American South. We have found them to be effective and sustaining—they work!

King was escorted by Mrs. Sucheta Kriplani, M.P., to the hotel. Mrs. King and James Bristol of the Delhi Quaker Centre accompanied him.

Asked if non-violence had won over the hearts of the white Americans, King said: “Non-violence is not a miracle that works overnight.” But he added, it went off “very well” in Montgomery. An encouraging aspect of the experiment in non-violence at Montgomery was that the bus boycott was completely devoid of bitterness against the whites. Another heartening feature of the campaign. King revealed, was the moral support which came from many white Americans.

Tracing the post-boycott developments, King said that “our real victory” lay not in bus integration but in the “new sense of dignity and destiny” which the American Negro had acquired. In terms of solid gains, he mentioned that 35 Southern cities have voluntarily integrated buses.

Explaining why the U.S. Negro had not taken to more radical ways of the Leftists, King said: “The basic reason is that the American Negro has faith that he can get justice within the framework of the American democratic set-up.”

Dr. King, a 30-year-old Negro Baptist minister, comes to India for a month-long study of the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence under the auspices of the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and the American Friends Service Committee. He is accompanied by his wife who plans to give special attention to the role of women in the Indian independence movement. His schedule includes meetings with Prime Minister Nehru, President Prasad, Vice-President Radhakrishnan, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and J. P. Narain.

King is optimistic of the Negroes’ future in democratic America. Prior to his departure for India he said: “Racial integration is coming about in hundreds of ways.”

As a pointer, he cited the end of racial segregation in transportation, education and public facilities, attributing much of this social change to Federal Court ruling and increased sensitivity in the South to world opinion.