

Alabama Bus Boycott Leader to Speak
at Universalist Convention in Cortland

A Negro minister who helped lead a protest against bus segregation practices in Montgomery, Ala., will speak in October at a meeting of New York State Convention of Universalists in Cortland.

He is the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Ph.D. who was found guilty last March of leading an illegal boycott against the Montgomery City Bus Lines.

His sentence—a \$500 fine and \$500 court costs—was suspended pending appeal. The case probably will go all the way to the U. S. Supreme Court on the grounds that the conviction violated the constitutional rights of Dr. King under state and federal constitutions.

BAPTIST MINISTER

The 29-year-old Baptist minister will address the Universalists' one hundred and thirty-first annual session, scheduled Oct. 14 to 17 at Cortland Universalist Church.

Dr. King was among 93 Negroes arrested in February and charged with violating a 1921 statute forbidding the hindering of a lawful business without "just cause or legal excuse."

Dr. King was the first to be tried. The prosecution contended that he had helped organize and lead the boycott. The defense contended that the Negroes had a "just cause" for boycotting buses and several witnesses described how white bus drivers had abused them for many years.

DEFENSE CHARGE

The defense also attacked the constitutionality of the boycott law, contending that it violated freedom of speech and assembly.

Dr. King is president of Montgomery Improvement Association, which was organized after the arrest of a seamstress who refused to give up her bus seat to a white person.

The Negroes have demanded through the association that the bus company assure greater courtesy by drivers, that it seat passengers on a "first-come, first-served" basis and that it employ Negro drivers on predominantly Negro routes.

The Negro minister received a B.A. degree in 1948 from Morehouse College in Atlanta.

EARNED DEGREE

In 1951, he was graduated from Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pa. Last year, Dr. King was awarded a Ph.D. degree in the field of systematic theology at Boston University. His father is a Baptist minister in Atlanta.

The convention's auxiliary bodies will also meet during the four-day sessions.

The Rev. Richard M. Woodman, pastor of Binghamton's First Universalist Church, is a member of the resolutions and recommendations committee. Mr. Woodman is also manager of Unirondack, Universalist summer institute at Beaver Lake.

Other members of the local church serving on committees are:

Kimball Davis, a member of the board of trustees and the pension and extension committees; Charles Lamb, member of the pension committee, and Mrs. William de Vries, a member of the Unirondack board of management.

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