If It Takes All Summer
Martin Luther King, the KKK, and States’ Rights in St. Augustine, 1964
Dan R. Warren
Foreword by Morris Dees
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An insider’s record of the St. Augustine Civil Rights drama
This memoir recounts the struggle against segregation in St. Augustine, Florida, in the early and mid-1960s. In the summer of 1964 the nation’s oldest city became the center of the civil rights movement as Martin Luther King Jr., encouraged by President Johnson, a southerner, who made the civil rights bill the centerpiece of his domestic policy, chose this tourism-driven community as an ideal location to demonstrate the injustice of discrimination and the complicity of southern leaders in its enforcement.

St. Augustine was planning an elaborate celebration of its founding, and expected generous federal and state support. But when the kick-off dinner was announced only whites were invited, and local black leaders protested. The affair alerted the national civil rights leadership to the St. Augustine situation as well as fueling local black resentment.

Ferment in the city grew, convincing King to bring his influence to the leadership of the local struggle. As King and his allies fought for the right to demonstrate, a locally powerful Ku Klux Klan counter-demonstrated. Conflict ensued between civil rights activists, local and from out-of-town, and segregationists, also home-grown and imported. The escalating violence of the Klan led Florida’s Governor to appoint State Attorney Dan Warren as his personal representative in St. Augustine. Warren’s crackdown on the Klan and his innovative use of the Grand Jury to appoint a bi-racial committee against the intransigence of the Mayor and other officials, is a fascinating story of moral courage. This is an insider view of a sympathetic middleman in the difficult position of attempting to bring reason and dialog into a volatile situation.

“This is an extremely interesting and important book. Its significance lies not only in the eye-witness descriptions of the civil rights campaign in St. Augustine in 1963–1965, but also in the fact that it is written from the perspective of a southern white official. Dan Warren’s account is invaluable in illuminating the relationship between money, the law, and political power in Florida at a time when blacks were virtually shut out of government.”
—Adam Fairclough, Raymond and Beverly Sackler Chair of History and Culture of the United States, Leiden University

Dan Warren is a combat veteran of World War II. He was the elected State Attorney for Florida’s Seventh Judicial Circuit and a past president of the Florida Prosecuting Attorney’s Association; a former Daytona Beach City commissioner, city judge and Justice of the Peace, he was an original member of the Daytona Beach Speedway Authority created to build Daytona International Speedway serving 46 years as a member.