

makes even the immediate future so uncertain. Can communities like Birmingham survive the shock and benefit from it, or will the very fabric of community living start to unravel? What can finally bring a change of attitude more basic than simple revulsion against bestiality, one that can really lead to changed relationships?

**T**HE EVIDENCE is far too scanty. But there would seem no reason to suspect that changing relationships in the changing South will end up so very different from those in the North. The prolonged tension of desegregationist warfare has exacted a price, as I was told time and again by white Southerners who vowed they would never feel the old warmth toward any Negro. More important, the advance of automation in home and factory is removing the ties of mutual dependency that preserved the old familiarity. The prospect, particularly in the urban South, is that desegregation will be accompanied step by step, by an increasing disintegration of personal relationships.

This drawing apart of the two races poses dilemmas that King's dream fails to take into account. Beyond the breakthroughs for those who are able and persistent, there lie massive struggles to bring along those who are not. Integration for Charlayne Hunter, last June's graduate of the University of Georgia who married a white classmate and went North to work for the *New Yorker*, is not to be compared with the difficulties that lie ahead for millions in the South who are neither so well educated nor so personable. For them, tokenism—whether token rights or token Negroes—could amount to a cruel new form of segregation.

Though the mind boggles at the attempt to look beyond desegregation, one thing is clear: neither law nor religious fellowship can guarantee that progress will be quickened once the formal barriers have been removed. What Martin Luther King's dream fails to reckon with in putting so much stress on man's togetherness is the hard and lonely road toward self-achievement that must lie before the Negro as it has for every minority in America.



## Toward the Other Shore

*The Freedom Movement as seen by a church leader*

VINCENT HARDING

*If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?—Jeremiah 12:5*

**T**HE QUESTIONS of the prophet are the insistent ones for the present moment in America. Confronted by such powerful forces, where does one stand to see and to know this "Freedom Movement" now sweeping the land? How understand the marching children, the singing adults, the beleaguered, persistent students, the calm grandmothers at the registrar's door? All things move too swiftly now for anyone to stand and see more than a passing column, hear more than the echo of a song. Besides, at no one place can the move-

ment be known in its strange, often contradictory fullness, and its spirit must be tested at various points along the surging line.

The rallying point is the church building. It may be proud Sixteenth Street Baptist in Birmingham, proud even in face of murderous dynamite, or First Christian in Greenwood, Mississippi, or little Shady Grove (before it was bombed) in rural southwest Georgia. Wherever it may be, this is where the people begin, where many first find their resolve to participate actively in the

revolution. Here the people of the pews speak not primarily of civil rights or of protest, but of freedom. This is the term that strikes them with greatest impact, for it describes not only certain legal and economic rights they must claim, but a new kind of society—dimly seen, vaguely known—in which they and their children shall be free to know and be known, to respect and be respected by all men. Especially for those who have grown up in the Deep South, it means the eventual rediscovery of each other by the black and white brothers who have lived so near and yet so far for so long.

**I**N ONE SENSE, the church building has become a base of operations for the movement through several accidents of history. Until very recently, most of the active protest leaders in the South were Christian ministers. It was therefore natural for them to hold the mass meetings in familiar settings. Besides, most of those attending were church members, and they, too, were at home in such surroundings. And where else in the communities of the Deep South could large numbers of Negroes meet to plan and participate in activities aimed at challenging and ultimately destroying the status quo (or, as some say, the status crow)?

However, it would be impossible to comprehend the present intensity of rushing waters and fast-striking hoofbeats if the church's role were seen as an accident and no more. For most of the men and women and children who gather in the plain wooden frame buildings or the sprawling modern brick structures, this is a religious movement to its core. It is only natural that the church should be its point of march.

Many times, especially in the midst of crisis, the meetings open not simply with a prayer but with a prayer meeting, often extending for more than an hour. Here the petitions are raised, the praise thunders out, and the shouting is unashamed. Often the songs at the outset are the old long-meter hymns, with an experienced voice spontaneously rising from the people, lining out the stanza: "Twas grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."

Each announcement or speech is

met with a mixture of applause and Amens. "Yes, Lord!" they shout. "Preach it, brother!" is the exhortation. Sometimes, the low, plaintive hum that sounds like a sinner's moan enters into antiphonal encounter with the speaker's words, and a chorus of response is begun. "Religion" as known in the older Negro churches is unmistakably present.

Then the freedom songs take over, and the mood of the young is quickly sensed. "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me round," "No more weeping, no more moaning, No more segregation over me," "Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom." This immediacy in the spirit of the young people and their sense of confidence cannot be missed, and most often this is the theme of the address or sermon. Freedom Now! is the new rallying call. Tomorrow is today! All tenses bow to the present.

Often the shouting, singing crowd is called upon for a decision. Will they offer themselves to break the barriers that bind us all? "You say you love Bull Connor; well, if you really love him you'll go to jail today to free him from this system of segregation that's killing us and him!" (To be sure, talk of this kind of active, painful loving is not heard as often as at an earlier time, and it is now more popular to speak of the power of the vote or the dollar or the Justice Department. Suffering brings fewer martyrs' songs and more phone calls to the Attorney General.)

**T**HE TRUE TEST of religion comes when the singing and the shouting is ended, and men move out into the arena, recognizing the lifelessness of marching songs without marching feet.

Among the younger leaders of the movement there would be much staunch resistance to any attempt at classifying their motives and actions as "religious." Such resistance comes not only from the pervasively secular nature of American society, but more importantly from their protest against a religion—primarily a Christianized one—that has so long stood aside from the truly significant matters of living and dying. These young leaders have no desire to be identified with this seemingly lifeless

form. Generally, they also tend to shy away now from any more talk of nonviolence than is necessary to keep people from striking back physically. And "love" is as uncomfortable a word among them as it is in the rest of the western world. Nevertheless, their actions tend to betray them, for these are the persons who so often are found by the side of the widow and the fatherless, who are merciful and seek justice at any personal cost, who sense a meaning and purpose to their life that is far beyond the edges of their own private existence. Therefore when the call is made for those who will walk, who will sit, who will ride, who will live and die for a new freedom, their response is a ready one. And when the saints go marching out of the church doors and into the streets, these saints-all-unaware often lead the line.

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*Ain't gonna let no police  
dogs turn me round, . . .  
Keep on walking, keep on  
talking,  
Marching to the freedom  
land.*

Out on the street a new encounter begins. The swift movements announced by the prophet telescope time, and as the marchers move forward—sometimes in orderly, singing lines, sometimes in surging, yelling crowds—the inevitable collision of past, present, and future comes upon them. They march out through the ghettos and slums and see fearful looks on the dark faces of persons who have been taught to despise themselves and to live without hope. For the young people there is a peculiar pain as they walk by the still segregated "Colored" schools, often newly built, with gaping voids where there should be books, laboratory equipment, and well-prepared teachers.

The marchers stride past the casinos and bars, the taverns and sleazy hotels, the thousand dungeons built by despair. And though they see such things, they burn with anticipation, knowing that this is both present and past. And every song they raise insinuates itself into the long dead hopes of fear-chained Negroes. Indeed, more than once, as the line has moved through such sec-

tions and past such doors, men have emerged and have been faced—sometimes for the first time in their lives—with the possibility of finding a great cause. More than once, such men and women have joined the line, and at least for a time—often a long time—have found a reason for living that has transformed their lives.

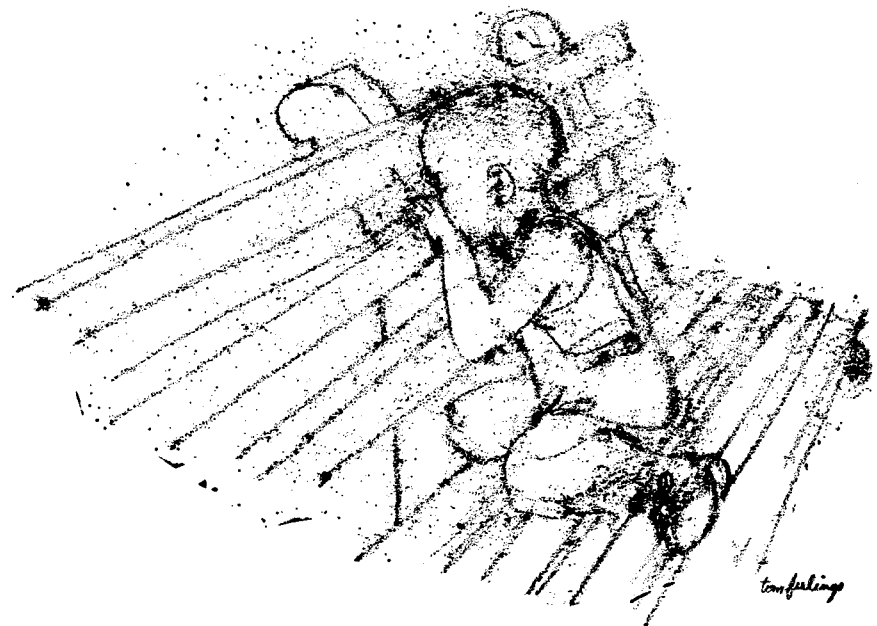
**B**URSTING into the shiny, neon-spattered, white-owned world of stores and courts and city halls, other encounters begin. Now the police and their dogs and their billy clubs are no longer simply the distant subjects of songs. On the streets the minority prophets must show the crowd what it means to love frightened and therefore hostile armed men.

In this meeting, all the memories of the past well up. Memories of drunks beaten unmercifully with these same clubs, memories of homes invaded by these same men, memories of innocent boys shot down in the darkness of midnight with these same guns. For these policemen are rarely seen by the Negroes as protectors but rather as the symbol of their inheritance of degradation and despair.

Now, on the streets, the police in most cases continue to play their traditional role, but the Negroes refuse to co-operate in the part that so long has been theirs to act and to live. Instead, they call upon the police to protect them or to stand aside, for they intend to march. In this very act, the line of walking, sometimes running men and women are born into a new age. For they continue to move—in spite of police orders. Sometimes they move into the city square, sometimes in front of the big bright stores. Sometimes they move into snarling police dogs, sometimes into the crashing billy clubs or stunning fusillades of water. Most often they march eventually into the checkered shadows of a paddy wagon, singing so loud that they do not hear the lock snapped shut.

Even jail becomes new in these times. For so long it held the stigma of shame. For so long it was seen primarily as a place for those who had done wrong. However, others knew it was more. It was also

an integral part of the structure of segregation, intimidation, and disgrace. It was the final legal threat to keep the oppressed in line, for it meant not only imprisonment but probable beatings and other mal-



treatment, especially if there were any signs of defiance.

Now from the back of the wagons the song rings out: "Ain't gonna let no jailhouse turn me round, . . . keep on walking, keep on talking, marching to the freedom land." For some, this is the last enemy overcome, and they enter the cells with a kind of exultation.

**S**OON, though, it is clear that there is more here than the songs intimated. For many of them it is very difficult, packed into cells four and five times overfilled, sleeping on concrete floors, using a toilet in full view of jailers and prisoners of both sexes, subsisting on poor and inadequate food. Sometimes the pain of all this is compounded by lack of sleep and beatings by jailers; and some persons complain bitterly and vow never to return. Most others, though, find in the fellowship of suffering and endurance an experience of sharing that they had never known in church or home. As the jar of precious water is passed from hand to hand in the darkness, men know more fully the meaning of high communion than they could possibly find in the quickly—almost ashamedly—snatched swallow of

grape juice from a little private glass. Here, for some, is the first glimmer of suffering for conscience' sake, of bearing voluntarily a burden that might have been escaped. Often, this new spirit is transferred to fel-

low prisoners who are not there for the same reason; sometimes there is communication on deep levels with the jailers. Whatever happens, though, from that time on, jail holds no terrors, and is blunted as a weapon against those who share such an experience.

Indeed, there is often an extreme, sometimes dangerous romanticizing of jail, and an equating of jailgoing with courage. Thus men are introduced at mass meetings with their primary qualifications resting in the number of times they have gone to jail. So blatant a measurement of martyrdom is probably unavoidable in such times, but it tends occasionally to force individuals to do the right thing for the wrong reason, and to deny the possibility that there are many roles in the movement—some of which do not lead to jail.

*If you don't see me at the Harlem  
Drug Store  
And you can't find me nowhere,  
Just come over to Walgreen's Drug  
Store  
And I'll be sitting-in there.*

In many places the police and politicians have played a strange and pathetic role at the request of



white men and women who often should have known better. As the marching lines formed, they called upon the police to stem the tide, to turn back the steeds of morning. They did not want to hear, to see, to know. They needed a buffer against reality, and chose the police and mayor and city council.

Again and again this has not worked, though, and it will never work in any ultimate sense; for the invisible men have now determined that they will be seen as they are, not as they are desired to be. For this reason, too, they cannot stop at police lines on the street, and have to keep marching wherever possible. So they come into the bus terminals, the soda fountains, the drugstores. So they sit at the counters and negotiating tables and walk up and down in front of the doors. So (in not enough places) they sit without ceasing in the employment offices, kneel to pray without ceasing in the churches, and stand for days on end in the voter-registration line.

So, they come and sit, and stand, and kneel, and say, "I will not be relegated any longer to the shadows of semi-life. I will be seen as I am." And it is intensely significant to note that it is no longer the rule that Negroes who thus present themselves must come in the latest styles, superneatly dressed. They want a truer picture now, one that will include the majority of Negroes—people who don't even know what the latest styles are, people who often have only a clean pair of coveralls each Monday. So in some places they no longer come dressed in the way most acceptable to whites. Dressed in blue overalls, they say, "Here we are, and we will be seen."

They are convinced that there is nothing in paleness or pinkness of pigmentation, or in straightness of nose or hair, which gives a man a right to keep for himself all the pleasures of good food, good jobs, good seats, or good toilets. They know now that all of these, if they are offered to "the public," must be offered to them.

In claiming their right for a share of the public domain, they issue another call to their white friends and brothers. When they are at the counter or the booth or the registration desk, they must be given a yes

or no. They prod the waitresses and owners and registrars—sometimes with loving care, sometimes with impatient disdain—into the realm of decision, the only truly human realm. For now they must answer the question that comes from the other side of town: Am I human, too? Do I deserve—simply as a result of my humanity—the same treatment as your other customers, clients, constituents? Though they have not fully discovered it, the white respondents may one day find cause to rejoice in this agonizing moment, for it may save them—if it is not too late—from that fatal atrophy of the power of moral decision which seems so dangerously pervasive in the American society. Meanwhile, though, they continue to respond in terms largely of economic and political expediency.

**M**OREOVER, as these dark legions move into the white churches, it is clear that the atrophy of the church is not very different from that of the society. Thus until it is confronted with the first dark face, many a congregation is not able to generate the power to initiate a decision concerning its true character, and perhaps—by that very token—has none. But at the moment the decision is truly faced and made, the church decides whether it shall belong to a universal, loving Lord or to a constricted, local culture-god.

There are other, less public places of confrontation where men are even more free to respond to each other as persons, rather than as shadows from a nether world. Here, too, of course, the marchers present themselves with the credentials of their determination. Here, in the long hours of negotiations (where men sometimes break bread across racial lines for the first time), often in secret meeting places, tensions are relaxed and a breaking through begins. The negotiators begin to discover each other for the first time, sometimes after having lived in the same city for forty years. The depth of their former alienation becomes terribly clear, but in such moments of discovery rests some of the hope for a new way.

Especially is there hope in those many situations in which Negroes are joined by whites in the long vigils

at the counters and the marching lines. (Some men, of course, cannot see these things without fear and the violence that fear creates. Such actions are too far from anything they have ever known. Such relationships wrench at every structure of their past lives, making right what was wrong, good what was evil, acceptable what was taboo. For these men, perhaps there is no response possible save a striking out in defiance, a fierce groping at exorcism. Perhaps for their lives there is no redemption short of such catharsis, and then a long facing of the inescapable realities.)

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*Come on folks let's learn how to  
vote,  
Freedom's coming and it won't be  
long  
If you don't vote we have no hope,  
Freedom's coming and it won't be  
long.*

There are many persons who see no hope for the coming of a new freedom to the South (and the rest of the nation) until the swelling waters of revolutionary ferment are channeled into new, political directions. This is why each day of the week on the courthouse steps in Greenwood, the men and women, often in their meager Sunday best, stand in Mississippi's sun and wait. The registrar takes her time, for the method is not to refuse to administer the test but to do it as slowly as possible and make it as difficult as possible. Nevertheless, the Negroes, many of them are well past sixty years old, return again and again. Here and in Selma, Alabama, in Cordele, Georgia, in Charleston, South Carolina, and in a hundred other places, men and women have dedicated themselves to the seemingly simple task of registering and voting. For some this means loss of jobs. For others it means a periodic spray of shotgun pellets through the thin walls of the shack. For some it means death.

The resistance is usually greatest in places where the Negroes are in the greatest comparative numbers. Deep, abiding fears range among the whites in such places, especially in rural areas. They are fears of what might happen if the Negroes one day did take over, fears of re-

venge, fears of losing control, fears of the unspeakable. Such fears lead to attempts at intimidation and the placing of every possible roadblock.

But some of the Negroes place more faith in this drive to register than in any other single weapon of the revolution. They say it is approved and encouraged by the Washington administration; interference brings certain—if slow—Federal action; this is less “embarrassing” to Washington; there are more funds available for this than most other forms of protest. They say new forces may arise, Negro candidates may run, and white candidates will be far more sensitive; senators and representatives will be open to different kinds of legislation. Besides, the entire process announces to the Negro that he belongs in the councils of decision makers, and serves notice on the white population that this ground is another that is no longer sacredly white. It, too, must be shared with the long-denied and hidden brother.

The workers are few, the task is large, and the method is necessarily slow. It takes a long time to persuade men to come in when they—and their ancestors—were taught all of their lives to stay out. It takes a long time to show them what the issues really are, why they are important, and what great burdens of new responsibility are now upon them. Comparatively speaking, this is one of the slowest aspects of the revolution, and yet it appears to hold out some of the greatest promise.

Still, when one looks at the places where the vote has been gained, such as Northern cities, signs of danger quickly appear. For it is evident that the vote, apart from any broader vision of the good society, apart from any deep sense of individual worth and importance, can be as impotent, corrupted, and misused in the hands of Negroes as in the hands of whites. In addition, when one looks at Mississippi, for instance, and sees the vast economic inequities there, it is necessary to ask whether or not the gaining of the vote may be a shield to keep men from seeing how great a need there is for some basic economic planning and radical economic change. Indeed, the entire role of the suffrage must be continually questioned in a society where men

organize their economic lives primarily to make money rather than to serve the society. Voting simply to continue this kind of process may be worse than not voting at all.

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*Roll, Jordan, roll; roll, Jordan, roll;  
I wanna get to Freedom Land  
before I die,  
So roll, Jordan, roll.*

Slowly, some begin to see the logic in the Negroes' claim: “We march to free you as well as ourselves.” It is often hard for men—of every hue—to want to be free, for it casts them into a world unknown and untried. But there is no true ultimate hope for the new land unless the vision finally captures the men who tend the hoses and the dogs as well. Until that moment, civil rights may have to be a necessary and temporary substitute for freedom, a resting point along the way.

And yet the faith that informs the singing, shouting crowds may be a source of strength and point of starlike hope to guide us all toward a new shore.

Perhaps the young people who

now storm the barricades of segregation and fear will not grow forever weary after these have largely fallen, but will continue to batter against the walls that set man apart from man, class from class, nation from nation.

Perhaps the churches will learn that sanctuaries were not meant to protect men from the world, but to offer sources of strength to prepare them for redemptive conflict with the world.

Perhaps, after further pain and further dying, the marchers may reach the “other shore” and there may discover an America with a new sense of purpose, an America that rejoices in the diversity of its people as fully as it does in the variety of its geography.

This is why the marchers cannot stop at police lines, this is why their path needed inevitably to lead to the nation's capital itself. For they carry within themselves a vestige of hope for their running, hiding society, a hope that men may one day see the horses and not be afraid, may eventually stand in the midst of swollen Jordan and not despair.





# One-Man Rule In Algeria

CLAIRE STERLING

HAVING GONE TWICE to the polls last month, the Algerians have settled several aspects of their country's future. The new republic will be officially democratic, popular, Islamic, and socialist, and it is going to be run by Ahmed Ben Bella without much back talk. As president, premier, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, head of the judiciary, secretary-general of the Political Bureau, and leader of the country's only legal party, the FLN, Ben Bella will be free to govern as he pleases, and he intends to do just that. "I am Algeria's last chance," he told *Le Monde's* correspondent within hours of his election to the presidency. Nine out of ten voters evidently agreed with him.

It is Ben Bella alone, therefore, who must bear the responsibility now for coping with the anguishing problems that have come with independence. That seems to be what he wanted. In the fifteen months since independence was proclaimed, nearly all the other men who had led

Algeria into and out of its seven-year war of liberation have vanished from the political scene. Among those who had represented the provisional government-in-exile in Tunis, for instance—Benyoucef Ben Khedda, Abdel Hafid Boussouf, Belkacem Krim, Ahmed Francis, Ahmed Boumendjel, Mohammed Yazid, Ferhat Abbas—only Boumendjel still holds a government post; and of the four rebel leaders who shared Ben Bella's five-year imprisonment during the war, one (Aït Ahmed) is now leading a bitter but basically tribal opposition among the Berbers of the Kabylie, another (Mohammed Boudiaf) is under arrest, while the last two (Rabah Bitat and Mohammed Khider) have been stripped of all functions in the five-man Political Bureau.

Not all these men have made the same sort of exit: some jumped, others were pushed. But in either case, Ben Bella has watched them go, one by one, without visible signs of regret. Whatever their ideological leanings—Boudiaf is a left-wing

Marxist, Aït Ahmed a French-type Socialist, Abbas a middle-class democrat—there is clearly no place for them in the kind of revolution Ben Bella thinks Algeria needs.

BY NOW, of course, both the régime and the country are irrevocably committed to a socialist revolution. Although the rebels did not list this as a war aim while the fighting was on, they embodied it in a statement of principles at their first postwar conference in Tripoli; and it has since been reaffirmed in the new constitution. But there are many kinds of socialism, as Ben Bella points out, ranging from Guy Mollet's in France to former Premier Fulbert Youlou's in the ex-French Congo to Fidel Castro's. "We Algerians," he adds, "have chosen Castro's. . . . Some among us do not agree. But conditions have been created now to set them aside."

Like most reporters in Algiers, I spent a lot of time trying to find out what Ben Bella means by "socialism à la Castro." At the ministry of information, I was told it meant a mobilization of the masses; at the ministry of agriculture it was described as radical land reform; at the planning office it was defined as state control of a mixed economy with public, semi-public, and private sectors; at the foreign affairs ministry it was said to be a "relentless struggle against any last vestiges of colonial domination." Few of those I interviewed seemed to know much about how Castro's socialism actually works. "What draws us to Fidel," said one, "is that he's a fighting revolutionary. He's none of your bourgeois reformists who always stop halfway. He's not afraid to remake his country from top to bottom, he knows how to rally his people for any sacrifice; he can stand up to Cuba's imperialist oppressors. *C'est un vrai militant—un inconditionnel.*"

Much as Ben Bella may admire Castro's spirit, however, observers here find it hard (or did until recently) to believe he would take Cuba for his model. "Ben Bella is not a hysteric like Castro, though circumstances might make him one," a western diplomat told me. "He has a sentimental image of Fidel as an anti-colonialist hero and agrarian reformer. But he knows very well that