

# ESCRU

## CONTENTS

PAGE	The Episcopal Society
	For
1	INTRODUCTION
	THREE TALL MEN & A PERSONAL MEMOR
5	AN EPOCH OF RACIAL HOPE - A RAINBOW OF HOPE
	A Bus Ride
	Cultural and Racial Unity
8	"A CHURCH SOCIETY FOR RACIAL JUSTICE"
	1959 - 1967
20	TEAR GAS, GLORY & DEATH AT SELMA - RIOT & RACE IN WATTS
22	"THE TIMES AREN'T EASY, NOR IS ESCRU'S SOUL SEARCHING"
	By John Morris
25	SOME REFLECTIONS ON CLOSING DOWN

## INTRODUCTION

*When the Church's Archivist, Mark Duffy, invited me to deliver a paper on The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity - I welcomed the opportunity to say some things about that unusual period for both the Church and the nation. I looked forward as well to the chance to see friends and colleagues and compare understandings of what went on in the much discussed (sometimes cursed) "Sixties." Unhappily, about six weeks ago I found myself learning more about the functioning of my heart than I really wanted to know! So I am sending what I would have said... or, more accurately, my somewhat expanded remarks. If read before the conference, I think the majority of them have now been shortened.*

## CONTENTS

*When the "Sixties" are mentioned today, too often it is with terms that bespeak violence, confusion, protest and anger. All that was present, but none are the sole or primary hallmarks of the Civil Rights Movement. Turn up to you who are historians to remind your readers of the high idealism and sacrificial service which characterized much of "The Movement" and its activists. But, more than that, if you are writing about faith, you don't just call them "Civil Rights Workers". "Worker" is a plodding sort of word anyway. If you were attached for Christ's sake - let their religious roots show! Realize that ultimately we are all workers for Christ's sake - but you are too prone for the sake of some intellectual idealism.*

**PAGE**

**INTRODUCTION**

1 **THREE TALL MEN & A PERSONAL MEMOIR**

5 **AN EPOCHAL COURT RULING: DOOMSDAY OR A RAINBOW OF HOPE  
A Bus Ride Toward Freedom & A New Movement Emerging**

8 **"A CHURCH SOCIETY FOR RACIAL UNITY"**

20 **TEAR GAS, GLORY & DEATH AT SELMA - RIOT & RAGE IN WATTS**

22 **"THE TIMES AREN'T EASY, NOR IS ESCRU'S SOUL SEARCHING"**

25 **SOME REFLECTIONS ON CLOSING DOWN**

*Historians & Archivists are often too busy as a body of activity and need outside the Church just as they exist in the marketplace, to "share the fruits of "Civil Rights" in just the beginning of the movement. The "Sixties" were a time when the "fruits of the Spirit" were first Pentecost, when they were all together with one accord in one place... it always present for us.*

*of the movement that can be done by more competent historians. The complete files are available here in Atlanta, and as noted in a footnote, several of the files are in book and other materials. I sent them in 1983 - were they not there with the very final days of ESCRU after I had left my position as Executive Director. This should be dealt with by others.*

*In the part I entitle A Personal Memoir appearing at the outset, I have dealt with some personal experiences - in childhood and later - occasions that had a bearing on my early thinking and subsequent actions. If history is biography to some extent, then these experiences may be pertinent here; and, for the most part, they will not be found recorded elsewhere. One thing I had totally forgotten until this paper was almost completed is a Church History paper submitted in January, 1954, to Dr. Zabriskie at the Virginia Seminary. Seventy-one pages long, it was prepared by my classmate John Walker and myself - with Patsy doing the typing! I found it in an old file of seminary papers - We got an A+ on it! The title was THIS SEPARATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE: The Problem Of Racial Prejudice In The Episcopal Church. At that early juncture, the future Bishop of Washington knew that the issue of race would be life-long for him. As for us, there used to exist the notion of a kind of destiny for quarantined white Southerners - we couldn't get away from the issue of race even if we left the region.*

2650 Peachtree Road, N.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30305

John B. Morris  
June 9, 1985

## INTRODUCTION

*When the Church's Archivist, Mark Duffy, invited me to deliver a paper on The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity - I welcomed the opportunity to say some things about that unusual period for both the Church and the nation. I looked forward as well to the chance to see friends and colleagues and compare understandings of what went on in the much discussed (sometimes cussed) "Sixties." Unhappily, about six weeks ago I found myself learning more about the functioning of my heart than I really wanted to know! So I am sending what I would have said.... or, more accurately, my somewhat extended remarks. If read before the conference, I have indicated what is here may be shortened.*

*When the "Sixties" are mentioned today, too often it is with terms that bespeak violence, confusion, protest and war. All that was present, but none are the sole or primary hallmark of the Civil Rights Movement. It is up to you who are historians to remind your readers of the high idealism and sacrificial service which characterized much of "The Movement" and its activists. But, more than that, if you are writing about faithful Churchmen - don't just call them "Civil Rights Workers". "Worker" is a plodding sort of word anyway. If they were involved for Christ's sake - let their religious roots show! I realize that ultimately we cannot divide life into Secular and Sacred - but scholars are too prone for the sake of some intellectual ideal to minimize the latter.*

*I understand the theme for this conference sponsored by the Archives and by the National Episcopal Historians & Archivists is The Episcopal Church: Civil Rights And Christian Mission..... An excellent and appropriate title so long as the "Civil Rights" part is not seen exclusively as a body of activity and need outside of the Church. If "Civil Rights" means Justice & Equal Opportunity for all - we have those needs in the Church just as they exist in the marketplace. And, of course, the pursuit of "Civil Rights" is just the beginning of concerns for us Christians. Something about seeking the Unity of God's people - as at the first Pentecost, when they were all together with one accord in one place..... is always present for us.*

*In what I have written here about ESCRU, there is some division into the various years and phases of the Movement and what we were about. However, it is not by any means an exhaustive history. That can be done by more competent historians. The complete files are available here in Atlanta; and as noted in a footnote, several of the seminaries have a massive volume of newsletters and other materials I sent them in 1983. There is one in Austin. You will also note that I have not dealt with the very final days of ESCRU after I had left my position as Executive Director. This should be dealt with by others*

*In the part I entitle A Personal Memoir appearing at the outset, I have dealt with some personal experiences - in childhood and later - occasions that had a bearing on my early thinking and subsequent actions. If history is biography to some extent, then these experiences may be pertinent here; and, for the most part, they will not be found recorded elsewhere. One thing I had totally forgotten until this paper was almost completed is a Church History paper submitted in January, 1954, to Dr. Zabricki at the Virginia Seminary. Seventy-one pages long, it was prepared by my classmate John Walker and myself - with Patsy doing the typing! I found it in an old file of seminary papers. We got an A+ on it! The title was THE SEPARATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE. The Problem Of Racial Prejudice In The Episcopal Church. At that early juncture, the future Bishop of Washington knew that the issue of race would be life-long for him. As for me, there used to exist the notion of a kind of destiny for concerned white Southerners - we couldn't get away from the issue of race even if we left the region.*

2660 Peachtree Road, N. W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30305

John B. Morris  
June 9, 1995

## THREE TALL MEN & A PERSONAL MEMOIR

In early March of this year three friends of mine died within days of each other: **Henri Stines, John Buggs, and Henry Bowden**. Each had been active in The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity during the time I was at its helm.

In a tribute at **Henri Stines'** funeral in Chicago on March 11th I recounted some of what Henri did when he was on the ESCRU staff with me in the mid-sixties. At the end of my remarks I said:

With a wisdom not everyone showed in those turbulent days, you knew that it was not an era for protest alone....but, a time to dream dreams along with Blessed Martin so that a Beloved Community might emerge from the ashes of the old order. Wherever there was a hint of divisiveness you stood strong for the rallying cry of the Psalmist: "Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133)

Henri would have known what I meant - for he and I frequently talked on the phone in recent years about various divisions that blur the dream. At the Church of St. Edmund, King & Martyr, with the Bishop of Chicago presiding and Bishop Barbara Harris preaching - an overflow congregation had a glimpse of the dream again in the service leaflet where Henri's posts in the Church were spelled out: "Director of Southern Field Service for The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity (ESCRU) based in Atlanta". How good it is to be able to make a statement by simply giving an organization's name!

And so it was at the funeral for **John Buggs** on March 13th at the Church of St. Philip the Evangelist in Los Angeles. There the former Mayor, Tom Bradley, and others had words of praise for this dedicated Episcopal layman. Later becoming head of the U. S. Civil Rights Commission, John had served for 13 years as Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. During that period he was on the ESCRU Board of Directors..... a fact duly noted in the service leaflet: "John.... held offices in various organizations including... The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity." Again - a small witness to Martin's dream in the Sixties - briefly glimpsed in 1995 by those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

The day after Patsy and I returned to Atlanta from Henri Stines' funeral the phone rang: a call to the clergy to report that **Fr. Henry Bowden** had died and that his funeral would be at St. Philip's Cathedral on March 15th. Henry James Charles Bowden was 93. His long ministry - set forth in what some of us still call "Stowe's"- bespeaks the segregation & separation we laid on him through most of his life..... discrimination that he experienced within his own Church, as the Bishop of Atlanta noted at his funeral..... discrimination which Henry Bowden witnessed against as he walked in an ESCRU picket line outside St. Philip's Cathedral many years before when he was then past 60 years old.

I shared the work and witness of ESCRU with all three of these men, but with John Buggs and Henry Bowden I shared something else - a common place of birth and upbringing: the lovely coastal town of Brunswick, Georgia - where all three of us were born and raised in the Episcopal Church. Henry Bowden and my mother were both born in 1902..... but they didn't know each other in Brunswick. Perhaps they met years later at an ESCRU annual meeting or at the 1964 ESCRU dinner at General Convention when Martin King spoke before some 1900 of us - but in Brunswick they never met. The Buggs family and the Bowden family belonged to St. Athanasius' Church. The Morris family went to St. Mark's Church - three short blocks away. It takes but three minutes to walk from one of these Episcopal churches to the other - but, with a great gulf fixed between them - they were miles apart. As a child, I noticed such things - and wondered. In the 60s, when John Buggs and I found ourselves at an ESCRU meeting or some other gathering, we would find time to sit and talk about Brunswick. He knew lots about the white community I had grown up in. I knew very little about his part of town - except for the kindly postman, the barber, the yardman - all of whom had made me feel special each time I saw them. I could tell John Buggs that I remembered his house and what it looked like - because as a child they told me "That's Dr. Buggs' home." when we drove by. And when I rode my bicycle by the Buggs' home I pondered some more on the fact that the town's only black physician lived in a house that looked as nice as ours. Most black folk in Brunswick lived in little shotgun three-room unpainted structures. And I told John Buggs about Sam Dent who brought our mail each day and who was very proud of his son who was earning a doctorate in some very learned scientific field. When I was very small I noticed that "Dent" stood at the back of the nave of St. Mark's at a family funeral when I thought he should have been sitting up front with us. Such was the old protocol as to where black folk stayed when they came to a white funeral. And there was Howard Battle at Floyd's Barbershop who felt like he had to start referring to me as "Mister" when I came home from college..... though he was old enough to be my father. After ESCRU was begun and I had been in the news several times... and was in for a haircut, "Battle" said to me in a hushed tone: "We appreciate what you are doing." That's what Joe the yardman meant when he gave me a great bear hug on that trip to Brunswick.

These are some of the things I shared with John Buggs when we talked about the segregation and separation that characterized our hometown. I told him also about the clergy I had known at St. Mark's and at Camp Reese, the diocesan facility he could not have attended. There was Lee Belford who years later would be a part of ESCRU's Prayer Pilgrimage of 1961. Our "outside man", his job was to worry about those of us who wound up in the Jackson City Jail. And there was Archer Torrey - young priest who in my high school years came to nearby Darien, Georgia, to serve St. Andrew's and St. Cyprrian's - the white and black churches of that tiny hamlet. Long conversations with Archer nourished my growing awareness of what the Gospel of Jesus should mean for our divided society. It was he who encouraged me to go to sea after graduation that summer of 1947 - with time to ponder all these things as my oil tanker plied the coast between Galveston and Montreal.

I also told John Buggs about something else that happened to me in our hometown of Brunswick. During the summer of 1949 I was back from college working as a laborer on the causeway project - building a new highway across the marsh to St. Simon's Island. I walked to and from home to the site at the Brunswick waterfront where bridge sections were poured and put aboard barges to be taken to location. Brunswick's waterfront area had seen better days and was generally derelict. The sidewalk on Bay Street was overgrown with tall weeds - only passable by a narrow path made by the few who went that way. One afternoon on my way home I saw up ahead a very old man coming on the path toward me. He walked slowly and with a cane. I had every intention of moving to the side as we neared - for without pushing a few more weeds aside we could not have passed. Before I could do that, however, he stepped into the brush, took off his hat, and - bowing - swept hat & hand down and up - motioning me to pass. He uttered a friendly greeting as I went by and I said "Thank you". I wanted to say: "Dear old man! You are older than my grandfather and you have a cane. It is I who should stand aside to let you pass!" I did not say it, though. He probably would not have understood. A long lifetime of being black had taught him to bow and scrape before white people - - perhaps even moreso before a nineteen year old white laborer.

Back at college in New York I didn't often encounter the more visible signs of racism that were all around you in Georgia. It was easy on Morningside Heights to forget the problems of my Southern region as I busied myself in Columbia's Canterbury Club and other church pursuits. Still, there were reminders of the old man on the path in Brunswick - like a small part in a campus civil rights group's testing the racial policy of a nearby barbershop: my getting a haircut while a fellow student who was black came in for the same service. I was learning that the North was not pure.....that the separate water fountains in Brunswick stores were really not so far away! And during this period I read Alan Paton's recently published novel from South Africa - CRY THE BELOVED COUNTRY. It was soon on Broadway and I went. Termed a Musical Play, with Todd Duncan in the lead, the lyrics and words of LOST IN THE STARS not only immersed one in South Africa's apartheid system - but in the evil of racism everywhere. The haunting refrain was equally about the segregation and separation I had grown up with. It was about the soil along that weed-filled path that protested and cried out when an old man bowed and let me pass:

Cry, the beloved country,  
Cry, the beloved land,  
the wasted childhood,  
the wasted youth,  
the wasted man!

Some years later it would be my privilege to take Alan Paton on a tour of Atlanta and I told him then how his book and the musical had helped to confirm my early decision to return South when college and seminary were finished. Though racism is everywhere, one doesn't abandon a "beloved country" when it's in crisis. We were in the midst of our changes when he visited. His land was still unmoved, but he had hope. His last book was titled: "Ah! But your land is beautiful!"

Tall, gaunt, and with the look of a mournful hawk, New Testament and Ethics Professor A. T. Mollegen was part of the excitement of arriving at the Virginia Seminary in the fall of 1951. Born, raised and ordained in Mississippi - "Molly" was the foremost in my mind of those faculty and students from the South who knew that our native region - especially- cried out for release from the shackles of Jim Crow. How good it was to share these concerns with others! Those few students who thought the Confederacy was due honor held their tongue. The view from my room on the 3rd floor of Aspinwall was toward the nation's capitol and change. In my class Virginia had its first black student, John Walker, soon to become our good friend and wedding usher; and, later, Bishop of Washington. In 1952 we received into our ranks both faculty and students who had quit the seminary at Sewanee in protest over racial policies there. But on this "Holy Hill" the momentum was forward.... or so I thought. One learned to live with fellow students for whom the helpful aspects of group dynamics and sensitivity training was not enough. They would have put the prophet Amos on a couch to probe the "hidden agenda" of his passion for justice! Molly knew this introspective pendulum had swung too far. He was our mentor for a periodic convening of students seeking a valid concept of Christian Social Ministry. We called it "THE EQB" meeting: EQB for *ECCE, QUAM BONUM!*, the Latin title of Psalm 133 - *Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!* With such concerns, I was glad that Molly was the "minister-of-the-week" in chapel when it came time for my Senior Sermon in the early fall of 1953. And I was delighted that the appointed date was on or nearby to St. Michael and all Angels' Day. Utilizing no scholarly exegesis, the Epistle was just right for me: *"There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not..... And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down..... And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony...."* There would be battles enough awaiting us when we left the serenity of our lovely campus, but it would be through no rapid or humanistic social gospel by which we are called to tackle these dragons of today. By the Blood of Jesus Christ men and society can be healed and brought together in unity! And it will be: By the word of our testimony..... Such was what I said from the pulpit of Immanuel-on-the-Hill that September morning. When Molly and I got back to the vesting room he gave me a big hug and said: "We needed that!" I was grateful. Sadly - in just a few years - we would part. Molly was shifted by events - from the left to the center - as a new, black-led Movement emerged and supportive Episcopal clergy were put in jail, The initiative for change no longer would be in the hands of well-intentioned white Churchmen - nor, indeed, in the hands of those of us Molly thought had become too radical. But that comes later. In the early spring of 1954, I had not seen the cloudbank building as I went to see Bishop Thomas Carruthers in Charleston and said I should be pleased to serve any small congregation he selected. Wherever it was - I would be returning to the people and problems I already knew. The scene Patsy and I anticipated would be typically Southern: a quiet small town where passing trains made the only noise. And so it was. We would go in the fall to St. Barnabas' Church in Dillon, South Carolina.

## An Epochal Court Ruling: Doomsday Clouds or A Rainbow of Hope A Bus Ride Toward Freedom & A New Movement Emerging

With graduation imminent, ordination in a month, and packing for our move from Alexandria to Dillon, Patsy and I were not waiting by the radio on Monday morning, May 17, 1954 for the news from across the Potomac that still reverberates in Dixie and throughout the land. The United States Supreme Court ruled that the old "separate but equal" doctrine was now out and the desegregation of public schools must be accomplished with "all deliberate speed." We didn't know it then, but the effects of this landmark ruling would affect our lives for years to come..

South Carolina had been awaiting the Supreme Court's ruling. Hoping to sustain its claim that "separate-but-equal" was still valid, it had been building new schools for blacks. Episcopal layman and Federal District Judge J. Waties Waring, who had earlier ruled against the exclusion of blacks from the South Carolina Democratic Primary, had also held in 1951 against school segregation in South Carolina's Clarendon County. That case was joined with others for the historic 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. However, by then, Judge Waring, born into the upper crust of Charleston society, had so wearied of the ostracism he sustained that he and his wife left the state. A younger Waring cousin, also an Episcopalian, stood ready to redeem the family name. Thomas Waring, Editor of Charleston's morning paper *THE NEWS & COURIER*, launched as vigorous an editorial campaign against the Supreme Court's school ruling as was seen anywhere in the South. With sophistication and literary acumen he fired salvo after salvo - as if on a holy mission to replicate the first shots on Fort Sumter one hundred years earlier. These editorial assaults were well underway in 1961 when our University of the South honored Tom Waring with a Doctorate of Civil Law. In 1954, and for more than a decade, such editorializing had its effect far beyond the parlors of proper Charleston society. The Ku Klux Klan began to ride again. Those higher on the social ladder formed the White Citizens Councils organization that would soon dominate the "massive resistance" efforts of white southerners.

Our arrival and beginning ministry in Dillon were routine and pleasant. With its implementing decision not issued until a year later, the impact of the Supreme Court's ruling was slow to be felt in small towns. Dillon is only a few miles from North Carolina where there was a more temperate response to the call for desegregation. This was evident in the newspaper from nearby Charlotte which many in Dillon read. While Charlestonians made icons of the old ways, Dillon was upcountry - removed from the plantation era and traditions. When Bishop Carruthers came to St. Barnabas in March, 1955, to ordain me to the priesthood, a friend we had known in seminary was the preacher. He was as black as coal and much liked by everyone at St. Barnabas. Indeed, impromptu arrangements followed the ordination and Inayet Masih of Pakistan became the preacher at a Sunday night Union Service at Dillon's Methodist Church. His distinct British accent certainly didn't hurt when it came to folks discerning the depth of his Christian devotion and not worrying about his color.

Sometime during that same year - 1955 - another small event illustrated the good relationship I believe existed between the people of St. Barnabas and myself. It had been advertised that the Ku Klux Klan would have an outdoor meeting at the edge of town to inform the citizenry of what they were about. Everyone was invited. I went and was standing close to the podium when it seemed appropriate to ask the robed speaker about his dislike of various classes of people including "foreigners". I suggested that his great-great-grandparents might have been called "foreigners" when they came to these shores from the old country. He was a bit consternated and said I should leave his rally. As I walked back toward my car I turned and saw three robed Klansmen fast approaching from behind. Thank goodness there were several deputy sheriffs right behind them! One of the robed men said to a deputy: "But, he said to get him!" They were sent back to their leader and I returned straight-away to the Rectory! The faithful at St. Barnabas were either bemused when they learned of the Klan encounter and/or worried for my safety, but there were none who had any sympathy for the Klan. We were blessed with the good influence of several strong and deeply committed women - most notably Elizabeth Hines Hall, sister of Bishop John Hines who would later become Presiding Bishop. Lib Hall was our Organist as well and would soon serve the Diocese and the National Church in expanded ways.

The relatively halcyon days would not last. The Supreme Court decreed on May 31, 1955, that school desegregation would be under Federal District Court jurisdiction; and, on November 25, 1955, the Interstate Commerce Commission banned segregation on trains and buses crossing state lines. In Montgomery, Alabama, it didn't matter a few days later to Mrs. Rosa Parks that the bus was for local transport when she was arrested on December 1st for refusing to yield her seat to a white man. That protest, together with the 1954 Supreme Court ruling, may be marked as the beginning of the modern Civil Rights Movement - itself built upon the suffering and witness of countless persons going back to Frederick Douglass and beyond. Mrs. Parks' bus ride brought on the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the emergence of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and a new movement that would soon spread..

The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina was in flux as to the matter of race. In 1953 the black parishes were invited to apply for admission to Convention. At the same time a resolution on the admission of blacks to Sewanee's School of Theology was tabled. White opposition to the Supreme Court's rulings was increasing daily and the ferment made its way into diocesan convention. The 1956 Convention saw the diocese's most influential layman, B. Allston Moore, Esq., introduce a resolution asserting "there is nothing morally wrong in voluntary recognition of racial differences" and "voluntary alignments can be both natural and Christian." It was adopted 94 to 43 after a substitute motion I introduced was defeated.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> It was much longer. I've quoted what appears in Bishop Thomas' history of the diocese.

For the full text see the Journal of the 1956 Diocesan Convention. Someday in my papers I may find my copy of what I had introduced as a substitute motion.

More vigorous than B. Allston Moore in denouncing the Supreme Court and all that was pro-integration was the Rev. Edward B. Guerry. Both were dedicated and hard-working Churchmen in a multitude of other roles, but together the two were in the forefront almost annually with resolutions critical of the National Council of Churches or others for liberal programs and pronouncements on race. By the mid-sixties such motions were rejected, but in the late 1950s they were part of the landscape. Scholarly and shy Bishop Carruthers seemed powerless to handle pressure from the conservatives and I think this contributed to his sudden death a month after diocesan convention in 1960. I talked about the situation a great deal with the Rev. Ralph Cousins in nearby Marion, South Carolina. Having transferred from Sewanee in 1952, Ralph and I were classmates at Virginia Seminary and had come to the diocese at the same time. We knew there were prominent white citizens around the state who opposed segregation, but they weren't acknowledged to exist by the likes of Editor Tom Waring. We needed to challenge the assumption there was a solid, monolithic white citizenry on the subject of race. Quoting from a later study to describe what came of our concern: "On the state level, one of the most positive calls for racial moderation during that period came with the publication in 1957 of a small book, *SOUTH CAROLINIANS SPEAK*. The volume, containing statements by twelve white 'moderate' leaders, was sponsored by several young white Protestant ministers....."<sup>2</sup> Before publication, Governor Timmerman learned of the project and denounced us publicly. Under cover of darkness we brought the booklets from the printer to our rectory. From there they went to the Dillon postoffice, some 18,000 copies being sent out statewide. One of the writers, Mrs. James Sanders of Gaffney, had her home bombed soon thereafter. Two of our small clergy group had to leave their jobs. Neither Ralph nor I had to leave - although we had been the primary force. We had successfully shown that white South Carolina had a mixed mind on the subject of integration and that change was possible. In 1958 Ralph would take a parish in Ohio and I would move to Atlanta - ostensibly to do graduate work at Emory. *Ostensibly* - because I didn't need another degree for what most concerned me. *SOUTH CAROLINIANS SPEAK* was accomplishing what it could, but it fell short of being a statement of what Christians should be doing and saying about the racial crisis. I was appalled at the scarcity of solid Christian writing on the subject. In the Episcopal Church about all I found was Bishop Scarlett's little book *CHRISTIANITY TAKES A STAND* - and it didn't have much on race. So, before leaving Dillon I began to line up contributors for a book that would have no equivocation about it. I contacted a number of distinguished seminary professors, parish clergy, the editor of a Christian journal, etc. They awaited a final outline as to how we would divide up such a book. However, other things happened that summer and winter of 1958 and I would soon be caught up in the founding of ESCRU. Others began to write the books we needed - like Kyle Haselden's *THE RACIAL PROBLEM IN CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE*. Harper, 1959.

---

<sup>2</sup> William Bagwell, *SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN THE CAROLINAS*. University of South Carolina Press, 1972. Page 153. Note: the files for our book project are at the South Caroliniana Library at the University of South Carolina in Columbia.

## "A CHURCH SOCIETY FOR RACIAL UNITY"

### AN IDEA ALMOST OVERLOOKED

We had some feeling of isolation in Dillon as the racial crisis escalated, so it was a welcome sign of concern from the larger Church when the Rev. Cornelius C. Tarplee came to visit sometime in 1957. As Rector of St. Paul's, Lynchburg, Virginia, from 1950 to 1957, Neil Tarplee had known the wearing effects of ministry as the storm clouds of Massive Resistance gathered over the South. Now by title: Associate Secretary, Division of Christian Citizenship, Department of Christian Social Relations of the Episcopal Church's national staff - he continued to live in Lynchburg. From there he quietly roamed the South with informal portfolio as itinerant pastor to clergy and laity who were hurting because of their witness. To further this special ministry, and with the assistance of the Rev. David Works, Neil arranged in the summer of 1958 for some of us to journey north to Eaton Centre, New Hampshire. There we could rest, share experiences, gather ideas for back home, and discuss the guidance we hoped would come from the General Convention soon to convene in Miami. At one of our sessions we were joined by the Rev. Robert O. Kevin who was summering near Eaton Centre. The discussion was about how to more effectively make a difference in the thinking of Church leaders. Bob Kevin, who had taught me Old Testament at the Virginia Seminary, offered advice somewhat on these lines: "You should form an unofficial and independent society which will be able to press its concerns without waiting for approval from the various organizational structures of the Church." We gave the idea only a little thought at the time and turned to what we hoped would come out of Miami. Toward the end of 1958 I talked with Neil about Dr. Kevin's suggestion and prepared *A Proposal: Formation in the Episcopal Church of a Church Society for Racial Unity*. Neil agreed to having his name on the document, along with mine, but because of his position in the official structure he couldn't take an overly active role. I got out my Royal portable and began an intensive letter writing campaign that would go on for months. Still at it in the summer of 1959, plans for implementation had emerged. Key persons formed committees to consider such matters as: Name, Statement of Purpose, Organizational Structure, Program, etc. The response to the proposal had been good. A time and place was set to move ahead..

### RALEIGH FOUNDING CONFERENCE.

St. Augustine's College, Raleigh, North Carolina, was the place. The dates were December 28-30, 1959. The New York Times headlined it: "*Protestants Aim For Racial Unity. Group Of 100 Organizing.....*"; The Living Church, in a full page account, opened with: "*One hundred Churchmen from all over the United States organized a society to promote racial unity....*"; The Raleigh Times headlined the Rev. Kilmer Myers' address: "*Failure to Understand Christ Said Caste Cause.*" The decision to name it THE EPISCOPAL SOCIETY FOR CULTURAL AND RACIAL UNITY was not without debate. Some cautioned that being for "racial unity" would be seen as advocating racial intermarriage. Having heard this concern prior to going to Raleigh, I had a sign painter in Atlanta inscribe an eleven foot oilcloth banner with the first

verse of Psalm 133: *Behold, How good and joyful a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!* Hung over the rostrum, this helped to define what we meant by the word "unity". The banner would later hang at the ESCRU office. (Then packed away until 1994, it now hangs on the wall behind my desk. I put it up after Henri Stines and I commiserated over the signs of separatism in some parts of the Church today.)

The opening of our *Statement Of Purpose* would further define our interest in Unity: *"The purpose of this Society shall be to encourage men to respond positively to God's call for unity in the Church. The unity of God with man, and man with man, is made by God in Baptism and Holy Communion. We commit ourselves to establish total participation in the Church for all persons without regard to race, class, or national origin; to give mutual support to all who act in this ministry of reconciliation; and to express this concern at parish levels and in a more creative witness throughout the community at large."* It remains today a viable proclamation about the nature of the Church. If some parts are now obsolete (hopefully!), like eliminating racial criteria for admission to Church institutions, other parts are as timeless as the final paragraph: *"We seek.... That condition of harmony among peoples which is the benefit of a mutual recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, so that brothers may dwell together in unity and see Him so lifted up that He will draw all men unto Him."*

It was determined that the Society would be governed by a Board of Directors - with representation from all of the Church's eight Provinces.<sup>3</sup> At least half would be laity. The Board would choose officers and appoint an Executive Director. There was consensus I should open an office in Atlanta. At the Board meeting, February 24-25, 1960, I was officially put at the helm. By then we had an office, a good printer, some foundation assistance<sup>4</sup> and were enrolling members. By August the membership was over one thousand.<sup>5</sup> It would grow to over 5,000 members and 28 local chapters.

---

<sup>3</sup> The first Board is listed here without full names, titles or location. The first four were the officers: John Lasso, Joseph Pelham, Mrs. Lee Hicks, Luther Foster, Kelley Barnett, John Burgess, I. H. Burney, Walter Dennis, Wilton Dillon, Wallace Johnson, William Kolb, Harold Lett, John McKnight, Gresham Marmion, Paul Moore, Kilmer Myers, Thomas Pettigrew, Massey Shepherd, Anson Stokes, Albert Stuart, William Van Meter, and McRae Werth. Only one woman on the list, but that would soon change! And it should be noted that a few of those listed would drop out of ESCRU, and others who became very active would be added.

<sup>4</sup> The Taconic Foundation, New York, funded by Audrey & Stephen Currier. Harold Fleming of Atlanta's Southern Regional Council helped me greatly in securing their aid.

<sup>5</sup> Some 33 linear feet of ESCRU files are at the Library of Atlanta's King Center - used by scholars periodically. I have relied chiefly on memory for this paper and a massive volume I prepared in 1983 - primarily for my four children. A copy of this volume is at the King Center, the South Caroliniana Library in Columbia, libraries of several Episcopal seminaries: Virginia, Sewanee, General, EDS/Cambridge, and at the Episcopal Church Archives in Austin. I have also consulted the Rev. Dr. John L. Kater's PhD dissertation, The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity: 1959-1965, McGill University, 1973.

### PERFECT or POSSIBLE: A CONTINUING TENSION

A thoughtful and almost full page editorial in THE LIVING CHURCH of January 17, 1960, discussed the tension that existed at the founding of ESCRU between those who felt the new organization "should be an uncompromising action arm...enunciating firmly the prophetic cry for Christian perfection" and those who saw it as a "strategic group, working seriously and skillfully to give practical effect to the positions taken on racial issues by Church governing bodies." The editorial saw a role for each approach and I thought it so good I sent a copy and a covering letter to our growing list. This tension remained with us, and a year later I sent out the same documents again! Whether ESCRU should pursue a *Moderate* approach or a *Militant* one? That was the question! The answer would come in the course of events. In seeking a synthesis, I had said in my February 3, 1960, letter: "If I am to err, I would rather it be on the side of militancy, as a fool for Christ's sake", but I also recognized "the art of the possible" when circumstances warranted. I eschewed *strident* militancy, usually attended by arrogance; and the infrequent, near-suicidal kind seen at times. It became increasingly apparent, however, that we in ESCRU had a prophetic role not everyone in the Church could be expected to undertake. In our first two years three things would happen which confirmed our posture as being more *Militant* than otherwise. At least that was how we were perceived by Episcopalians who followed the news. By ESCRU being *further out* or to the left, official structures in the Church could, with relative impunity, take stronger stands.

### STUDENTS SIT DOWN AND A MOVEMENT SPREADS

Though the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on schools and Rosa Parks' 1955 witness in Montgomery were watershed events in the emergence of the modern Civil Rights Movement, an equally important milestone came on February 1st, 1960, when four black students sat-in at a Greensboro, North Carolina, lunch counter to protest the "white only" policy. It soon spread. I was visiting my friend, the late Harold Fleming, at his office in the old Wesley Memorial Building on Atlanta's Auburn Avenue. At the helm of the influential Southern Regional Council, he had a keen sense of the role of the press in our changing Southern scene. Though a Baptist of sorts, he liked what he saw emerging in ESCRU and suggested we make a statement endorsing the "sit-downs" as they were then called. I took the matter to the first Board meeting and on March 6, 1960, the New York Times headline was: "*EPISCOPAL GROUP BACKS SITDOWNS. Hails Negro Store Protests and Urges Similar Fight on Church Racial Bans.*" Now, in 1995, it seems absurd to link our modest statement with an emerging militancy for ESCRU. But, the fact that a mainline denomination was perceived as endorsing the sit-ins was news back then! My guess is that the phone in Bishop Carpenter's Birmingham, Alabama, office rang off the hook on March 7th with complaints from irate Churchmen. Then he could say that ESCRU was a rag-tag group that didn't speak for Church. In just a few weeks, Arthur Walmsley's "*Background Paper on Student 'Sit-In' Protest Movement...*", straight from Church headquarters in New York, would give him more of a problem! A fine document, it reminded the Church that the Bishops' 1958 Pastoral Letter had said that at times "an open violation of the law as a matter of conscience is not only permissible but imperative."

### SIGNS & SYMBOLS - PRINTING & PROMOTION - NEW OFFICE & SOME POLITICS

It was of no small consequence that first year - 1960 - that two depictions of Our Lord offered themselves as excellent symbols of the concern that had spawned ESCRU. In juxtaposition they quietly proclaimed what we were *for* and what we were *against*. One came from St. Andrew's Church, Beacon, New York; possibly with an earlier Roman Catholic origin. It showed Christ, robed as High Priest, with His right hand raised to bless two figures kneeling before Him. One is black and the other white, and in stylized form they appear to be greeting each other. I put that scene straightaway on our Statement of Purpose flyer - along with the opening of Psalm 133! The other powerful symbol came from *The Living Church* issue of April 26, 1959 - but with a change I had made at the printshop. I've called it *The Capetown Placard* because originally it was a poster placed on the grounds of St. George's Cathedral in Capetown, South Africa: Our Lord Jesus hangs limply on the cross - a barbed wire fence of many cruel strands bisecting His Body. On either side kneel two figures, heads bowed as in prayer. One is black and the other white. Emblazoned on the barbed wire fence in the original was the single word *APARTHEID*. I had our excellent printer, John MacArthur, remove this and replace it with two words - one above the other: *SEGREGATION* and *SEPARATION*. As in the original, the words bisect the Body of Christ along with the strands of wire. Further comment is not necessary!

We did lots of printing, mimeographing and mailing at the ESCRU office - first located at 50 Whitehall Street in the more decrepit area of downtown Atlanta. The space was free - donated by prominent businessman Ben Massell. But that didn't last. We moved when the building superintendent said our Secretary, who was black, had to use the rest room in the basement! At 5 Forsyth Street, conveniently across from the newspaper building, we were the first of several liberal tenants - including the Southern Regional Council, Atlanta Council on Human Relations, American Civil Liberties Union, etc. From there I trundled our *Bulk Rate* mailings down the street to the Post Office. In the beginning some of these were huge - like one in 1960 with 30,000 names from the Seabury Press lists. Newsletters were handcrafted on my typewriter and the mimeograph. We sent out for offset the many articles we reprinted to send the membership. One of the first such was Episcopal layman (and recently Senator) Harris Wofford's address on Civil Disobedience - a timely piece in 1960 with the sit-ins gaining strength and other types of protest on the horizon.

Sometime that Presidential year Harris Wofford was at our house and we were discussing the Southern racial situation and the campaign. As I recall, he was John Kennedy's staff person on Civil Rights during the campaign - later helping to set up the Peace Corps. I had gotten 25 key religious leaders to jointly issue a statement to Kennedy and Nixon calling on them to affirm that they would not knowingly use restaurant or lodging facilities which were segregated. Signers included: Reinhold Niebuhr, Will Herberg, John Courtney Murray, Martin Luther King, Jr., Fr. John LaFarge, Roy Wilkins, Bishop Angus Dun and others. The Nixon people said he followed such guidelines and would continue quietly to do so. Kennedy's staff had a positive reply they were about to issue, but JFK's celebrated telephone call to Coretta King, while Martin was in jail, happened at that time and it was deemed a sufficient recognition of racial concerns and no response was forthcoming.

### FIRST ANNUAL MEETING: FROM EVENSONG TO EPISCOPAL SALVOS

It opened on January 8, 1961, with Evensong in Colonial Williamsburg's historic Bruton Parish Church and, for Patsy and me, only ended about a week later after I had dealt with a lot of fuss and fury from three Bishops: Virginia, Southern Virginia, and West Virginia! They were in an uproar that in their environs a group of Churchmen had dared to comment on the taboo subject of racial intermarriage! This was the very tame resolution that evoked their wrath:

The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity requests the House of Bishops to study, and then to state in its next pastoral letter, the position of the Church with respect to marriage between persons of different color. The Society recognizes the small incidence of such marriages, but urges a clear statement to guide clergy and laity, in view of the impression frequently given that such marriages violate biological and theological principles. The Society asserts for itself that there are neither theological nor biological barriers to marriage between persons of different color, and that laws forbidding such marriages are contrary to Christian teaching, natural law, and the Constitution of this country.

The press made much over this, employing extravagant headlines as could have been expected. In our sessions I had opposed our dealing with the subject at that point, but it was done and I fully agreed with the substance. The Bishops in Richmond and Norfolk had asserted that our statement was not "consonant with the policy or attitude" of the two dioceses. In my measured public response I offered to debate them on the matter. For the Bishop of West Virginia more was needed - not because he said our stand was "shocking and offensive" - but because he charged that ESCRU's leadership included "card-carrying Communists." We were still too close to McCarthyism to make light of this. I flew to Charleston, West Virginia, and after due consultation, Bishop Campbell publicly retracted his communist charges.

As I have read anew the 10 page Newsletter I prepared after Williamsburg, I am reminded of what a vibrant gathering it was.<sup>6</sup> The fine program and arrangements were devised by Layton Zimmer, Harold Lett, Arthur Sherman, McRae Werth, Mary Hotchkiss, Ron Miller, and Walter Dennis. The keynote speaker was Dr. Kenneth Clark, noted psychologist, member of an Advisory Committee for the Presiding Bishop, and later a member of the ESCRU Board. Other speakers and preachers included: Joseph Pelham, Theodore Gibson, Will Campbell, Thomas Pettigrew, Sarah Patton Boyle, Paul Moore, Francis Walter, and Neil Tarplee. James Farmer of the NAACP then was a major speaker. Another year, as Director of CORE, he would address us again.

We lost some members after the Williamsburg meeting. I was sorry to see them go; but, in retrospect, perhaps it was just as well. The Church's official bodies had to move slowly. ESCRU didn't. Our increasingly perceived militancy made it easier for the rest of the Church to take a bit stronger stand. Without the effects of Williamsburg, I wonder if we would have responded as we did to the next major challenge in 1961.

---

<sup>6</sup> ESCRU Newsletter, February 15, 1961, found in the ESCRU archives at Atlanta's King Center, and in the large volume previously referenced which has all newsletters I prepared.

A PRAYER PILGRIMAGE: NEW ORLEANS-JACKSON-SEWANEE-DEARBORN-DETROIT

I was on a two-week tour of ESCRU chapters in the late spring of 1961 when a caller found me in Richmond. The "Freedom Rides" had begun and there had been violence in Alabama. A bus was burned in Anniston. The caller, a member in California, said something like: "Let's support the Freedom Rides by having an Episcopal one right away!" I thanked him for the idea and began to talk with others. The result was *The Prayer Pilgrimage to the 60th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, September, 1961*. To this day I remain pleased with what we projected - and accomplished. Not again, until our involvement in Selma, would we so distinctly highlight in one event both our support of "the Movement" and our witness to renewal and reform within the Church. Martin King said of our plans, in part: "*The Episcopal clergymen who will ride on this pilgrimage, using terminal facilities at the bus stations enroute, will implement the spirit of the Freedom Rides fully since they will use restroom, eating, and other facilities without regard to race.....*"<sup>7</sup> When the chartered bus with 28 clergy pulled away from New Orleans' Dryades Street YMCA the morning of September 12th we were fearful and uncertain as to what lay ahead. Prayers were said beside St. Martin's School on the highway out. Later, in a small Mississippi town, we went in the Episcopal Church and prayed again. Our first scheduled stop was Vicksburg's *All Saints' Junior College* where the Rev. John Allin received us politely and we talked.

Our message for the future Primate was in a statement we prepared in New Orleans the night before: "*....the Church must become, in every phase of its life,, that which by the grace of God it is - one Holy Fellowship where racial barriers have been done away..... At the beginning of our journey, we shall see segregation in the Body of Christ as found in some of the educational facilities we are to visit..... a tragedy of immense proportions that they have lagged behind the state in the removal of racial restrictions. At the end of our pilgrimage we shall consider the more subtle and difficult question of separation, both within the Church and the community. At a suburb of Detroit we will confer with local clergy on the role of the churches in overcoming discriminatory housing...."*

This was the word taken on to Sewanee and Dearborn by a remnant of our group after 15 of us were arrested at Jackson's Trailways Bus Terminal and put in the city jail. We were courteous - but firm; as was Captain Ray of the Jackson police. Though we were all properly attired in our gray or black suits and clerical collars<sup>8</sup>, those who were black could not be served in the coffee shop. At the jail we were segregated by race and remained confined for a week. As General Convention opened, there was much interest in our incarceration. Upon our release we reached Detroit in time for the ESCRU Dinner, addressed by Joost de Blank, Archbishop of Capetown; and a final message from the pilgrim priests was read. In it we stressed our respect for those in the South who were faithfully ministering under hardship, our concern for problems in the North and in the Church everywhere - like clergy placement along racial lines.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. King's comments on Pilgrimage: ESCRU Newsletter, Sept. 17, 1961.

<sup>8</sup> When clergy came South to witness, I discouraged irregular appearance: sun glasses hide the person too much, and in the winter big furry hats looked unnecessarily Bolshevik!

The twenty-eight<sup>9</sup> on the Prayer Pilgrimage were, unknowingly in 1961, an early vanguard in the changing *persona* of the clergy wrought by the upheavals of the Sixties. Though still ahead of their time, the hundreds who went to Selma in 1965 were in a newly honorable<sup>10</sup> tradition of witness insofar as the role of white clergy was concerned. The stereotypical sweet & mild Vicar was disappearing fast into the covers of English novels. In his place came the outspoken activist, picket sign in hand and ready - if necessary - to be hauled away in the paddy wagon. Being arrested became a badge of honor not as readily proffered by police who increasingly tolerated protest that was not disruptive. Throughout the Movement I opposed "going limp" - requiring the constabulary to literally carry one to the wagon. But I respected many who saw it differently. To me, our protest was against the system. Captain Ray in Jackson was simply doing his duty in arresting us in 1961; as was Captain Marler in Atlanta several years later. That we would soon bring suit against Captain Ray, alleging false arrest, et al., was a legal requirement in a pivotal case aimed at the system and which we eventually<sup>11</sup> would win before the U. S. Supreme Court.

There were many accolades for the Prayer Pilgrims at the Detroit General Convention. But it was awkward when I ran into my friend mentioned earlier, Dr. Mollegen. I think he wanted to say something pleasant, but he knew good people from his native Mississippi who felt we had "set race relations back" by our arrest in Jackson. I didn't have opportunity to tell him of the less prominent Episcopalians who had welcomed us to Mississippi. With a great and audible groan of despair, Molly simply had to walk away from me and we never talked again. We needed in that period to have someone bring the old moderates and the new militants together for better mutual understanding. In our predominantly white Church, such would have helped us all to feel better..... but the initiative and agenda setting was done elsewhere.

---

<sup>9</sup> Gilbert Avery, Lee Belford, Myron Bloy, Malcolm Boyd, James Breeden, David Brooks, Robert Chapman, John Crocker., Joseph Dickson, John Dorr, James Evans, John Evans, Robert Fortna, Quinland Gordon, James Guinan, Robert Hampshire, DeWitt Hastie, James Jones, Jack Malpas, John Morris, Robert Pierson, Morris Samuel, Geoffrey Simpson, Robert Taylor, William Wendt, Powell Woodward, Merrill Young, Layton Zimmer.

<sup>10</sup> Not everyone thought a lively witness to be honorable, as Virginia Seminary in 1965 which opposed letting faculty & students go to Selma. Some did so anyway.

<sup>11</sup> One of the Prayer Pilgrimage clergy, Bob Pierson was Governor Nelson Rockefeller's son-in-law - which factor intensified press interest and prompted us to title our suit *Pierson v. Ray*. Carl Rachlin of New York was our attorney and was due to present our case before the Supreme Court in the fall of 1966. Meanwhile, Patsy and I were also involved in liberal Georgia politics, successfully mounting a *write-in* campaign in the 1966 fall gubernatorial election which, with our further legal challenge, brought the choosing of a new Governor for Georgia to a halt. Thus, the Supreme Court advised us that *Pierson v. Ray* would be held until the next term so that *Morris v. Fortson* (Fortson was Georgia's Secretary of State) could be heard and Georgia could have a Governor! Charles Morgan, Jr., was the inspired attorney in this case which by then was titled *Fortson v. Morris*. It was interesting to have one case I had initiated get bumped on the calendar of the Supreme Court by another case carrying my name! We lost in the Georgia case!

## A CONTINUING PROBLEM AT SEWANEE

When the retired Bishop of Florida, Frank A. Juhan, wrote from Sewanee to thank Patsy and me for a small gift to the University of the South in 1956 - we didn't know that in a few years I would be *persona non grata* on the Tennessee "domain" he and Dr. Edward McCrady tended. By then the two of them were somewhat *non grata* themselves, for many at Sewanee wanted to see their beautiful campus leave its Confederate heritage behind. The 1952 exodus of seminary faculty and students had brought changes, but the housecleaning was not complete. The old segregated ways still ruled at *The Sewanee Inn & Claramont Restaurant*. Right on the main street and owned by the University, it was operated by "Miss Clara" - almost as much a fixture as Vice-Chancellor McCrady. With deep low-country roots, McCrady shared the conservative racial views of Charleston Editor Tom Waring (Doctor of Civil Law, Sewanee 1961), and South Carolina's Sewanee Trustees: B. Allston Moore and Edward Guerry. Whatever else, these people were fighters - and chaplains - for a disappearing old order! Thusly strengthened, I believe it was McCrady and Juhan who stretched out the agony - making it necessary for us in ESCRU to pay several return visits. We had hoped the initial one by "Prayer Pilgrims" would suffice for opening the Inn and Restaurant.<sup>12</sup> It is easier, though, to contend with blatant evil outside the Church than to joust with fallen angels within! I was very glad when all got settled at Sewanee - and especially when the ESCRU Sewanee Scholarship Fund was able to assist the first undergraduate black student enrolled there! And I was pleased in 1984 to send the Library at St. Luke's a copy of the massive volume on ESCRU I've noted earlier and various other papers sent to Ed Camp. I like Sewanee and almost went to college there - having been accepted by Sewanee and Columbia in New York. We Southerners have a thing about our region - *for better or for worse!* Perhaps it was wise I chose Morningside Heights over this lovely mountain Domain. There could be a risk in that setting of distant Southern drums stirring the heart the wrong way.

## TIME TO FOCUS ON THE NORTH

Amidst the intensity of the Sewanee conflict, it was timely that a smoldering dispute between the Long Island ESCRU chapter and diocesan authorities took me to Brooklyn for a witness action outside St. John's Hospital in the late spring of 1962. The Prayer Pilgrimage itinerary had included Dearborn and northern housing segregation, but this Episcopal facility in Brooklyn revealed an overt "southern" form of segregation. One floor was reserved chiefly for white patients! In defending the hospital, Suffragan Bishop Sherman had said in part: "...Negroes are a gregarious race (one of their most loveable traits), and they like to visit in sixes and sevens." We would hear more about such incredible paternalism when the Second Annual Meeting convened in Chicago, June 21-24, 1962. Among the speakers: Harry Golden of *The*

---

<sup>12</sup> It is wearying still - to deal with McCrady's casuistry! See Regents' resolution of October 12, 1961. Or talk with some clergy who returned for ESCRU in April, 1962: Robert Chapman, James Breeden, Robert Hunter. The late Quinlan Gordon was also there. Ask them about the dramatic incident when a white kitchen employee from the Inn - probably meaning harm to them - crashed his car on the road ahead and was given last rites by Fr. Bob Chapman as he lay dying on the pavement!

*Carolina Israelite*, ESCRU Board members John Burgess and Chandler Sterling, Edwin "Bill" Berry of the Chicago Urban League, and Episcopal layman G. Mennen Williams. Our Chicago Chapter, which hosted the meeting, remained throughout one of the strongest local chapters. By June of 1962 - after two & one-half years - there were 2,600 members nationwide and 12 chapters, with more forming. At that point, 13 clergy and 30 lay persons had resigned their membership - mostly because of our perceived militancy - but new members were being added steadily. I was travelling a great deal - visiting chapters, speaking & preaching, representing ESCRU at religious and secular Civil Rights meetings: like helping plan a "National Conference on Religion and Race" initiated by Mathew Ahmann - my friend & counterpart in a Roman Catholic organization. There were always newsletters and other materials to prepare for members. And there were times when it was appropriate that I just be somewhere as a sign of support from the Church and/or ESCRU. As John Burgess had said in Chicago, ESCRU had its primary tasks within the Church - but we also were part of the wider Movement. Thus, that summer of 1962 - when Martin King was in jail in Albany, Georgia - it was time for me to go down. Flying back to Atlanta several days later, Coretta King and I sat next to each other and talked about our children - and their schools. Atlanta's public schools were not integrated. An absurd plan was projected, starting at the upper levels and not reaching our little ones for years. I told Mrs. King we liked the Church-related school our kids attended. She was interested and I was to get back to her. Such was the beginning of a major confrontation for ESCRU!

#### 1963: MARTIN LUTHER KING III REJECTED - MARTIN JR. STILL HAS A DREAM !

There were good things in 1963: The great *March To Washington* was capped off by Martin King's glorious "*I have a dream!*" speech - and the nation moved forward a bit!<sup>13</sup> Episcopalians welcomed the Presiding Bishop's excellent *Whitsuntide* message - and the Church was a little stronger!<sup>14</sup> We held our *Third Annual Meeting* in Washington, November 14-16. Speakers: Burke Marshall, James Breeden, William Stringfellow, Wyatt Tee Walker, Thomas Thrasher, Arthur Walmsley, Louis Lomax. Six days later the Sun stood still in Dallas, and we all wept! From a clergy meeting in Schenectady, I went to the Monastery at West Park to mourn - telling Brother Somebody that I appreciated his apology for their St. Andrew's School at Sewanee being segregated, but had he not heard that the President lay dead in Texas? (*He was slow to discern the gravity of the racial crisis, but there was great potential - or so we had felt earlier on June 17th when I greeted JFK at the White House along with several score "religious leaders".*) Now he was gone, and I would fly south to National Airport, walk along the Potomac to Arlington Cemetery and wait below the bridge's archway as the dirgeful caisson came across. After taps: a walk back to the airport and a flight to Atlanta. There had been picketing of the Lovett School until the day before the President's death and it would soon resume. We had to get ready.

---

<sup>13</sup> ESCRU chapters turned out hundreds! I found a shaded perch up a tree - down the Mall a bit.

<sup>14</sup> Appropriately, Arthur Walmsley was behind this. At ESCRU, we put up a large framed copy.

Atlanta's Lovett School was "church-related"- in the tradition of many such schools in the Northeast. By charter, the Dean of the Cathedral was Chairman of the Trustees. A full-time Chaplain was an Episcopal priest. The Book of Common Prayer was used in the school's chapel. Graduation was held at St. Philip's Cathedral. It was an Episcopal school - and segregated! The Bishop of Atlanta didn't agree! Some 13,000 copies of the diocesan paper were destroyed one month because Episcopal layman Ralph McGill had been interviewed and was too critical of the Diocese. It was reprinted without his comments. Early on the Bishop's chief assistant threatened revocation of my license (done later) and suggested our children might be affected if I pursued the matter. They were. We withdrew them from Lovett and put them in an excellent Presbyterian school that had the first integrated schooling in Atlanta. A few others withdrew their children from Lovett. A Jewish Trustee resigned from the predominantly Episcopal Board.

These unpleasanties occurred after I had advised Mrs. King that it appeared Lovett might consider her children. The Diocese had declared that Church facilities were open to all; the Bishop declining to allow the questioning of specific institutions. Martin and Coretta King applied for their son, Martin King, III. He was turned down because of his race - as were others.. ESCRU called a meeting of the Executive Committee and Chapter representatives in Atlanta on September 15-17, 1963. The Lovett Protest began. Picket lines of clergy and laity from Atlanta and ESCRU chapters were at Lovett's entrance - carrying the stark Capetown Placard. When the graduation was at St. Philip's, with vested clergy and crucifer, the picketers were Atlantans outside their own Cathedral. Later, Frs. Bob Hunter & Kim Dreisbach fasted in the Cathedral and Dr. King came to see them to show his support for the protest.

The protest was painful for all of us. Our children understood and agreed. Within the Church in Atlanta there were many like-minded folk and we didn't often see the others - including most of the clergy. Many had never been comfortable having the ESCRU office here. Atlanta was an overgrown small town then. Patsy tells of meeting a veteran priest of the diocese who, upon learning her identity, gushed: "Oh, dear! You're not married to him!" My license in the diocese was restored by the Bishop after the just formed national clergy association sent a lawyer priest to see him - with Court Reporter for possible deposition purposes!

Those who came from afar to picket were often put up at our house. It was my style to introduce clergy to our children - with the title "Mr." or "Fr." according to the guest's preference. After around 20 or so clergy visitors, our younger son - six year old John, Jr. - asked me one evening: "Dad... how come there are more Father *picatees* than Mister *picatees*?" He was right! The Catholic or *High Church* folk evidenced a greater Social Concern & Justice commitment than found in my own Evangelical or *Low Church* tradition. Such was my experience in ESCRU.

Lovett has had black students for a long time now. Indeed, it's been years since our younger daughter chose to go there for her last two years of high school. We were glad for that - like we were glad long ago when old friends and wise leaders arrived to guide the Cathedral and the Diocese. From our new condominium down the street, the Diocesan Center and St. Philip's are always in sight.

### 1964: A VERY BUSY YEAR !

Five lengthy ESCRU Newsletters tell of a very busy agenda that pivotal year. Pivotal for us and the *Movement* - which began to see legislative successes and more publicly noted violence - e.g. *the three young men buried in an earthen dam in Mississippi*. There had always been violence - mostly unnoticed. It came to the fore in 1963 when Medgar Evers was slain in his driveway by an Episcopal layman, and when the four young girls died in the bombing of the Birmingham Church.<sup>15</sup> Patsy and I had been alerted to prospective danger ever since "the Crank" began calling with threatening messages after the Prayer Pilgrimage in 1961. In the beginning the phone company said they couldn't do anything. We got a second and unlisted line for the use of family and would take the regular phone off the hook, tucking it under a pillow to muffle off-the-hook buzzing. In the beginning, the "Crank" had a restrained, somewhat teeth-clenched voice.... sophisticated and with no obscene words. Probably an Episcopalian. Over several years, however, it was the same voice that grew increasingly adept in the use of four letter words and dire threats. By then the phone company was more helpful. We kept a log of all incoming calls - time and if it was the Crank. The phone company only told me that many of the Crank calls came from a large office, with a ten line rotary system, in the First National Bank Tower. They had sent someone to talk with the head of that office and were told something like "Oh, I think I can see that this is stopped!" From the lobby directory I noted several big firms and wondered which one housed a very sick person - probably someone with a private office. I never learned who it was, but the calls stopped!

JAIL AGAIN - As I noted earlier, Captain Marler was very courteous when, at the request of the owner of a major Atlanta hostelry, he had to arrest an integrated group of us in the facility's cocktail lounge. With representatives from SNCC, SCLC, and the NAACP, I was in good company! One of my cellmates is now - in 1995 - our Congressman! But there was little humor present that evening of January 11, 1964, when the owner learned my identity. He lived across the street from the Lovett School! Perhaps nowadays he may find some humor in remembering that it was our sit-in and his subsequent litigation or threat-thereto that led the Georgia General Assembly to make mixed drinks legal in Georgia! That's too complex to explain here. This same gentleman also was responsible for the constitutionality of the 1964 public accommodations law being upheld by the Supreme Court in his *Heart-of-Atlanta v. United States of America* case! Sad that such was, indeed, reflective of some of Atlanta's power-structure "heart" even as they profited by our progress in the 1960s.

---

<sup>15</sup> I didn't go to many funerals back then, but did lead a clergy group to the service for Medgar. He had been our friend in continuing visits to Jackson after the pilgrimage. Recently, I have been pleased to see that his widow is now at the helm of the NAACP. Whether always filled with vitality, the NAACP has an honorable legacy and is still needed. It was to Roy Wilkins' assistant, Episcopal layman John Morsell, in their offices at Columbus Circle in New York, that I handed my first NAACP dues. For more on Episcopalian Byron De La Beckwith see Reed Messengill's *Portrait Of A Racist*. St. Martin's Press. 1994. NOTE: I trust it is evident to the reader by now that I am not presuming to write Civil Rights History..... only some of what went on in ESCRU and in the Episcopal Church during the *Civil Rights Era* and some of the instances where ESCRU and the wider movement met up. Readers of this treatise should have a working knowledge of the *Movement* in the Sixties..

MISSION TO HATTIESBURG - With Presbyterians taking the lead in a witness for voter registration in Mississippi, starting January 21, 1964, ESCRU chapters sent 11 Episcopal clergy to join an ecumenical group that had official support from some denominations. At that time our official folks in New York were restrained from assisting such ventures - just as some other national staff were told not to join any Lovett School picket lines when they came to Atlanta for a conference. Not to worry! The pressure on Church officialdom would go up or down; and, while we leaned on "281 (or "815") at times, we praised them just as often.

MORE STAFF FOR ESCRU - Through the good offices of Max Hahn of the Marshall Field Foundation, I secured a grant for a Board approved position with ESCRU that would focus on the South. Henri A. Stines accepted our call and moved to Atlanta from Detroit with his wife and three daughters in April, 1964. He would soon be off to St. Augustine where SCLC had things happening and the three wives of Episcopal Bishops and others, like Fr. Bob Hampshire, made a witness. Henri's daughter Denise would join the two of us and the local NAACP head, Mr. W. W. Law, in an Easter Sunday witness in Savannah the next year. Henri and Francis Walter were the last from ESCRU to see Jonathan Daniels alive in the Hayneville jail. *Requiescat in Pace*: Jonathan and Henri. - It was also in 1964 that the Board gave Malcolm Boyd an ESCRU appointment as "Field Representative", affording him a "national niche" for his gifted and prolific pen. We were already distributing his trilogy of plays - *Study in Color*.<sup>16</sup> - In late 1964, A. R. "Kim" Dreisbach, Jr. was called as ESCRU's Associate Director. He would arrive in Atlanta with his wife and two children early the next year - in time for lingering Lovett problems and as Selma took center stage.

"WHEN THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS FULLY COME they were all together with one accord in one place...." May 17, 1964 was the 10th Anniversary of the Supreme Court school desegregation ruling and it was Whitsunday or Pentecost: the Church's beginning - when the Holy Spirit was given. Having met in Atlanta February 2-4, ESCRU's Board issued *A CALL TO WITNESS* - that the inclusive nature of the Church might become more a reality. It was suggested that faithful persons consider whether they might transfer to a parish with a racial makeup different from their own: black or white. As noted in later Newsletters, some did.

FREEDOM HOUSE - McCOMB - The summer of 1964 saw several hundred persons go to Mississippi to help in local programs in the black community. I was at McComb a while - where other ESCRU members had been earlier. See our March 14, 1965, Newsletter for photos I took after Mrs. Quinn's home and a church were bombed. Fr. Harry Bowie, with the NCC then, still ministers in McComb today!

DR. KING AT GENERAL CONVENTION - Bishop James Pike preached at our 4th Annual Meeting in St. Louis before Convention, but *our finest hour* was on October 12, 1964, when Martin stood before some 1900 persons at our Dinner, extolled the role & service of ESCRU, and then delivered his clarion call for justice. He had been introduced to the House of Deputies the day before, and the day following the ESCRU dinner it was announced he had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

<sup>16</sup> See his *ON THE BATTLE LINES*. Morehouse. 1964. Of 27 writers, 20 were ESCRU members.

## 1965: TEAR GAS, GLORY & DEATH AT SELMA RIOT & RAGE IN WATTS

HOUSEHOLD MATTERS - As it unfolded, 1965 was absorbed by the events above, but there were others. The Church had a new Presiding Bishop - John Hines. I wished him well in a Newsletter, assuring some anxious people I knew they shouldn't worry because he was a Southerner. In fact, they should be reassured because he had not been the first choice of the conservative Southern "block" in the House of Bishops! And ESCRU had new officers: Mike Peabody, Jim Breeden, John Stevens and Jean Frey. We were still growing - with over 1000 clergy members and 3 or 4 times that in the laity. With more staff arriving and foundation seed money ending, finances were tight. At the outset of 1965, however, there was no foretelling of later events which may have started the *slow denouement* of ESCRU.

An early January 1965 Newsletter headline said "Executive Council Retreats On Race". Bishop John Allin of Mississippi had led a move to restrict Episcopal Church support for National Council of Churches' programs in the South. There also were comments on what the Episcopal Church was spending on race relations as compared to other denominations. Ruffled feathers soon were smoothed when the national Church rescinded earlier actions and gave full support to the various ecumenical programs that conservatives had fought.

An important household matter was the oft raised subject of *Clergy Placement* - seeking reform of the traditional assignment or calling of black clergy only to posts generally held by blacks.... in short: the Church should be at least an *Equal Opportunity Employer!* The September, 1965, "Mission To Montana" - where the House of Bishops was meeting - included Jesse Anderson, Sr., Jim Breeden, Quinland Gordon, Bob Hood, Kenneth Hughes and Henri Stines.

SELMA AND ITS AFTERMATH - The name of the town came to denote a series of events that emanated from the tear gas of March 7, 1965. My best recollection as to why I was there that day is this: A few on the ESCRU Board didn't want us to worry about internal "churchy" matters like Sewanee and Lovett as much as devoting that energy to supporting the Movement. I readily disagreed about any lessening of focus within the Church, while continuing to appreciate our role in the Movement. Upon returning to Atlanta from an ESCRU meeting, I called my friend Andrew Young to inquire about the status of things in Selma where I knew SCLC was active. He invited me to fly there with him the next day - March 7th. By the time we got into town a march over the bridge toward Montgomery had begun. With Jim Bevel and others we sat in the car, almost under the bridge, and on the radio heard the attack on peaceful marchers above and we began to smell the tear gas. Back at Brown's Chapel we pitched in helping the wounded. At some point I said to Andy that clergy from around the nation should be asked to come to Selma. He put me on the phone with Dr. King who was in Atlanta and I repeated the idea. Martin asked me to draft a Call. After telephoning to his office what I had drafted, I went to Selma's Holiday Inn - and for two days stayed on the phone with people in ESCRU, various denominational offices, my friends in the Roman Catholic and Jewish organizations, etc. Food came by room service. At some point, there were gruff voices outside and pounding on my

door. I stayed quiet! When I finally emerged and returned to Brown's Chapel, over 100 Episcopal clergy were among those who had come to show their support of Dr. King and his call for help. What happened in the days following is history. You can read about it elsewhere. There was "glory" in Selma because of the vast assembly of caring, mostly religiously motivated, people who came from afar and joined with the Christian people of Selma for a great ecumenical witness! There was "glory" in the faces of poverty level women who fed long lines of us; and there was "glory" in the faces of Roman Catholic nuns who had joined such an assembly!<sup>17</sup>

The Episcopal Church was well represented in all phases of 'Selma', with the Presiding Bishop and other New York staff, six other bishops, a seminary dean, seminary students, cathedral deans, etc. I estimated in an April 4th Newsletter that 500 of our clergy were at Selma at one time or another. Goldie Sherrill was our selected "all the way" walker for the trek to Montgomery. Among those who served in other ways there was Henry Parker, Morris Samuel, Earl Neil and Marc Oliver who stayed longer. Seldom has the Church been as vibrant in such numbers. Here was glory! And, sadly, there was shame! Shame - as church folk were denied entrance to our parish in Selma, or forced to sit in the back, or receive Communion last!

And there was death - outside a Selma restaurant, on the road back from Montgomery, and in nearby Hayneville..... not to speak of Jimmy Lee Jackson earlier. Hayneville was where Jonathan Daniels would die. He and Judith Upham, both students at the seminary in Cambridge, had come to Selma in one of the early waves. As the thousands left to go home they saw the need for a "continuing ministry of presence" and they stayed longer. We offered some assistance to Jonathan during a return stay in Selma. He knew there was danger in his easily recognized Volkswagen, so he got a rental car. He wore a clerical collar (as worn by some Roman Catholic seminarians: a black band at the front) because he was there in Christ's name and as His witness! His deep faith was never hidden - when with his friends in the *movement*, or with parishioners at St. Paul's Church. It was with him on August 20, 1965, when Thomas Coleman shot him dead in Hayneville. He had seen what was coming and had pushed young Ruby Sales to the side as Coleman fired. He died instantly. A Roman Catholic priest, Richard Morrisroe, was seriously wounded and still walks with a limp. An Atlanta friend offered his small plane and we flew north with Jonathan's body toward New Hampshire. Ruby Sales is now a student at his seminary. Blessed Jonathan - Seminarian & Martyr - is now remembered each year in the Church's Calendar. Dr. King rightly called Jonathan "....a true follower of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ." So that others might know him this way, I began the effort in 1990 to add Jonathan to the Calendar. Many writers only see a "Civil Rights Worker." Read what Jonathan wrote and find a "Disciple of Jesus Christ." We are in what Episcopal layman & Yale professor Stephen Carter recently has called a "*Culture of Disbelief*" where "religious devotion is trivialized."

---

<sup>17</sup> For more on Selma see previously referenced bound volume at several locations, with Newsletters for 3/14/65, 4/4/65, 6/24/65, 8/1/65, 10/28/65 and 10/28/65 Addendum. Two books on Jonathan Daniels: William J. Schneider's 1967, Seabury, *The Jon Daniels Story*; reissued 1992, Morehouse, *American Martyr: The Jon Daniels Story*. And: Charles W. Eagles, 1993, Univ. North Carolina, *Outside Agitator. Jon Daniels.... etc.*

**RIOT AT WATTS - WHITE LIBERALS JOLTED** - The agenda for our 5th Annual Meeting in September at Jackson, Mississippi, had been announced. We would hear from Jonathan Daniels about his ministry, and developing plans for the *Selma Interreligious Project* that Francis Walter would soon head. "Interreligious Issues" and "Native Americans" were agenda topics.... as was, portentously, "Frontier In A Northern City". Before the ink was dry, "Watts" happened! Rioting started on August 11, 1965, in the Watts District of Los Angeles.... for all practical purposes: a "northern" city. With an estimated \$40,000,000 in property loss or damage and 34 dead, the nation was jolted..... especially white liberals. And, moreso, white liberals in the North who had naively believed America's racial problems were confined to the Southern states! I knew these sweet & good people in ESCRU. After my speech they would pat me on the back for being so brave and staying down South! They were genuine, albeit prospectively paternalistic, when they said to me: "I've never met a Negro, and do wish I could know some." They would look puzzled when I said that it was possible the South might work through its problems sooner than the North. We live more closely together than you do in Northern communities - so there is often some degree of "knowingness" across racial lines upon which we may build eventually. But there was nothing to alleviate the anxiety which Watts and its aftermath the next year would bring. Violence outside the South would become commonplace. Sometimes, as in Chicago, it was ugly white violence. In ESCRU there was the beginning of some gentile white backlash. When we grieved at Jonathan's graveside in Keene in late August, the seeds of an unraveling national consensus were germinating - some labeled *White Flight* and some *Black Power*.

### **1966 "THE TIMES AREN'T EASY, NOR IS ESCRU'S SOUL SEARCHING" 1967**

The dreary tone above came from me in a late December, 1966, Newsletter note captioned "The Way Ahead?" and opening with: "We carried much frustration to New York, resolved some of it in the witness at '815', and went into the Board meeting with more than a modicum left. Move the office North? More ESCRU focus on city ghetto areas? A staff resignation and rejection of same. Of such was a turbulent session made....." That Board meeting came after our 6th Annual Meeting held at the diocesan Synod House and at St. Philip's and St. Martin's in Harlem, November 10-13, 1966. The agenda included South Africa, Washington Home Rule, Programs of '815' and what General Convention in 1967 would do. But, foremost - that Annual Meeting looked at "The Crisis in Northern Urban Areas" and "The Movement: Fragmentation and the Future." Earlier in 1966 we had issued the 2nd ESCRU *SPECIAL REPORT*, this on "THE CHURCH AND THE RIOTS"; and the just concluded meeting had focused on inner city needs. But, there was no satisfying of some on the Board who looked for a magical potion for the continuing "ghastly" riots around the country. It was thought that moving the office north would help; or that closing down other and too "churchy" ESCRU concerns would free us to bring peace to the streets! Perhaps the popularity and success of ESCRU in recent years gave some an unrealistic perception of our strength. The new thrusts were a distortion of what I had felt our mission to be and I opposed them. The soul-searching wasn't easy!

WOBBLY, BUT STILL ALIVE - During the 1966-67 period of ESCRU soul searching, life continued. An early 1966 summary showed 28 local chapters.<sup>18</sup> Ironically the first local Chapter, New York, disappeared that year. A few were not very active - while others appear steady.<sup>19</sup> <> The Rev. David Nickerson came to Atlanta from Durham to succeed Henri Stines as Director of our 'Southern Field Service Program.' <> ESCRU's President reported to the January 1966 Board meeting that possibly the Diocese of Florida would alter the situation at Fernandina Beach where they had planned to fund improvements for a "white" parish and a "black" parish on the same city block. Henri Stines had begun our interest in this in 1965 and I pressed for continued attention. With riots spreading in 1966 some did not give such "churchy" concerns a high priority. <> Our Chicago Chapter created an annual *Bishop Lichtenberger Human Rights Award*, presenting it posthumously to Jonathan Daniels. I was there in early 1966 when Jonathan's mother, Constance, received it and spoke movingly. In 1968, after I had left my ESCRU position, they gave me the lovely award certificate. With Mattie Hopkins' signature, it hangs now in my study under the Psalm 133 Banner. My remarks in response were, perhaps, my swan song to ESCRU.<sup>20</sup> <> About another concern, I wrote a nine page article on *Racism In Southern Africa And American Initiative* for the Summer, 1966, issue of NEW SOUTH published by our neighbors, The Southern Regional Council. <> Noted earlier: on June 1, 1966, Dr. King visits fasting clergy at St. Philip's in Atlanta to show support. On September 12th, Lovett announces it will accept black students in 1967! Whew! <> A law suit against the all white jury system of Lowndes County is won in the spring of 1966. Hayneville, where Jonathan was killed, is there. Henri Stines and I were at Coleman's trial when the all-white jury found him innocent. The suit, brought by Charles Morgan's Atlanta ACLU office, was joined by ESCRU staff. Among other friendly types, the ACLU was at 5 Forsyth Street. <> Plans for 7th Annual Meeting in Seattle, September 15-17, 1967 include Fr. Quinland Gordon, Bishop Edward Crowther, Saul Alinsky - and lots more soul searching on the future. <> ESCRU's initial benefactors, Stephen & Audrey Currier, were lost at sea in early 1967.

PRO CIVIL RIGHTS AND ANTI VIETNAM WAR ISSUES - Viewed separately at first, Dr. King and others would later link them. In 1965 I said: "ESCRU has taken no position on the Vietnam War issue, nor should we in my estimation...." And in 1967 I saw "....the rush into the peace field as escapism from unfinished business, although I am myself now much more of a dove...." Though it wasn't major for us, Martin was right. Chiefly I was opposed to having ESCRU take on *all* the issues - like Capital Punishment which I deplore. We had *our* task. The *Church* deals with all of them.

---

<sup>18</sup> Atlanta, Boston, Central NY, Chicago, Cleveland, Conn., Delaware, Houston, Indianapolis, Iowa, Kansas City, Long Island, Los Angeles, Mahoning-Shenango, Maryland, Michigan, Milwaukee, Minn, Missouri, Newark, New Jersey, Northern Virginia, Penn., Pittsburgh, Rhode Island, Richmond, San Diego, Washington

<sup>19</sup> There is Chapter news in the Newsletters I've referenced, and there are chapter files of what they sent Atlanta in the 33 linear feet of ESCRU archives at Atlanta's King Center. I don't know if any diocesan archives received local material.

<sup>20</sup> Whatever a "swan song" is, it's in the massive, bound volume previously referenced.

BLACK POWER: ECONOMIC & POLITICAL SELF-DETERMINATION - If the new slogan had come on the scene with these modifiers, the *White Flight* that began in 1966 might have been lessened. It was heard, though, in the din of riot and often with threats of violence. It was heard amidst the fragmentation of the *Movement*. I was on part of the Meredith March in Canton, Mississippi, in 1966 when SCLC-provided small American flags were being taken from marchers by SNCC workers until James Orange of Dr. King's staff stopped it. And there were the small black kids whom someone had tutored to chant *Martin Luther Coon!* Unhappily, these were some of the modifiers attending "Black Power." Dr. King was himself critical of the new slogan when it meant violence or a giving up on integration; but, dominant as he was, he couldn't restrain others. It is ironic to contemplate what difference might have been made in these currents of thought if Jonathan Daniels had lived. He was one of the few whites liked by SNCC leader Stokely Carmichael. The two had been in jail together in Hayneville. Carmichael was released sooner. Some believed Carmichael turned harder to the left after and over Jonathan's death - embracing *Black Separatism*, an extension of Black Power. Still at times a thorn in the side of Christ's Body, it has been in vogue in recent years in a glib dismissal of *Integration* in the Church or an espousal of "*multi-culturalism*" in society. In 1966-67 I gave no credence to such Balkanization in things I wrote for ESCRU - nor do I now! As I began this treatise with obituary references, it is pertinent here to excerpt from the New York Times of May 25, 1995: "The Rev. John Howard Johnson, the founder of a landmark Episcopal Church and a Harlem community leader, died yesterday (at) 98..... An integrationist, he spoke out against the notion of a *black church*..." It went on with details of his work for the good of Harlem and in service of black and white. We need younger clergy like him!

MY TIME TO GO - In the March 19, 1967, Newsletter: "As a stop-gap alleviation to the financial crisis we face, ESCRU's Executive Director proposed to the Board and has been granted a six-month non-salaried leave.... This will start April 1st. Our Associate Director will be in charge...." There was a money problem, members were not renewing, and there was fragmentation in the air! There were important differences in how ESCRU should be run. Some felt we should move the office to the North, drop all else, and focus only on calming the inner city. It was time for me to go! I don't remember now, but perhaps I suggested the six-month leave as a way of gradually adjusting to *not* being responsible for ESCRU and all it had meant to Patsy and me. I still believe we were most privileged to have known so many wonderful people around the country! During the Civil Rights Era some good people took their leave *from the Church* - because they were so discouraged with what they experienced of the institutional Church. We knew too many fine Bishops, clergy and lay leaders to have ever become that depressed! And we saw some of those folks at the Seattle General Convention where my departure was confirmed. Nine great years - even if the last few were rocky! < > ESCRU would carry on with Kim Dreisbach at the helm, but the finances did not improve and directional questions loomed large. I make no attempt here to summarize or comment upon what went on after I left. President Barbara Harris announced in Houston on October 18, 1970, that the Society's life had come to an end. Later I helped Kim close down the office and take the files to the King Center.

## SOME REFLECTIONS ON CLOSING DOWN

It's easy now to say that it was *time to go* when I left the helm in 1967; but, painful as it was, I should have been relieved. The remaining time for ESCRU was hard on everyone! What we thought was solid consensus had become soft in the wake of *White Reticence* and *Black Power*, and concern for *reform & renewal in the Church* went into hiding. Some might have thought I was leaving a sinking ship before all the passengers reached lifeboats - and I did; but conflicts only alluded to here had redefined the Captain's role too much for me. It was time to go!

As ESCRU declined in those waning years, an essentially positive thing was emerging within the Church's official structure: greater militancy in support of what was left of the Movement. Though dubious about some of the grants, I welcomed the 1967 General Convention Special Program - even if at times *White Guilt* approached *White Masochism*. Also, I wished that the "official" structure could have as readily applied itself to internal reform around the Church. (But, somewhat understandably, it was always easier to march in Selma than to picket a Church-related school!)

With any scintilla of doubt about the GCSP, it is just as well I left the helm at ESCRU. Also, my choice not to take on the Vietnam issue might have become a problem had I stayed. (Such not to be judged by later perceptions of the mess.) I would have cheered and affirmed the nascent *Women's Movement* in the Church had it come forth while ESCRU was around - but back then probably would not have wanted us to take a position on the ordination of women. Some ESCRU members let the organization become a substitute for the Church. They wanted us to take a stand on every worthwhile cause. I was uneasy at times with such idolatry.

At the ESCRU founding meeting at Raleigh we had not anticipated that a time would come when an independent and unofficial organization would not be needed - but that is what was happening! The Church itself is - or always *is becoming* - the best Society for Cultural and Racial Unity. As walls came down - the need for rapid action, fast response, and a brilliant searchlight was disappearing. Of course - even now there are remaining vestiges of the old order, but it's the Church's responsibility to be aware of them.

When through the mail or other solicitation I see a venerable organization trying to redefine its role and stay alive, I am glad that ESCRU retired from the scene when it did. How sad for yesterday's leaders and their worthwhile groups to have to keep going to preserve the honor of what they did in the old days! We don't have to distinguish now between "official" and "unofficial" as to what Episcopalians did in the Civil Rights Era. Whomever - it was the Church acting! When we gathered at the 1991 General Convention to seek the addition of Jonathan Daniels to the Church's Calendar, warm friendships from ESCRU were renewed. But, not everyone working for this had been members of ESCRU. The important thing was that they knew Jonathan in one way or another. And, thus, in preparation for the final action on Jonathan that would come in 1994 - an energetic and lovely couple, whom I had not known before Phoenix, did yeoman's work in the interval and then opened a booth at Indianapolis to better inform the Church about its most recent Martyr. Jonathan belongs to the whole Church..... not to some ancient organization with the curious name of ESCRU!

ERRATA for my paper on ESCRU:

page 21, line 14: should be *Walter* Parker

page 22, line 21: should be *genteel* white backlash