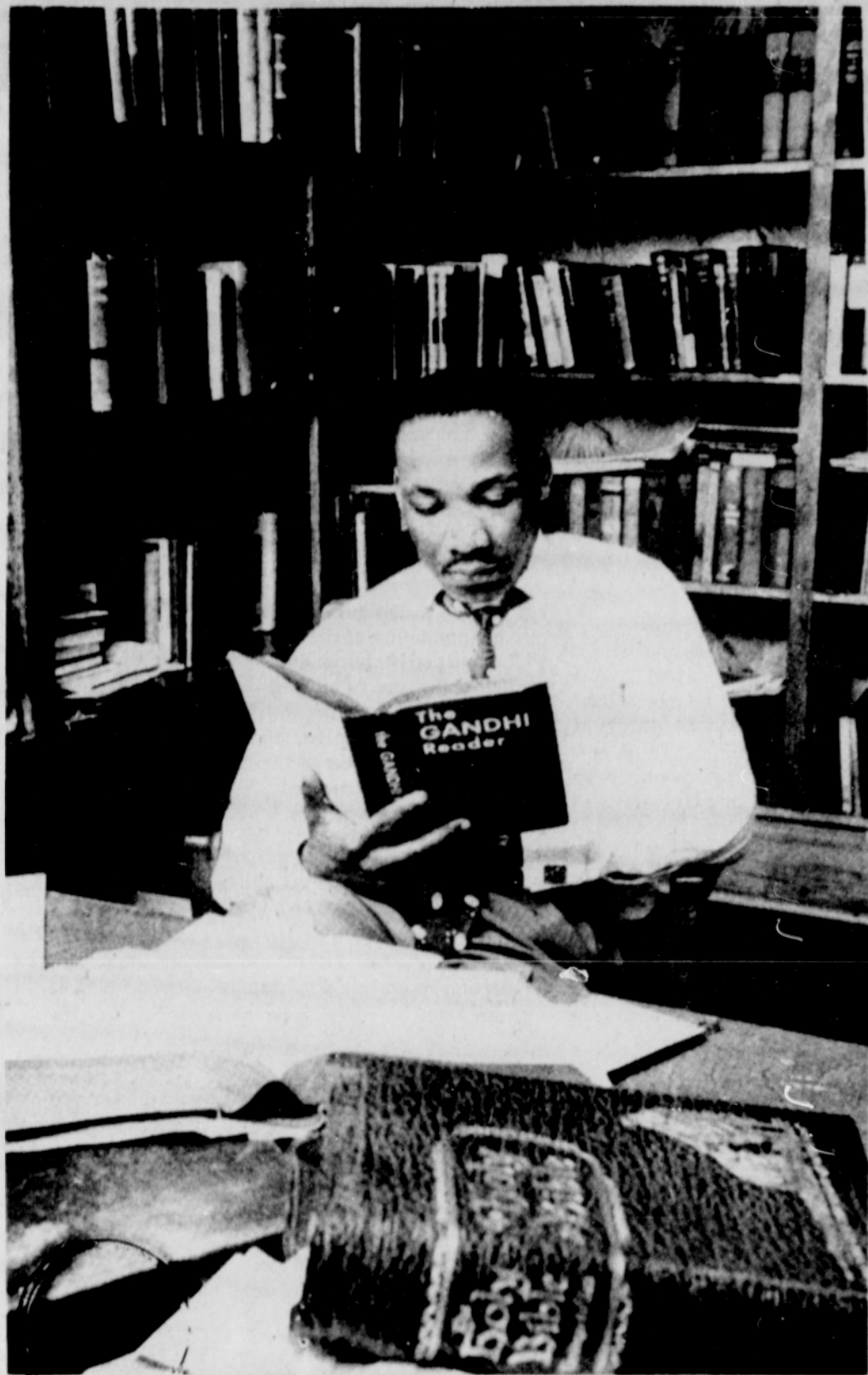


God is on our side . . .



The young Dr. King studies Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was born in Atlanta, Georgia on January 15, 1929 in a comfortable thirteen-room two-story house at 501 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia. His parents were middle class Black Americans. Martin Luther King, Sr., his father, was a Baptist minister; his mother, Alberta Williams King, a schoolteacher.

King Jr. was nineteen when he graduated from Morehouse College in 1948. Three years later he received a Bachelor of Divinity degree at Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, graduating at the head of the class. In 1951 he entered the Graduate School of Theology at Boston University and was awarded a Ph.D. degree in systematic theology four years later.

While studying at Boston University, King met Coretta Scott of Marion, Alabama, who was then studying at the New England Conservatory of Music. She had just graduated from Antioch College. Coretta and Martin were married in

1953, and became the parents of Yolanda Denise, Martin Luther III, Dexter, and Bernice Albertine.

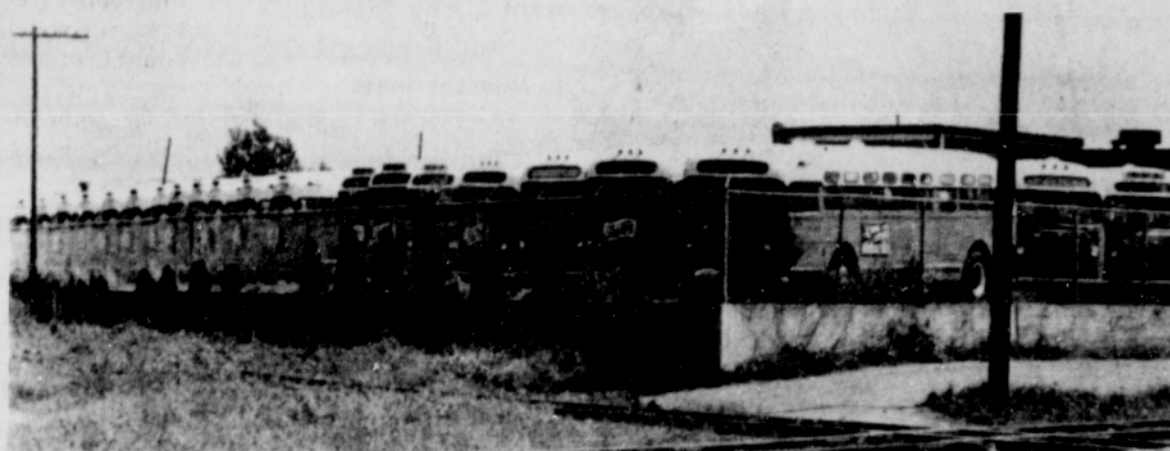
From 1954 until 1960 he was the pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. While pastor at Dexter Avenue, King was elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association which organized a year long boycott against segregated public transportation in Montgomery. The success of this boycott catapulted Dr. King into prominence in the civil rights struggles of Black Americans.

In 1957 King organized what later became the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and was elected its President. The SCLC offices in Atlanta, was the organizational base for Dr. King's civil rights activities after 1960, when he left Montgomery, Alabama to join his father as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

For a decade Martin Luther King was world-famous as a leader of

Black Americans in their struggle against discrimination and race prejudice. He was a principal leader of the historic "March On Washington" in 1963, and *Time* magazine designated him "Man of the Year" for 1963. In 1964 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize—the youngest Peace Laureate in history.

Along with this world-famous leadership came threats on his life, the bombing of his home and general violence and hatred towards him. In the midst of plans for a "Poor Peoples March On Washington" Martin Luther King Jr. made the second of two trips to Memphis, Tennessee to support the garbage collectors there who were on strike for better wages and working conditions. While in Memphis on April 4th, 1968 he was murdered by assassin James Earl Ray, who shot Dr. King with a high-powered rifle as he stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Hotel talking with friends and members of his staff.



Empty buses wait as Blacks in Montgomery walk rather than ride in segregated busses.



Car pools were an effective means of getting to work; many walked.

Early in 1957 sixty Black leaders founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and elected Martin Luther King, Jr. President. He was now a national figure and in May, with A. Philip Randolph and Roy Wilkins, he organized the Prayer Pilgrimage in Washington, D.C., the biggest civil rights demonstration by Blacks.



A bus ride after the successful boycott ended.

"History has thrust upon our generation an indescribably important destiny—to complete a process of democratization which our nation has too long developed too slowly, but which is our most powerful weapon for world respect and emulation."

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



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