

asks an old friend who had been born in the North how he could bear to live and teach in Mississippi, and the answer comes back, "We have this house, I have my doctorate. I make good money. . . . I've got security, Johnny." This is confirmed by another friend at Alabama State College who tells him that where there is resistance to integration on the part of Negroes, it is often for reasons of self-preservation. A professor of sociology whom he does not name says curtly, "Governor Wallace pays my salary; I have nothing to say to you. Excuse me, I have a class to get to."

Mr. Williams gets his best material from Negro sources. In his interchange with white liberal newspapermen who have been taking the punishment in the South, men like Seigenthaler of the *Nashville Tennessean* and McGill of the *Atlanta Constitution*, Williams was too much on the defensive, failed to ask the right questions, and his findings are negligible. I also had the feeling that he was overplaying his dread of Southern violence, but after all, he was reporting his reaction, not mine. Not all the book is concerned with the struggle. His picture of Vermont is dreamy; his relief on reaching Chicago, infectious; his reunion with his mother and brother, Joe, in California, touching.

Atlantic Monthly
July 1965

CASING THE REBELS

As one of the leaders of the Fugitives, ROBERT PENN WARREN was concerned about segregation as far back as the early thirties. He too is Southern-born, having grown up in Kentucky and Tennessee, and when he set forth on his big inquiry, *WHO SPEAKS FOR THE NEGRO?* (Random House, \$5.95), he cast a wider net than Johnny Williams; he listened with sympathetic patience to what people had to say, frequently taking down their testimony with a tape recorder. Thus he has had a meeting of minds with the men and women in the many movements and in the dangerous communities, and with the skill of a novelist he has pointed up what they stand for and how they have borne the battle. His interviews in some of the Louisiana parishes and in Mississippi placed him in jeopardy, but he writes without repugnance, and his book is a comprehensive case study, vivid, searching, and compassionate.

Here is the Reverend Joe Carter's narrative of how at the age of fifty-five he tried to register; of how he was falsely arrested, stripped of his clothes, forced into a uniform, and eventually released — without the registration blank; of how he organized a school to study voters' rights; and of how the next fall he led twenty-three Negroes down to the courthouse and this time he *was* registered. We hear from Lolis Elie, a practicing Negro

lawyer in New Orleans, who got his degree with G.I. money after Korea and who believes that the desegregation of the armed forces is "one of the most significant things that has happened in this country." Elie admits that the Southern judges are prejudiced against a Negro lawyer and that this drives away his clients, but he finds hope in the fact that there are today twenty-five Negro lawyers in New Orleans when a decade ago there were two. Mr. Warren has a fascinating session with Clarice Harvey of Jackson, the manager of a successful business combine and the founder of Woman Power Unlimited, in the course of which she remarks that Martin Luther King's non-violence "is really an aggressive force which speaks to the conscience of the wrong doer." Or he seeks out Dr. Aaron Henry of Clarksdale, Mississippi, whose house has been bombed and shot into and whose store windows have been repeatedly knocked out; whose daughter Rebecca has grown so used to the abusive phone calls that when the anonymous voice says, "I just shot your daddy," she replies, "Aw, fellow, are you kidding?" Dr. Henry lives with an armed guard, but what arms his spirit is knowing "that the United States sanctions what we are doing."

This is at times a shocking book and, thanks to Mr. Warren's probing, an edifying one. His long talk with Ralph Ellison, the Negro novelist, is the most profound of any in the book. Ellison's words are charged with affirmation: "Another factor is that Negroes, despite what some of our spokesmen say, do not dislike being Negro — no matter how inconvenient it frequently is. I like being a Negro. . . . I have no desire to escape the struggle, because I'm just too interested in how it's going to work out, and I want to impose my will upon the outcome to the extent that I can." In their talk Ellison insists, over and over again, on the Negro's will, even under slavery, to develop discipline and achieve individuality. His prophecy of what the South will be is eminently sane, and when he says that "Negroes are forcing the confrontation between the nation's conduct and its ideal, and they are most American in that they are doing so," one is prompted to reply Amen! An interchange such as this is tonic for any reader and blessedly free from sociological molasses.

WINSTON'S SUNRISE

LADY VIOLET BONHAM CARTER is uniquely qualified to tell us of the formative and stormy years of Winston Churchill, and my, how well she has done it! She was nineteen and he was thirty-two when they first met at a dinner party in the summer of 1906, and she was fascinated by