

Letters To The Editor . . .

GC Transfer Joins Civil Rights Move

Dear Editor,

I want to commend "you all" on the fine job being done on the All-American Record.

I am now attending Tougaloo College, a small liberal arts college near Jackson, Miss. It is now the only educational institution in the state that is integrated.

Many of the students are active in the civil rights movement. The current emphasis is the integration of white churches. A few churches have been open but most have remained closed to Negroes.

Until recent arrests, the procedure was simple. As an integrated group approached a church, they were met by the ushers. The spokesman would ask, "What do you want here?"

The students replied, "We came to worship with you."

"You are not welcome here," the usher announced. "Now will you leave?"

The students then tried to push the conversation a little further, but after the ushers refuse to discuss it the students thank them and leave.

On world communion Sunday, Oct. 6, Rev. Ed King announced, "Three Tougaloo students who attempted to attend a white church in Jackson this morning have been arrested and are now in jail."

Later we learned that the three arrested were coeds, two Negroes from Mississippi and a white exchange student from Oberlin College. The charges were disturbing public worship and trespassing on church property. They were held on \$1,000 bond each.

No bail money was immediately available, so the three girls had to stay in jail until Tuesday afternoon. They were tried Monday afternoon with a few minutes notice and no lawyer. They were fined \$1,000 each and sentenced to a year in jail.

The girls were finally released on \$1,000 appeal bonds supplied

by the National Methodist Church. (The arrests were made at a local Methodist Church.)

This past Sunday, Oct. 20, twelve would-be worshippers were arrested. One white faculty member was arrested in his own church for attempting to take a Negro to his Sunday School class.

I have not yet been arrested, but I suspect it may not be long until I too will be starting a "criminal" record.

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THE BISHOP'S COLUMN



The desire of myself and the overwhelming majority of Methodists in Mississippi is for good and improved relations among all races. There was a time when Negroes and white worked more cooperatively in church affairs.

The coming of white Methodist preachers from other sections is seriously hurting the kind of race relations we should have, and making it far more difficult to cultivate the spirit of love and goodwill which are fundamental to improved relationships. I told the Council of Bishops that the coming of these preachers to Jackson is hurting and not helping. I heard of one who came, and in his town it was said a Negro cannot stay overnight. I know of no such place in Mississippi.

The Council made a pronouncement on ideas and ideals in race relations. Not every one favored all that was in it. It should not hurt to study what was said. There was some desire to criticize one of our Jackson churches by name. I made an earnest plea against that and it was not done. The message calls upon our Methodists to treat people as people, and I reckon that is in keeping with St. Paul's utterance, "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free."

Race relations must be of the spirit and should ever be based on justice, righteousness, kindness, and goodwill. The methods used now are hurting.

Let us earnestly and prayerfully face all the tensions of our day and strive to find what Christ would have us do.

Merrill Franklin