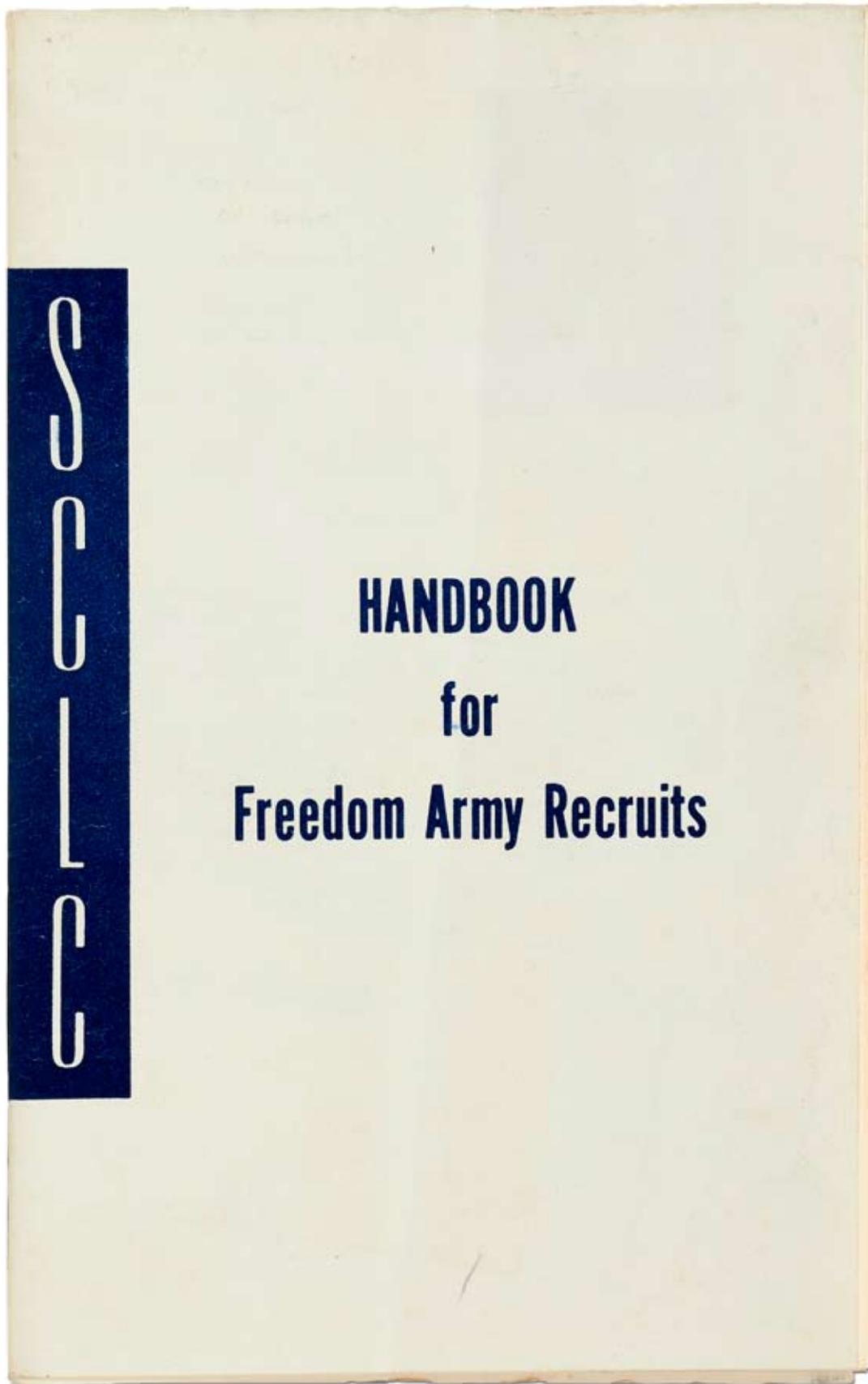


**(Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)**

*[Cover title]: SCLC Handbook for Freedom Army Recruits*

(Montgomery, Alabama: Freedom Army Recruiting Center 1964)

\$4600



First edition. Octavo. [12]pp. Prefatory message by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Small portrait of Dr. King over his preface on verso of front wrapper. Stapled off-white wrappers printed in blue. Light vertical crease, else a very near fine copy of this amateurishly printed handbook.

Prepared for a massive non-violent protest campaign in Alabama during the summer of 1964, this important American Civil Rights manifesto became obscured by circumstances. Following the March on Washington in the fall of 1963, King and leaders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference began planning for the following year's activities which would include a "non-violent army marching on Montgomery and mobilizing for voting rights throughout Alabama ... throughout the spring King heralded the 'Alabama freedom army' as SCLC's next big push, hitting the road by June or July" (Stewart Burns "To the Mountaintop," New York, 2004, p. 237).



#### MESSAGE FROM DR. KING

The Non-violent movement has made great strides toward freedom in the past few years; it is now time for us to stride into freedom. It is fitting that this big push into an integrated society, fostering representative government should take place in Alabama. Here our first steps were made in the Montgomery Bus Protest. Our major effort toward an open society occurred in Birmingham. Alabama then is the battlefield for Constitutional government. If the Negro doesn't have the right to vote in Alabama, then his future is endangered everywhere. If court orders and Congressional legislature are not enforced here in the deep South, then our American Dream has not been fulfilled.

I call upon you, men of good will, as did the Apostle Paul, to "give your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God", in loving service that we might redeem the soul of America through our action here in Alabama.

*Martin Luther King Jr.*

Two major developments in the southern Civil Rights Movement, however, forced postponement of the Alabama campaign, the mounting drama and events of Mississippi's Freedom Summer and the violent clashes that developed in St. Augustine, Florida, during May and June between protesters and white supremacists. With attention turned to those events, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, that Autumn's national election, King's Nobel Peace Prize, and other matters, it would be early 1965, with the Selma to Montgomery marches before Alabama would again take center stage, leaving the Freedom Army and this handbook behind as historical footnotes.

This was an important statement for conduct of large non-violent protest movements, this handbook begins with a message from King: "It is now time to stride into freedom ... if the Negro doesn't have the right to vote in Alabama, then his failure is endangered everywhere. If court orders and Congressional legislature are not enforced here in the deep South, then our American Dream has not been fulfilled."

In Memorium.....

Herbert Lee

William Moore

Medgar Evers

Addie Mae Collins

Denise McNair

Carole Robertson

Johnnie Robinson

Virgil Ware

Cynthia Wesley

and the others

. . .who died

Following are a call to duty (“we must leave our homes and whatever we are doing and join the rest of the people who will be going off this spring to fight segregations ... we are asking everyone who joins to commit himself for one year to do the work in the army”), a list of objectives (“If Negroes voted, we could put the kind of Negroes and whites into office who would look out for the interest of all the people both black and white ... poll tax, literacy tests, insults at the courthouse and all such things are for the purpose of keeping Negroes from voting ... if everyone can vote, we can elect into office people who will help integrate schools, restaurants, movies, etc., get Negroes better jobs and housing, and be more fair and just to all the people”), methods (“nonviolent direct action is the way of overcoming injustice without becoming unjust yourself ... nonviolence begins by remembering that the people who oppose us are human beings, in spite of the way they act sometimes ... with this attitude we recognize that there may have to be physical suffering”), eleven points in a code of discipline (e.g., “6. In the course of struggle of anyone insults or attacks a policeman or any segregationist, we will protect him from insult or attack even at the risk of our lives.”), instructions for conduct in jail (“[being arrested and] staying in jail can bring to bear the moral pressure of the country and world on the state of Alabama”) and reasons for not posting bail (e.g., “5. It doesn’t make sense to get in jail and then want to get out.

## JAIL

Being in jail is an important way that we can point up a serious wrong. When we are in jail, freedom is foremost on the minds of our friends and relatives and they are more likely to cooperate and to act at this time. The issues of freedom or segregation is in the newspapers. Our being in jail gives others a chance to write letters, telephone and talk about the issue we are trying to point up. Our being in jail inspires others to demonstrate and often to join us. Our opponents are more likely to think about the problem and if we can persuade them they often change their minds in the behalf of justice. The attention of the entire country can be focused so that enough pressure can be brought to bear upon public officials to do what is right. Being in jail can bring about a crisis great enough so that people can not run away from the problem any longer. They must think about it and solve it. That is how we can bring about changes without harming anyone. Staying in jail can bring to bear the moral pressure of the country and world on the state of Alabama. In this way a freedom army will be of more service to the cause in jail than they could be on the outside. Each person in jail will have his own moral weight against the unjust government of Alabama. As long as he stays in jail he can keep his weight against the state and inspire others to put their weight against it. If our endurance and capacity to suffer are great enough, Alabama will have to yield to the weight of righteousness. Alabama will have to let us vote.

We will not be posting bond (except in extreme cases like serious illness or emergency) because as soon as we come out of jail our most important weapon, moral force, will be lost and everyone will go back to thinking about their everyday problems and living under the injustice as we have for so many years. Briefly, here are some more reasons that we will not be posting bonds:

1. As soon as we post bond, the fight is off moral grounds (our weapon) and into the courts (opponents weapon). Segregationists have legal strategies that are designed to maintain segregation, and they are in control of the courts.

We could just stay out in the first place and not waste the time and bond money.”), rules for prison (e.g., “2. We cheerfully accept jail discipline and its hardships. It’s supposed to be rough. It’s not supposed to be a picnic.”), lists of recommended clothing and equipment (“we urge you not to bring items not listed ...”), suggested reading (“The Power of Nonviolence by Richard Gregg ... Civil Disobedience by Thoreau ... My Experiments with Truth by Gandhi, and others”). On the last leaf is a “sign-up card” that can be filled out.

## RULES FOR PRISON

1. A Freedom Army recruit should be a model prisoner.
2. We cheerfully accept jail discipline and its hardships. It's supposed to be rough. It's not supposed to be a picnic.
3. Always act and speak with honesty.
4. Cooperate with prison officials and don't break prison rules unless they are against dignity and self-respect or our principles.
5. We may protest and refuse food served insultingly or uncleanly.
6. Do all tasks allotted to the best of our ability.
7. Do not hesitate to ask for essential spiritual and physical needs, but do not be irritated if we do not get them.
8. Don't take part in improper joking with prison officials.
9. Don't bother trustees and jailors with unnecessary errands and asking of special privileges and favors.
10. Make no distinction between demonstrators and ordinary prisoners.
11. Ask no favors and claim no privileges which ordinary prisoners do not get and which we do not need strictly for reasons of health.
12. Apply the love principle to people in jail with you and do not be selfish.
13. We must do nothing to demoralize our fellow prisoners. Take responsibility for keeping everyone in good spirits. Do not take part in teasing or conversation that might hurt feelings or start a fight.

Rare. We can find mention of only six copies: *OCLC* locates two copies (California-Davis, Wisconsin Historical Society); Tulane holds a copy in its John O'Neal Papers; the 6th Floor Museum in Dallas's Dealey Plaza holds Maj. Gen. Edwin Morgan's copy; and the Tuscaloosa, Alabama Sheriff's Office apparently holds a copy sent by King to Rev. T.Y. Rogers. According to some sources and informed speculation, the entire pamphlet may have been authored by King. [BTC#403244]