

560130-010

Amistad Research Center
Tulane University
New Orleans, La. 70118

DATE: January 30, 1956

Observed by: Donald T. Ferron

TIME: 11:00 a. m. - 2:35 p. m.

Presiding: Rev. M. L. King

Executive Board "Call" Meeting

This meeting was called because there are some "important" issues to discuss rather than to hold off until thursday.

Prayer:

Rev. Alford: Said that he had been pondering over a proposal which was made to Rev. Binion by some of his "white friends" some weeks back. (Apparently the Executive Board rejected it then) Rev. Alford feels that it is "worthy of our studying it" "I think we should go back under these conditions.

Rev. Binion: To the question of the nature of the proposal: Mr. Macrosie (his "white friend") explained the proposal to him before the three N. ministers had been "hoodwinked" into a "compromise" The City had decided that if Negroes would give Whites the first two seats on the Jackson, Day and Cleveland*st. routes, and on the rest of the routes give the first six seats to the Whites - an agreement could be reached."

Mr. E. D Nixon: "Did the proposal of two seats mean the long seat plus the next two seats?"

Rev. Binion: "I don't know."

Mr. Nixon: "If you talk about the first two seats, then that's the same as before. We would be returning to the same conditions, and if we accept it we are going to run into trouble, with the people who had been riding the bus. If that's what you'r going to do, I don't want to be here when you tell the people."

Mr. White: "This morning was the test." "The rain was pouring and they still walked. If they don't want to go back, I don't see why we should decide otherwise, folks just made too much sacrifice. I hold that we should go on to the end. I think we should stay just where we're at."

Rev. King: "I've seen along the way where some of the ministers are getting weary. Says he won't call names. If you have that impression that should go back to the bus under the same conditions. We won't ostracize you. We should "iron it out here" (executive meetings) and show where in we shouldn't go back"

*Jackson, Day and Cleveland streets are predominantly Negro used routes

Rev. Alford: "There's a time in the life of any crisis when you ought to be reasonable; the parties concerned ought to "give and take". If we can get two out of the three demands (Alford called the "concessions"), I think we ought to accept. We have no protection to give these people - our wives and daughters* are not out there. We can arrive at some type of agreement that is pleasing even to us."

Rev. King: "From my limited contact, if we went tonight and asked the people to get back on the bus, we would be ostracized. They wouldn't get back. We "shouldn't" give people the illusion that there are no sacrifices involved, that it could be ended soon. My intimidations are a small price to pay if victory can be won. We shouldn't make the illusion that they won't have to walk. I believe to the bottom of my heart that the majority of Negroes would ostracize us. They are willing to walk.
(changing the subject), "I think this is a basic point." We agreed that in the event the Chicago franchise was renewed and ours was rejected, we would go to court. Attorney Gray went to New York last week for a few days to discuss this whole problem with Thurgood Marshall and another lawyer. Atty. Gray has drawn up two suits: one demanding that the segregation law of the city is null and void because it is unconstitutional; in the process of litigation, all intimidation be outlawed. This joint suit is to be filed in the Federal Court this afternoon or tomorrow. We are in the process of drawing up a list of plaintiffs (those who can stand up under intimidation and who are not susceptible to losing their jobs) So far we have Miss Calving, Miss Smith, Mrs. Reese, Mrs. Hamilton, and Mrs. McDonald. This suit on the City of Montgomery would go directly to the Federal Courts, but it would be filed in the name of the NAACP. What are we to do for the people in the process of litigation? The Court has 20 days to answer - don't know how long the litigation would take.

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Mr. Saye: Number 1 "issue on ultimatum giving a time limit (leaving out goal 3) to the Commission stating our position to see what they would do; 2, we need to do that to have a point from which to prepare people to return to the buses. We need to train people to go back to the bus. We would disgrace ourselves before the world if we give up now.

Mr. Nixon: "Hold people off the bus for the end of the 20 days, instructing them about going back to the bus. At least for the first 20 days from tomorrow keep them off the bus."

Rev. King: "It is very important that misinformation does not leak out about the NAACP and the Court action until its printed in the newspaper. We want to surprise the whites. Don't mention the 20 days. Some liberal whites say that because of the stigma that has been put on the NAACP, its part in this should not be mentioned because of its effect

*Rev Bennet has referred to the masses of Negroes, those who had once ridden the buses, but who are now walking, as "those in the gutter".

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on a public sentiment. We should use the legal structure of the NAACP, but refer to the participants as "legal citizenry".

Dr. Saye: "Because we can't settle this within the framework of the law, we should state publicly that we're taking it to the Federal Court.

Rev. King: "By the way, I've found out that the Negro lady who was beat up by a Negro man a few days ago is the cook for the mayor; she attends the mass meetings and tells the mayor what happened the next morning. We also found out that Sellers let 3 Negro prisoners attend the mass meetings so that they can tell him what has happened.

Atty Gray: About selection of plaintiff: I think it's good strategy to have at least one minister, people of different ages, and people with different grievances. It's not good strategy to have Rev. King because he's too much in the "limelight".

Rev. King: "I think it's very important in throwing sentiment our way if we have a minister as a plaintiff. Who (of 25 present) will volunteer? after discussion in which Rev. King said that he knew of many in the meeting who had been fired and other wise intimidated, still no one would volunteer.

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Rev King reiterated their stand on a policy of non-violence. It was suggested in this connection that we go "on record not to come to the rescue of people arrested for carrying concealed weapons."

Rev. King: "About lawyer fees.

Atty. Gray: (A. H. Langford not present) The branch NAACP made an agreement with me about a figure for my work for the Mrs. Parks' case. Explains that the retaining fee (\$50/wk for each lawyer) covers anything that comes up other than Court cases.

Rev. King: "I would ask this question even if A. H. Langford was here: Is it necessary to retain two lawyers?"

A. H. Gray: "I'll leave while you discuss it." (He leaves the room)

Dr. Saye: "I'll never did see the wisdom of hiring two lawyers".

It was agreed that the lawyers be paid \$500 (the figure the two lawyers had submitted) for their work from December 11 to January 4, and from that time retain the two lawyers at \$50/wk each until the case is filed in the Federal Court. They will then be paid a "general fee" which will be added to that fee paid by the branch NAACP (this money will come from collections at the mass meetings) Each lawyer will submit a bill for "services rendered" to get away from having to pay the retainer featuring as after Court action.

Announcement: Mass meeting tonight at 7:00 p. m. at First Baptist Church

Meeting ends with prayer.

Executive Board "Call" Meeting
 Monday, January 30, 1956
 11:00 A.M. - 2:35 P.M.
 Rev. M. L. King, presiding

FEB 2 1956
 Donald T. Ferron

- Prayers

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Rev. Alford - Said that he had been pondering over a proposal which was made to Rev. Binion by some of his "white friends" some weeks back. (Apparently the exec. board rejected it then). Rev. Alford feels that it is "worthy of our studying it." "I think we should go back under those conditions."

Rev. Binion - to the question as to the nature of the proposal:

Mr. Naerosie (his "white friend") explained the proposal to him before the three N. ministers had been "hoodwinked" into a "compromise". The city had decided that if N. would give W. the first two seats on the Jackson, Day and Cleveland St. routes, and on the rest of the routes give the first six seats to the W. - an agreement could be reached.

Mr. E. D. Nixon - Did the proposal of two seats mean the long seat plus the next two seats? Mr. Binion - "I don't know."

Mr. Nixon - If you talk about the first two seats, then that's the same as before. We would be returning to the same conditions, and if we accept it we are "going to run into trouble" with the people who had been riding there. "If that's what you're going to do, I don't want to be here when you tell the people."

Mr. White - "This morning was the test." The rain was pouring and they still walked. "If they don't want to go back, I don't see why we should decide otherwise. I think we should just make too much sacrifice. I hold that we should go on to the end. I think we should stay just where we're at."

Rev. King - "I've seen along the way where some of the ministers are getting weary." Says he won't call names. "If you have that impression (that N. should go back ^{under same conditions} to the buses), we won't as traicize you. We should iron it out here (exec. meeting) and show wherein we shouldn't go back."

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Rev. Alford - "There's a time in the life of any crisis when you go ought to be reasonable; the parties concerned ought to "give and take". If we can get two out of the three demands (Alford called them "concessions"), I think we ought to accept. We have no protection to give those people - our wives and daughters* are not out there. We can arrive at some type of agreement that is pleasing even to us."

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Rev. King (changing the subject), "I think this is a basic point."

We agreed that in the event the Chicago franchise was renewed and ours was rejected, we would go to court. Attorney Gray went to New York last week for a few days to discuss this whole problem with Thurgood Marshall and another lawyer. At. Gray has drawn up two suits: 1) demanding that the segregation law of the city is null and void because it is unconstitutional 2) in the process of litigation, all intimidation be outlawed. This joint suit is to be filed in the Federal Court this afternoon or tomorrow. We are in the process of drawing up a list of plaintiffs (those who can stand up under intimidation and who are not susceptible to losing their jobs). So far we have Miss Colving, Miss Smith, Mrs. Reese, Mrs. Hamilton, and Mrs. McDonald. This suit on the City of Montgomery would go directly to the Federal Courts, but it would not be filed in the name of the NAACP.

Rev. King What are we to do for the people in the process of litigation? The court has 20 days to answer - don't know how long the litigation would take.

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Donald T. Ferron

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giving a time limit

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Dr. Saye - Because we can't settle this within the framework of the law, we should state publicly that we're taking it to the Federal Court.

Rev. King - By the way, I've found out that the lady who was beat up by all men a few ~~weeks~~ ^{days} ago is the cook for the mayor; she attends the mass meetings and tells the mayor what happened the next morning. We also found out that Sellers has let 3 N. prisoners attend the mass meetings so that they can tell him what has happened.

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Rev. King - I think it's very important in throwing sentiment our way if we have a minister as a plaintiff. Who (of 25 present) will volunteer? After discussion ^{of about 10 minutes} in which Rev. King said that he knew of many in the meeting who had been fried and otherwise intimidated, still no one would volunteer.

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Rev. King reiterated their stand on a policy of non-violence. It was suggested in this connection that we go "on record not to come to the rescue of people arrested for carrying concealed weapons."

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AH. Gray - "I'll leave while you discuss it." (he leaves the room)

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Each lawyer will ~~be paid~~ submit a bill for "services rendered" to get away from having to pay the retainers fee during or after court action.
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