ed in "Network," he said

to millions of Americans

to join him if they were

as "made as hell, and

not going to take it any

Friends and enemies.

They were everywhere.

How do you tell what the

enemy looks like. You

HE WAS THE ONE-

By Roosevell Fitzgerald

Thirteen. That number has historically been considered to be an evil omen. The etvmology of the word, both in its cardinal and ordinal forms, could fill hundreds of pages. For our purposes, we will simply say that, like any other number, there are good things to say a cause for sadness. It about it and there are those things which are not so good. Consider the following as an example of my hypothesis Thirteen years before, and see if you don't

Until thirteen years ago, the fourth of April was one of my favorite dates. It was on that date that I was born almost two lifetimes ago. The events of that date in 1968, prompted me to peruse an Encyclopedia his congregation. Little of World History to de-

termine what other history-making events had occurred on that date since the beginning of recorded history. I was amazed and, simultaneously, dismayed because of all the things which had occurred on that date prior to 1968. none more represented was thirteen years ago, on April fourth, that Martin Luther King was as-

in 1955, he had become the pastor of a small church in Montgomery. He had no reason to believe that his life would be as tumultuous as it became. He had expected that he would spend his time caring for the spiritual needs of did he know that by go-

HENRY HARRIS

Will Get You

You Want.

would place himself dead center of the bulls eve of the civil rights

Rose Parks had been the spark which ignited the movement but it would be Martin Luther King, Jr. who would guide and nourish it. He was selected, by Black leaders of that community, to organize a boycott of the city's transit system. The action was contemplated because of the arrest of Rosa Parks who had refused to relinquish her seat on one of the city's buses. It was not anticipated that it would be any more than a quiet protest of a day or two. Little did they realize the proportions that that action would achieve.

For more than a year the boycott went on. White citizens of Montgomery had scoffed at

even jokingly reported it on the local television different matter when it news and in the newspapers. They all got a big laught out of it and sneeringly made snide remarks like "you can't get more than three of them nigras to agree on one thing for more than five minutes." They may have been right - up to that point - but to say such, in public for all to hear, added insult to injury. Black people of Montgomery might have had a history of being abused by their white 'christian" neighbors, but among themselves and within their families, dignity did indeed exist. A person's pocketbook might be attacked, a house might be attacked and the person might be attacked. All of those kinds of attacks might go on inde-

finitely with no aggres-

tions. It is profoundly comes to dignity. Owen Wister probably describes it best in his famous book The Virginian, where he writes: "A man's sense of himself is the most important thing he has." Of course, this also applies to women and children.

In November of 1956. the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in seating in public transportation was unconstitutional. Victory. King was humble in victory. He did not gloat and puff his chest out. He encouraged the Black populace of Montgomery not to brag not to say that "we the Negroes, won a victory over the white people. He understood well the meaning of being a good winner.

Two years after the end of the Montgomery boycott, he wrote Stride Toward Freedom. In that, he analyzed the role he had played during that turning point year. He also wrote about the future and the role of the churches in bringing about the rights of all people. He was the eternal optimist and, in spite of the activities of the KKK and White Citizens' Councils, he was certain that conditions would improve. The churches would have to lead the way by becoming involved in legal social actions against the long held beliefs of racial inferiority. The churches would have to integrate themselves and place as high a priority on its teachings of the univer-

as it did on prayer in the schools or swearing on the Bible in a court of

Not too many weeks

following the end of the Montgomery boycott, he insited a large number of Black southern leaders and church people to a conference in Atlanta. Ten states were represented in the persons of sixty individuals. Out of that grew the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). King was elected president. The organization was to coordinate all civil rights organizations and activ-

Within two years of

the end of the Montgomery boycott, Stride Toward Freedom was published. While in a book department of a store in Harlem, he was stabbed with a letter opener by Izola Ware Curry. Fortunately, it was not fatal and he had a rapid recovery. He discovered, however, that even among Black people there were those who could be swayed to believe that he was a troublemaker and was "making things tough" for Black people in America

He returned to Montgomery and continued his pastorate. It became increasingly difficult for him to wear two hats. As his involvement in the activities of SCLC grew. he had les time to spend in Montgomery. He was needed everywhere. After considerable thought, he finally began, in February of 1960. to devote all of his energies to the civil rights





Professor Fitzgerald is director of ethnic studies at University of Nevada-Las

off the rabble rousers

who were ready, roaring

and raring to send recal

citrant "righters" reel-

ing and rolling in the red

river clay of an appar-

ently racist republic.

Most merely tsk tskilly

An atmosphere of

lawlessness, which had

always existed under

the surface, was begin-

ning to become more

and more apparent.

Americans had not yet

learned that so long as

any American's rights

are not protected and so

long as any American is

not safe, the Republic

"We shall overcome."

Everywhere, those lyrics

could be heard. What

had started as a mere

trickle was growing into a tidal wave of aspira-

tions for "life, liberty

and the pursuit of happi-

ness." Martin Luther

King became the tube

through which the

seeds, which had been planted in 1776, travel-

led to the eggs of the

principles of demo-

cracy. In manner more

spiritual than that utiliz-

isn't safe.

looked the other way.

movment and to SCLC. For the next eight years he became one of the most visible people on the face of the Earth. It was almost as though he had taken and paraphrased the primary order which had been given to naval commanders during World War II - "Seek out, engage and desuoy" racism wherever it is to be found. His life's work was laid before him and he was determined to make the United States of American live up to

ciples. To effect such changes required full commitment. Not only did he have to attack the manner in which white Americans, in general, viewed Black people but he also had to attack the manner in which Black Americans, in general, viewed themselves.

its ideals of democracy

and to make christians

live up to their prin-

Beginning in Greensboro. N.C., his solourn was initiated. He taught "non-violence" to a people who had been brutalized by violence all their lives. Wherever mistreatment of Black people was to be found. Martin Luther King and his followers went. They marched, they picketed, they demonstrated and they also went to jail. They filled the jails to capacity and were then placed in open wirefenced stockades in the sweltering sun. Nothing could stop them.

Their adversaries beat them, unleashed dogs on them, poked them with cattle prods, turned high-powered pressurized water hoses on them, threw bombs and dynamite at them. destroyed their chur-

just have to risk it out. Some of his enemies, who regretted the condi-Vegas tions which Margaret Mitchell described ches, fired them from when she wrote: "There their jobs, set fire to was a land of cavaliers their homes, kicked and cotton fields called the Old South. Here in pregnant women, burned crosses, connected this pretty world, gallantry took its last bow. explosive devices to the Here was the last ever to ignitions of vehicles. be seen of knights and assaulted them with intent to kill, shot some. their ladies fair, of maswounded, some, blew ters and of slaves. Look some faces away, simfor it only in books, for it ply murdered others and is no more than a dream for others they not only remembered. A civilizamurdered but also castion "gone with the wind," was determined trated and generally mutilated them. The aforeto return things to the way they were in the mentioned were some of the lesser acts of bru-"good 'ol days" of a hundred years before. tality. The greater act was that none, in positions of authority, did anything to stop it. Verbal reprimands ran rampant but they rolled right

tage of Americans lived. He did not win each time, but each time he kept coming back. From the beginning, he had realized that there were risks involved but he also realized that it mattered not how long a person lived but how that person lived. He went to the mountain top and he saw the other side. On April 4, 1968, America's best friend stepped into eter-

Martin Luther King

was equally determined

that not only would such

not occur but that the

status quo would be

chnaged. His efforts

carried him aorund the

country, including Las

Vegas. His travels made

him aware of the plight

of other groups of peo-

ple in America and he

soght to bring the atten-

tion of the nation on

those conditions under

which a large percen-

He did not do it to make a name for himself He was not in it for the glory He was not a very abrasive man Just one who thought democracy was holy On numerous occasions he placed his life on

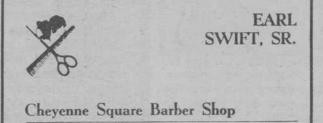
On numerous times he was attacked Each time his efforts were seemingly thwarted Somehow he would manage to come back To thousands of people he extended his hand In efforts to make them stand tall When the powers that be rained down their force He stood with his people, one and all

What does friendship mean to you? Is it merely for relationships filled with fun? To Blacks & Whites and all lovers of democracy



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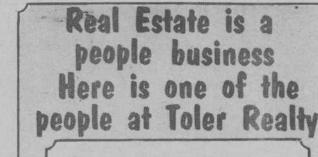
CONSUMER AFFAIRS PROBLEMS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION: I am a landlord. I have been following this feature in the Sentinel and I wonder why we andlords always have to be on the defensive. The tenants have some obligations. Could you list

ANSWER: According to the Nevada Revised Statut s obtained from the Nevada Consumer Affairs Division, they are: (1) Comply with the terms of the rental agreement; (2) Keep that part of the premises which is occupied and used as clean and safe as the condition of the premises permit; (3) Dipose of all ashes, garbage, rubbish and other waste from the dwelling unit in a clean and safe manner; (4) Keep all plumbing fixtures in the dwelling unit as clean as their condition permits: (5) Use in a reasonable manner all electrical plumbing sanitary, heating, ventilating, air-conditioning and other facilities and appliances, including elevators, in the premises; (6) Not deliberately or negli gently render the premises uninhabitable or des troy, deface, damage, impair or remove any part of the premises or knowingly permit any person to do so; and (7) Conduct himself and require other persons on the premises with his consent to conduct themselves in a manner that will not disturb a neighbor's peaceful enjoyment of the premises.

Enquiries can be registered weekdays between 8 a.m. an 45 p.m. by mail and in person at 2501 E. Sahara Avenue, Suite 304, Las Vegas, Nevada 89158 or by phone Area Goda 702-386-5293.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS PROBLEMS is a weekly feature of the LAS VEGAS SENTINEL and is prepared through the cooperation of the Consumer Affairs Division, Nevada Department of Commerce, If you have a consumer problem, let us know. We will try to get an answer. Address your card or letter to CONSUMER AFFAIRS PROBLEMS, Las Vegas Sentinel, 2450 Industrial Road.





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