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BUT - BAKER CONFRONTATION  
AT ST. PAUL'S IS FROM  
SAGA OF SELMA.

Transcript of Reverend John Morris' video tape of March 20,  
1965

Morris: (at present): Episcopal service in front of Brown's Chapel, Selma Alabama, March 20th, 1965. I am John Morris; today's date when I'm speaking now is Oct. 12, 1990, some twenty-five years later. I recently sent to the library at the school of theology at Sewanee, a whole bunch of audio tapes for the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, that I was involved in its founding and Executive Director for a number of years, back 25-30 years ago, and in the course of doing--sending those audio tapes to Sewanee, I found this small movie film that was 16 mm, I never had such a projector or camera, and I didn't take it. I finally ascertained that it was taken on the camera of my friend in Atlanta, Glover McGee, when he in his private plane, flew over, flew him self and the Reverend Hugh Saucy, over to Selma, on March 20, 1965. And I have had the movie footage, it is only about 2 minutes and 17 seconds, I've had it put onto a video cassette so I can more easily make use of it and also send it onto Sewanee and to anyone else in the church who might be interested. I added the caption that you see here, and I am going to let it play through one time, and then if I can manage all these controls and two VCR's, endeavor to put some further sound into the video recording which I am going to utilize some cassette tapes that were made from an old-fashioned reel tape that we did in ESCRU called The Saga of Selma. Wherein I told of the whole Selma experience. That the Episcopal church was involved in, following and supporting Dr. King's efforts there, in 1965, and, we had our own thing in the church, in Selma, problems with reference to the local parish that would not admit black persons. And I'm going to go back to this Saga of Selma audio sound and include on a further showing of this on this same video the voices and what went on when we endeavored to walk from Brown's Chapel to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and were stopped by the Director of Public Safety, Mr. Wilson Baker, and you hear an encounter on that, with Bishop Myers and myself, speaking to Mr. Baker, whereupon we, having been stopped on the sidewalk, simply said the church's penitential office, and then walked back a few steps to the steps of Brown's Chapel, where we had the celebration of the Holy Communion that you'll see here. Now in my original recording 25 yrs ago I think I had sound for the communion part, as you see, but I don't have that sound now, I believe it's still on the long reels that were originally made by ESCRU. So I'm now going to let, without any narration, let this very short, brief bit of movie footage run, whereupon I'll replay it, and use my pause button to have some possible narration of what I see, if I can work out all the time factors on this, and now, I'll let the movie part go.

(  
He lets the video of the protest service run with no narration.)

Morris: Now if that works properly, as I said I will not let it play again, but use my pause button and I will bring in the sound from our confrontation on the sidewalk that was just moments before we went back to the steps to have the Communion service that we were not able to have at the local parish church.

(singing in background)

Morris: The singing you hear here is actually the night before at Brown's Chapel, where Bishop Myers, Seckiel(?) Myers, spoke and, we'll have just a little bit of that here, which will then move along into the confrontation the next day.

Singing (1965) From WE Shall Overcome: "God is on our side, God is on our side, God is on our side, this day, O, deep in my heart, --

1940 Morris: You will also hear some narration from me that appears on this Saga of Selma tape, which I did in its production 25 years ago, so you'll have to try to distinguish between what is my voice then and what is my voice now.

Singing swells up--still We Shall Overcome. "You shall make us free, you shall make us free, you shall make us free, someday,

1990 Morris: (1990) I might note that at that mass meeting at Brown's Chapel, the night before, the Reverend Earl Neal of the Episcopal Church presided and along with Bishop Myers, Bishop Millard of California spoke, the Reverend Mr. Reese of Selma and the Reverend James Bevel, and others. I was recording this while sitting up in a window, at the Chapel.

Music swells up again: "We shall overcome someday." Black and white together. "Black and white together, Black and white together, black and white together, now, O, deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome someday. We are not afraid, ---

1940 Morris: I appear to have more of the singing of we shall overcome on this video than I had intended, but it's a marvellous song and is certainly fitting to the occasion. In just a moment, it will move on into my comments that will transfer us after Bishop Myer's benediction of that night before, transfer us to the next day, March 20, 1965, to the sidewalk confrontation.

Music swells again. We shall overcome someday. Hum the refrain. Oh deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome someday. We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome --

(Morris' voice from 1965)--And so you've been to a mass meeting in Selma, at Brown's Chapel, that was Bishop Myers who said the benediction. It is Friday night, March 19th, Episcopalians in Selma are concerned for what will happen the next day. We know that we've been denied the use of the church, it is our intention to walk or go, nevertheless, to St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Selma and in some way represent, even out on the sidewalk, the concern of churchmen across the country. Portions of the tape that follow, are what happened on that Saturday, March 20th. We walked out of Brown's Chapel, about 150 strong, led by Bishop Myers and Bishop Millard, endeavoring walk to St. Paul's church where we would recite the penitential office. The next thing you hear is a confrontation between Bishop Myers and and Mr. Wilson Baker, Selma's Director of Public Safety. (Note: I took this transcription from Morris' Saga of Selma audio cassettes, because the sound quality is far better)

Voice: I see you every day and---

Baker: I don't want to be here every day.

Voice: Well, we don't, either.

Baker: Well, please back up into the church.

Voice: We want our freedom.

They argue. What about freedom?

Baker: You've got freedom. You got freedom in Dee-troit?

Baker: (after much unintelligible bickering) I'm not interested in freedom or anything else (the people laugh at Baker) I'm interested in protecting the lives of people in this city. You are the guests of this city.

Voice: Can we say our prayers right here.

Baker: You certainly may.

Voice: Will you join us.

Baker: I certainly will, because I ---of ya. I don't need a written prayer. I pray directly to my own God, through Jesus Christ.

*INGITO*  
Morris: Bishop Myers, before our prayers, I think that we might tell some of the people here why we wanted to go to Saint Paul's; this is not just a regular march or anything, indeed it wasn't intended to be a march, it was going--

Baker--march, I cannot permit it for your own safety.

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Myers: The Episcopal Church, as you know, officially states, it is canon law, and in all of its public utterances, that no one shall be denied entrance to the church to participate in any sacraments and rites whatsoever. The Bishop of Alabama and the priest of the parish of the church in Selma have denied admittance to the sacraments of men and women, priests and laymen, who belong to the Episcopal church. This occurred last Sunday. Acting upon this, the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity organized or proposed rather a service at St. Paul's Church today. We requested the Bishop of Alabama for the privileges of the altar. I myself sent him a telegram as a Bishop in this Church, asking him if I might use an altar of the Episcopal Church, which is not just a church in Alabama, ---whole world

Baker: (steps on Myers' line) Don't talk to me--I'm not even an Episcopalian.

Myers: It might help you to listen to it. And so, we were refused this, by a Bishop of the Christian church, and we are here because we don't like this in the Episcopal Church, and we think that anybody and everybody ought to have the right to worship and receive the sacraments of the Episcopal church. In Detroit, in New York, Chicago, and in Selma, Alabama.

People murmur their approval.

Myers: So let's say our prayers to that end. And the Bishop is going to lead us. And pass out as many of these leaflets as you can, to the folks around, please. Then minister and people lead off from the first part of it.

All: "Have mercy upon me, oh God, ----according ----and cleanse me from my sins----"

Morris (in young voice) Bishop Millard leads us in the penitential office. ← L2 SITU

(THIS IS NARRATION FROM MORRIS' VIDEO VERSION WHICH I AM INSERTING HERE. THIS NARRATION DOES NOT EXIST ON THE "SAGA OF SELMA" AUDIOTAPE.

I remind you now that we are into the Church's penitential office from the prayerbook. (chanting continues) You will see in the background there one of the symbols that we used in ESCRU, the Capetown placard with "Segregation/Separation" bisecting the body of Christ. I recognize a few of the people here, and I may mention some of their names, but it would perhaps not behoove me to try to identify everyone, because after 25 years, that would be difficult. (chanting continues) And over to the right, of this pause, you will see the other sign that we used, Christ and the 2 kneeling figures, showing a sense of unity, as opposed to the

bifurcation of Christ's body and the other. (chanting continues) That's Bishop Myers, and the priest administering the chalice you see in a moment is the Reverend Henri Stines. (here, Lord's Prayer begins off original soundtrack). We have here, um, simply a short showing that we've taken Bishop Myers back to the airport, to put him on a Delta plane, for Montgomery, Glover McGee flew him to Montgomery. And then we will go back to Selma, and for some reason, the footage becomes black and white for just a brief duration. (the prayer continues off original soundtrack.) The voice there is Bishop Millard, and the penitential office that we'll now conclude on the audio, and then we will conclude the video part in just a mmoment. (original sound ends with "our enemy is great") And that is the conclusion of the audio part, and the video virtually ends after this. Jonathan Daniels, Episcopal seminarian from the Episcopal seminary at Cambridge, Massachusetts, was in Selma, whether he was here this particular day I don't know, for he and his friend, Judy Upham had been down there, and then they'd gone back to ETS, to determine what they would do and to see if they might not return to Selma. So I don't know if they were here this precise day, or for this service, we didn't know him at this point. Soon, very soon thereafter we got to know him, and in fact ESCRU asked him to do what he already was committed and wanted to do, to remain in Selma, for a continuing ministry of presence, and he and Judy did that, and then for some months, and it was, as you know, on August 20th, that he was shot and killed, just after being released from jail, when a colleague at the time, a Roman Catholic priest, Father Richard Morrisroe, was critically wounded. The trial of the assailant ended in complete acquittal by an all-white jury. Whether Jon was present for this Eucharist on the steps of Brown's Chapel or not, I think it fitting that this small video and audio composite be dedicated to him. When I did the Saga of Selma tape soon after the major Selma events in the spring, at that very early point, in the whole Selma experience, I didn't know Jon, but of course, very soon thereafter doing the tape, I got to know him, and he would come over to Atlanta to visit Patsy and me for rest and relaxation, returning to the situation in Selma, which for him entailed not only a commitment to a presence of ministry in the general movement, but also a concern for the life and renewal of the Church, as indicated by his frequent going to St. Paul's and finally establishing a rapprochement there. And now I'll let the video conclude, and the whole thing here will conclude and I hope it will come out and copy satisfactorily.

all--continue with the office.

Morris continues in his 60's narration: We are about 150 Episcopalians here but with around 150 other people. Who joined us for this service and then later for for our Eucharist.

All: "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, amen."

Bishop ??: Lord have mercy upon us.

Response: Christ have mercy upon us.

Bishop: Lord have mercy upon us.

All: Say the Lord's Prayer.

Bishop?: O Lord, save thy servants.

Response: ----

Bishop: Send unto them help from above.

Response:----

Bishop: Help us O God, our Savior.

Response:---deliver us.---

Bishop: O Lord, hear our prayer.

Response: And let our cry come unto thee.

Bishop: Let us pray, oh Lord, we beseech thee, mercifully hear our prayers, and --all those who confess their sins unto thee, that they, whose conscience is by sin, are accused, by Thy merciful pardon may be absolved, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Response: Amen.

Bishop: O most merciful mighty God and merciful Father, who have compassion upon all men, and who ---not the death of a sinner, but rather he should turn from his sin and be saved, mercifully forgive us our trespasses, receive and comfort us, who are grieved and wearied with the burden of our sins, by----is always to have mercy, to Thee only it appertaineth to forgive sin, spare us, therefore, good Lord, spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed, enter not into judgment with thy servants, but so turn thy anger from us, who meekly acknowledge our transgression, and truly repent us of our faults, and so make haste to help us in this world, that we may ever live unto thee in the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen.

Bishop: Together.

Response: ---, O Lord, and ----thy people, who turn to thee  
--in prayer, for Thou art merciful, God, full of compassion,  
----punishment, and in Thy wrath, --upon mercy. Spare Thy  
people, good Lord, spare them, and let not Thy ---be wrought  
with confusion. Hear us, O Lord, for our enemy is great,  
and after the multiltude of thy mercy.----

This except<sup>8</sup> ends, on the Saga of Selma tape.