

# San Francisco Chronicle

THE VOICE OF THE WEST

## Now the Great Challenge Begins

THE CIVIL RIGHTS BILL of 1964 is now law, signed by a man who had a great part in bringing about its passage. To President Johnson much credit is due, yet this great act of recognition of our most valid national principle—equality of opportunity—undoubtedly owes its existence to a double irony: It was sent to Congress last year by John F. Kennedy in his "grief and outrage" over events in Birmingham. Without the pressure of circumstances after his assassination, the bill probably would not be where it is; indeed, it might never have gotten out of the House Rules Committee last January—and that was a step, as we have seen, that had to be taken at the time it was taken ever so reluctantly by chairman Howard Smith to assure successful timing in the Senate.

The second irony, and perhaps the greater one, is that the civil rights bill got started on its way and won the very general approval of the American people by the efforts of men who loathe and despise it most, the Southern die-hard segregationists of the school of "Bull" Connor in Birmingham. As if in a Greek drama, they have succeeded in turning the fire hoses on themselves.

ENOUGH WORDS have been uttered about this bill to warrant mercy in adding more, yet there is one further thought we would suggest: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 can mean a lot, or disappointingly little, to the Negro race, depending on how they use it.

True, the bill creates obligations on the white majority to extend to all minorities equality in voting, in lodging, in hiring and in various other acts of public concern, and it is up to the Government of the white majority to enforce compliance with these obligations.

But the way in which rights are exercised has a great deal to do with their effect: Many of the rights secured by this bill call for Negroes to show qualifications, to prove themselves. After the barriers are thrown aside, they must still qualify to vote, to get a job, to join a union. Even to enter a public dining room, they must qualify by meeting whatever standards of neatness and behavior the proprietor chooses to apply to all.

MEETING THESE VARIOUS tests and effectively exercising the rights secured under the bill will be a big challenge to many millions of Negroes, especially, of course, in the South. They will need a great deal of help and support from the organizations that have fought the congressional battle in now acquiring and demonstrating the individual qualifications and skills we refer to. In many respects, the time has come for the Movement to move off the streets and into the quieter areas where people can prepare to fulfill themselves.

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(DR. KING, from page 1)  
really ready to live up to their democratic or religious creeds."

#### "AMERICAN TRAGEDY"

The Congress of Racial Equality called the nomination a "tragedy for the Republican party and for the American nation."

Roy Wilkins, executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said Negroes "generally will be disappointed at the nomination."

"Senator Goldwater himself is not regarded as a racist in their minds," he said, "but they note with dismay that among his supporters are some of the most outspoken racists in America."

"Their quarrel with the Senator lies in their opinion that the Federal Government must act to protect the rights of citizens against infringement by the states, and the Senator's belief that the Federal Government has no such role."

"No amount of smooth language or clever maneuvering can bridge this basic difference," he said.

The president of the New Jersey branch of the NAACP said his organization would oppose any state or local candidate who did not disavow Mr. Goldwater.

"We have been given no choice but to take

a negative approach toward anyone who runs with Goldwater," Augustus B. Harrison, said.

#### REGISTRATION DRIVE

Henry L. Moon, New York NAACP spokesman, said that the organization planned to step up its current voter-registration drives in 49 states with extra staff members, and that it might undertake other projects, including circulating Goldwater's voting records on civil rights, Social Security and social-welfare legislation.

In New York, a Negro lawyer, Paul Zuber, filed a suit in Federal court to void Senator Goldwater's nomination on the ground that Negro delegates were excluded from the national convention.

CORE, which organized protest demonstrations outside the San Francisco Cow Palace during the convention, accused the Republican party of "turning its back on its past and its future."

In response, CORE "will encourage Negroes to register and vote," according to Marvin Rich, a spokesman.

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