

Negroes Continue Bus Line Boycott

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Montgomery is aroused over a bus boycott by its Negro citizens now going into its third month. On Dec. 1, Mrs. Rosa Parks, a Negro seamstress refused to vacate a seat in a white section of a segregated Montgomery bus when ordered to do so by the driver. She was arrested and fined \$10 and \$4 in costs.

Almost at once, the Negroes of this first capital of the confederacy were stirred to action. Led principally by the Rev. M. L. King, the movement swept the Negro community.

Meetings were held in a number of churches. Operating carefully, the Negroes began accepting funds to supply gasoline to car pools, and these were initiated on something approaching a regular schedule. As time passed, the Montgomery police obviously were concerned.

But there apparently was no way in which the movement

could be headed off. Capital police did make some moves to stop "overloading" of automobiles, but stopped short of any real effort to eliminate the car pools. Many white householders, of course, thinking principally of keeping their own servants on the job, chauffeured their hired help.

Lines Discontinued

By Christmas, the boycott was so effective that several bus lines, through Negro areas principally, were discontinued. Over the year-end holidays, for two days the busses ceased to run. The Montgomery City Lines was hard pressed, losing money in trying to keep busses running. Public transportation in Montgomery, as in most United States cities, was having a hard time breaking even before the boycott was begun.

The leader of the boycott, the Rev. Mr. King, is a youthful 27. His father has been pastor of the large Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta since 1932, and his grandfather was pastor of that church for 37 years.

Before he received his doctorate in systematic theology at Boston University, the young Rev. Mr. King had been assistant pastor of the Ebenezer church for five years. The Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery is his first pastorate. It is a large church, its congregation including 375 Negro members who are recognized as professional people or persons with a reasonably high to quite high income.

In brief, the Rev. Mr. King is supported by a congregation quite different from the fabled Southern Negro Baptist church.

The Montgomery boycott is not being directed in any degree, according to the Rev. Mr. King, by the NAACP. Indeed, the minister says that the national organization considers the Alabama capital effort small and relatively insignificant.

White Minister Active

Although the Rev. Mr. King emphasizes that he is an ardent advocate of immediate desegregation, he concedes that the Montgomery boycott effort is aimed at something less. It is seeking more courtesy from white bus drivers, inclusion of some Negro drivers on runs primarily in Negro areas, and a "first come first served" seating arrangement.

In this, Negroes would take seats from the rear first, seating forward as far as necessary, the whites to do the reverse. This, obviously, would continue segregation. But there would be no set division in individual busses.

The Montgomery City Commission, headed by Mayor W. A. "Tacky" Gayle, a reserve Army colonel and generally a moderate man, refused the last part of the request, as well as inclusion of Negro bus drivers. But the commission is all for more courtesy toward Negro patrons by white drivers.

Also involved in the boycott effort is another young minister, the Rev. Robert S. Graetz, a Lutheran from West Virginia. He is white, and since he has been in Montgomery he has been pastor of a Negro church. He has been outspoken in his boycott support, and for a time received telephoned threats against himself and his family. He was given overnight police protection once by order of Mayor Gayle.