

LABOR UNIONS

THE "RIGHT TO WORK" LAWS

Bayard Rustin, Executive Director
A. Philip Randolph Institute
Saturday, February 20, 1967

America is a country born in libertarianism. Its basic philosophical and constitutional documents guarantee and affirm democratic values. Yet so many millions of our people have been forced to spend their entire lives in the struggle to obtain social, political and economic justice. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution itself, the Bill of Rights, a whole series of Federal Statutes -- they articulate a course for the democratic conduct of our affairs, yet so many of us have been doomed to fight as though we are creating a democracy, instead of, in fact, inheriting a historic birthright.

Though this paradox touches in one way or another upon the lives of millions of Americans, black and white, it has been most dramatically evidenced in the lives of Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans and other minority groups, and in the life of the American labor movement. Nobody knows so much about American freedom as Negroes who have never really had it, whose entire journey across the stage of American history has been a long, bitter, heartbreaking journey in search of an elusive birthright. And no other social movement in America has been forced to walk as doggedly as

the labor movement has, the bloody road to labor dignity and industrial democracy. Labor and minority groups have been where the real action is -- the bullets, the dogs, the lynchropes, the billy clubs, blood dripping down through the leaves of the trees, and blood running out of the open shop. This makes us brothers not only under the skin, but also brothers in blood, in sweat, and in tears, all shed in the service of making America safe for democracy. It is to the credit of the American labor movement, and a challenge to its treatment of the Negro in the future, that I cannot make that statement about any other institution in America.

When the racists, bigots, and monopolists were not shedding our blood, they were blocking our way with all kinds of stratagems. We have heard them all -- "Property Rights," "States Rights," "Right to Work." All of these slogans, as you will have noticed, and as you will still notice, have been uttered in ringing tones of idealism and individual freedom. But that is the special genius of those who would deny the right of others and hoard the fruits of democracy for themselves: They evade the problems and complex challenges of equal justice by reducing them to primitive oversimplifications that plead for nothing else but the perpetuation of their own special, exploitative interests.

The present battle being fought by some of the most powerful interests in this country to retain the so-called right-to-work laws falls squarely within the tradition of

these primitive self-serving strategies. This slogan -- Right to Work -- developed out of the license granted by Section 14(b) of the Taft Hartley Act, is deceptive and insidious . On the face of it, what working man would not be interested in his inalienable right to work? It is only when we look more closely that we see it does not mean that at all.

IT DOES NOT MEAN that every worker has the right to a job and to receive work at fair wages, reasonable hours, and under decent labor standards.

IT DOES NOT MEAN that every worker has a right to secure employment with proper provisions for paid vacations and insurance safeguards against sickness and old age.

IT DOES NOT MEAN that every worker is protected against arbitrary discharge.

IT DOES NOT MEAN to strengthen the individual worker's bargaining position through a union of his choice.

What it means is the OPPOSITE of all these things. And what IT DOES MEAN is weakening the workers' bargaining power by keeping unions out of the factory or office.

IT DOES MEAN creating the open shop.

IT DOES MEAN destroying the institution of collective bargaining, and thus keeping Negroes and other minority members at the bottom of the economic ladder.

IT DOES MEAN wrecking the whole structure of labor union democracy and effective labor-management relations.

In short, "Right to Work" is the same as Open Shop and industrial Jim Crow, and no matter how you dress it up it is the same weapon that was used to kill trade union organization in the early part of the twentieth century, the same weapon used to deny minorities their economic rights.

Therefore, Right to Work -- as it becomes incumbent on Negroes and other minorities to see -- beyond being aimed at wrecking the traditional labor-management apparatus, constitutes just another instrument to perpetuate the informal system of racism in the United States. That being so, I am opposed to it as a Negro; I am opposed to it as someone who sees that from this point on the problems of minorities are intimately connected with the problems of the labor movement; I am opposed to it as someone who has spent the greater part of his life in the struggle for human rights; and I am opposed to it as an American who understands that the cause of equality for all of our people and justice for all of our people cannot triumph without a strong, unified effective movement of all the workers in our society regardless of color, race and creed.

But what, in more detail, is the nature of our case against Section 14(b)? I will bring at least five charges.

1. "Right to Work" laws are a violation of the letter and spirit of the Constitution.

Anyone who examines the history and development of the

Constitution will find that federal jurisdiction over national labor-management relations is vested in the "commerce clause," which argues, in effect, for a uniform regulation of commerce. The Constitutional Convention of 1787 voted unanimously to delegate to the federal government the power to regulate commerce. This is further buttressed by the provision that federal law is supreme to state law in areas delegated to the federal government. As recently as 1935, the Congress in the Wagner Act preempted for the federal government jurisdiction over labor management relations for several years, during which the Supreme Court consistently ruled that States may exercise their traditional police powers to protect public safety and order, but may not adopt their own codes of labor relations, since this was the exclusive prerogative of the federal government. The doctrine is clear, and still stands as one of the chief arbiters in relations between the federal government and the States. Significantly, there is just one exception: the authority that Section 14(b) has given the States since 1947 to exercise jurisdiction in matters affecting the local union security. There could be no more flagrant breach of one of the hallowed traditions of the Constitution, and Negroes and other ethnic minorities who have suffered most from the frustration of American constitutional guarantees cannot be happy over yet another blow to their aspirations for social and economic liberation.

President Truman, as many of us recall, had no interest

in being an accomplice to this disastrous precedent. He attempted to veto the Taft Hartley Bill, sending it back to Congress with these words:

"The bill is contrary to the national policy of economic freedom...would limit the freedom of employers and labor organizations to agree on methods of developing responsibility on the part of unions by establishing union security..."

But, as so often happens, Congress saw the issue differently. And so it overrode Truman's veto and destroyed the integrity of labor's hard-won bargaining strength.

2. "Right to Work" laws are undemocratic.

In the 1930's, slowly groping its way out of a disastrous Depression, the country made a momentous democratic political decision: We decided that henceforth free collective bargaining was to be the policy of the nation. We opted to apply democratic principles to the regulation of industrial life, and in doing so, we were also opting for "exclusive jurisdiction" in labor matters. The union that won a free and fair election among the workers in a plant was to be empowered by law to represent all the workers of that plant. The union was to become the exclusive bargaining agent that could exclude or ignore no one. This became the pattern of labor-management relationships, and it helped open the economic doors to hundreds of thousands of Negroes and other minorities. But comes 1947, and with it Section 14(b) of the Taft Hartley Act. And what does it do? It refuses to

acknowledge the binding nature of the majority decision of a union membership, guarantees the right of non-union membership among workers in a plant, imposes the will of a minority of members upon the majority, and thus destroys the collective bargaining arrangement, and sets back the progress of Negroes and other minorities. But the implication of this so-called right to work law goes beyond the destruction of nationwide trade union democracy; in effect it has also given certain States a minority veto over the federal government, for it permits individual States to walk out on the national labor policy. This is a most unwise and undemocratic turn of events, with grave dangers for the enforcement of federal civil rights legislation. What would we do if individual States were permitted to disaffiliate with our national food and drugs standards? What would happen if in the United States, after every election, all the losers stopped paying taxes because they didn't like the government that was elected? What do we do when Alabama opts out of Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act? The result, needless to say, would be utter chaos and a destruction of our democracy.

3. "Right to Work" laws exploit and perpetuate American poverty.

And who, may I ask, are more concerned about poverty in the United States than Negroes and other ethnic minorities?

As we have seen, most of the States that have retained these laws are the poor, segregationist, reactionary States with weak labor movements and disenfranchised Negroes, and who use the laws as an inducement to those industries with low capital and low labor incentives. In other words, they attract the kind of companies that can make money off a large, defenseless pool of unskilled labor and that can profit from the perpetuation of this backwardness. It is no accident that among these States we find Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, and Florida.

Let's look at the situation in these States:

- The percentage of families living in poverty in right-to-work States is much higher than in the other States.
 - None of the right-to-work States matches the federal minimum wage of \$1.40 an hour.
 - In most of these States right-to-work laws make it literally impossible for Negroes to join unions.
 - Negroes are barred from enjoying an expanded minimum wage in these States.
 - Eleven of the States have no minimum wage standard at all.
 - Only three of them have equal pay for women.
 - Only one of these States has fair employment laws.
- By contrast, it is significant that none of these prob-

lems exist in States with democratically organized union structures. Twenty-three of the States without "Right to Work" laws do have enforceable minimum wage laws. Fourteen of them cover men as well as women. Twenty-one provide at least \$1.00 an hour minimum wage. And twelve of them equal or exceed the federal minimum wage of \$1.40 an hour. And in all of them Negroes are organized in the union shop structure.

So, as the evidence shows, contrary to guaranteeing the right to work, what these laws do is to guarantee the right to work long hours; the right to bar Negroes; the right to underpay women who do equal work with men; the right to pay substandard wages; the right to pay substandard employment and compensation benefits; and the right to destroy organized unionism.

4. "Right to Work" laws are anti-Negro and anti-Civil Rights.

It does not require an extraordinary amount of wisdom to see that behind the insistence of certain States to maintain "Right to Work" laws is a desire to preserve their right to discriminate. In the same way that many of them have run out on the national labor policy, they want to make it easy for Mississippi and Alabama, say, to contract out of the national Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965. Therefore, it is not an accident that we find the plight of Negroes worst in States that have "Right to Work" laws. In a study conducted by Dr. Vivian Henderson, President of Clark College, Atlanta, Georgia, of Negro employment and income between

1950 and 1960, the author found that in only one of the Southern "Right to Work" States "have the earnings of the Negro male worker gained in relation to those of white male workers. In each of the other ten States, not only did the dollar gap increase, but Negroes also lost percentage ground, ranging from 6% in Virginia to 25% in Arkansas for all male workers." In short, between 1950 and 1960, everyone in these Southern States was doing better, while Negroes were falling farther and farther behind.

Therefore A. Philip Randolph is right when he says that right-to-work supporters are pushing these laws "in the hope of driving a wedge between Negroes and the labor movement." And Martin Luther King is right when he charges that the "Right to Work" laws are laws to "rob us of our civil rights and job rights." And Roy Wilkins, Clarence Mitchell, and James Farmer were absolutely right in their testimony before the Special House Subcommittee in support of the repeal of Section 14(b). As they went on to point out, it is significant that these efforts to deny our civil rights and job rights are being pushed by some of the country's staunchest segregationists.

5. "Right to Work" laws are "Rightist" and racist.

Who are some of the leading figures behind the drive to retain "Right to Work" laws? You will find their names on every right-wing letterhead across the nation, all of which organizations, let us not forget, are anti-Negro, anti-Mexican American, and anti-Puerto Rican, and anti-

civil rights. In Kansas, Leonard Banowetz, Chairman of the Kansas State Chamber of Commerce Labor Relations Committee, is leading supporter of the open shop and also a field coordinator of the John Birch Society. One of the chief organizers of the National Right to Work Committee, E.S. Dillard of North Carolina, is an endorser of the John Birch Society, one of the most racist organizations in America. William Tyler Harrison, a 1960 incorporator of the Committee, is also President of the Council for Individual Freedom, an Indiana extremist organization. The Rev. Howard E. Mather, an executive Committeeman, is director of the Christian Freedom Foundation. These men and organizations who are representatives on the Right to Work Committee are well-known right-wingers.

What could it be that has suddenly united racists, rightists and segregationists behind the right to work? I wonder why it is that these laws were being passed in Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas during the late forties and early fifties, precisely the times when Negroes were effectively denied the right to vote? Isn't it rather cheerful and hopeful for the future of our democracy that members of the John Birch Society have suddenly developed a tender love and sympathy for the common man? If questions like these bring sneers instead of smiles to our faces, then we know we cannot

take them seriously, that we are in fact being had.

In raising these questions and in relating them to the political interests and tastes of rightists and segregationists, I am not supporting the notion of guilt by association. I am against lists that would bar a man from a job on the grounds of assumptions about past membership in an organization rather than on the facts of his present competence. But in politics, it is necessary to test a man's word by what he does. And the advocates of the "Right to Work" laws have, by and large, been opposed to every social and economic reform that would benefit Negroes and workers, the very groups they sometimes profess so much concern about. It is also necessary, in politics, to judge movements by the major trends within them, And I am suspicious of any campaign in behalf of the right to work which claims to be for Negro rights, but is in fact supported by practically every racist in the country; which says it is in favor of workers' rights, yet only succeeds in States where workers are a small minority.

Though all the foregoing do not exhaust the possible objections to "Right to Work" laws, or the reason why 14(b) ought to be repealed, they represent the fundamental grounds of protest on which the labor and Negro movement stand united.

Having said all this, let me make it clear that I remain in favor of our working out a genuine right to work

situation. But it is impossible to come to what such a situation would be without stating that a genuine right to work will not be achieved until the Negro and the trade union movement succeed in eliminating some of the urgent problems that remain between them. I mean by this that we all have to recognize that there is still discrimination in a minority segment of the American labor movement. This is a scandal, however, that is being vigorously fought by every unionist, black or white, who is worthy of the name. I myself am, in my own capacity, committed to end the vestiges of discrimination in the trade union movement, but I absolutely refuse to conduct the battle along lines that will ultimately injure the labor movement. I could not do this and still remain convinced that Negroes have a need and a responsibility to make that movement stronger and more effective.

After all, we must recognize that a great measure of the Negroes' economic progress is the result of their membership in the labor movement. We all know of the post World War I emigration of Southern Negroes to Northern industrial centers in search of jobs and dignity. We all know what they discovered when they came; that the economy was systematically arranged to keep them more unemployed, more menially employed, less paid, most slowly hired, and most quickly fired. We all know how that terrible disillusionment found expression in the back-to-Africa movement led by Marcus Garvey, in much.

the same way that their contemporary despair is finding outlet in the cries for Black Power. And we all know how the Depression that brought down millions of white Americans in poverty ironically raised the economic standards of the majority of poor Negroes who found that their relief payments added up to more than they were able to earn as workers. It was in this period -- the great Depression -- that Negroes in large numbers really became involved in the labor movement. The CIO organized the mass production industries and every worker in them. This was followed by other AFL and CIO unions who organized Negroes in many other industrial areas, making the labor movement one of the most integrated institutions of our society. There are many problems that remain to be solved between labor and Negro; however, we are pressing a vigorous attack upon these problems. I myself am engaged in an effort to get Negro and Puerto Rican youngsters admitted to the building trades. And we have succeeded in placing 250 youngsters in those trades in the New York area. When I urge an alliance between the labor movement and other minority groups, I am not encouraging complacency nor losing sight of the unfinished business. I simply want to place the relation of the black worker to the white worker in proper perspective. More than that, it is to help us to confront together a new injus-

tice: What are the millions of impoverished Negroes and the millions of impoverished whites going to do in an age of automation? How can we, in the new developing circumstances, guarantee full employment, and therefore guarantee a genuine right to work? The only way to guarantee this kind of right to work is for Negroes and the unions to work together. We cannot do it by ourselves, and the economy cannot do it without us. We both have got to weld a great coalition to solve the problems of jobs, education, housing, We have got to make our movement come to represent the majority will of the American society and help it move on to massive and planned social investments to end slums, inferior schools, and depression rates of employment.

It is only when we have achieved all this that we will have achieved the genuine right to work. In closing, then, I am in favor of the right to work in the sense that Franklin Roosevelt was: namely, that this society should guarantee every worker a job at decent wages with security and dignity; and if the private sector does not fulfill this task, then it must be the automatic, legal obligation of the public sector to do so.

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE
Of B'nai B'rith

315 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10016, MUrray Hill 9-7400

COPY Speed

NATIONAL COMMISSION

DORE SCHARY
Chairman
HENRY E. SCHULTZ
MEIER STEINBRINK
Honorary Chairmen
LEONARD L. ABESS
BARNEY BALABAN
HARRY BRANDT
ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG
JACOB K. JAVITS
PHILIP M. KLUTZNICK
LEON LOWENSTEIN
ABRAHAM A. RIBICOFF
WILLIAM SACHS
MELVIN H. SCHLESINGER
Honorary Vice-Chairmen
MAURICE BISGYER
WILLIAM P. BLOOM
DAVID COLEMAN
MAURICE N. DANNENBAUM
HERMAN FINEBERG
ABE GOLDSTEIN
LABEL A. KATZ
IRVING R. KAUFMAN
HAROLD LACHMAN
DAVID H. LITTER
JEFFERSON E. PEYSER
MAX J. SCHNEIDER
HENRY E. SCHULTZ
MEIER STEINBRINK
SIDNEY SUGARMAN
LOUIS ZARA
Life Members
JACK Y. BERMAN
SEYMOUR GRAUBARD
MRS. LOUIS L. PERLMAN
DAVID A. ROSE
CHESTER H. ROTH
SIMON S. WEIL
Vice-Chairmen
BENJAMIN GREENBERG
Treasurer
RICHARD M. LEDERER, JR.
Assistant Treasurer
EDWARD GOLDBERGER
Secretary
S. O. SHAPIRO
Assistant Secretary
BENJAMIN R. EPSTEIN
National Director
PAUL H. SAMPLINER
Chairman National Executive Committee
NORMAN J. SCHLOSSMAN
Vice-Chairman, National Executive Committee
*
WILLIAM A. WEXLER
President B'nai B'rith
RABBI JAY KAUFMAN
Executive Vice President B'nai B'rith
MRS. ARTHUR G. ROSENBLUTH
President, B'nai B'rith Women
*
ARNOLD FORSTER
General Counsel
*
STAFF DIRECTORS
NATHAN C. BELTH
Public Relations
OSCAR COHEN
Program
ALEXANDER F. MILLER
Community Service
J. HAROLD SAKS
Administration
CHARLES I. SCHER
National Campaign Director
LESTER J. WALDMAN
Organization and Planning

November 7, 1967

Mr. Bayard Rustin
A. Philip Randolph Institute
217 West 125th Street
New York, New York 10027

Dear Bayard:

I thought you would like to see what one regional office - Atlanta - did with your recent statement. It was sent to our board and other community leaders in three state areas.

Warmest regards,


Oscar Cohen

OC/mj
Attachment

MEMBERS OF NATIONAL COMMISSION

DAVID ARENSTEIN, Richmond, Va
 ROBERT L ARONSON, St Louis, Mo
 LESTER F AVNET, New York, N Y.
 EPHRAIM BAKER, Harrisburg, Pa
 HARRY G WALTER, Los Angeles, Calif
 DAVID W BARG, Houston, Texas
 *JACK Y BERMAN, Los Angeles, Calif
 *MRS ISADORE E BINSTOCK, Pittsburgh, Pa
 ISADORE E BINSTOCK, Pittsburgh, Pa
 IRVING BLUM, Baltimore, Md
 WILLIAM BREMAN, Atlanta, Ga
 LOUIS L BROUNSTEIN, San Francisco, Calif
 BEN L CHERNOV, Milwaukee, Wis
 *JOSEPH COHEN, Kansas City, Kansas
 MERLE D COHN, Seattle, Wash.
 ALBERT COTT, New Haven, Conn
 *SAMUEL DALSIMER, New York, N Y
 *LOUIS DEGEN, Denver, Colo
 MORRIS DIRENFELD, Detroit, Mich
 ROBERT S ENGELMAN, Chicago, Ill
 *BENJAMIN R EPSTEIN, New York, N Y.
 MRS ALBERT FELDMAN, Booneville, Miss
 DR LEON H FEIDMAN, Asheville, N C
 MRS WILLIAM W FINEMAN, Albany, N Y.
 ELLIOTT W FINKEI, Pittsburgh, Pa
 MRS SIDNEY FLAMM, West Englewood, N J
 LOUIS FREEDMAN, New York, N Y
 MILTON A FRIEDMAN, Miami, Florida
 FREDERICK GASH, New York, N Y
 MRS HY GINSBURG, Fresno, Calif
 MORTON R GODINE, Chestnut Hill, Mass
 BARON H GOLD, Cincinnati, Ohio
 *EDWARD GOLDBERGER, New York, N Y
 DAVID P GOLDMAN, Pasadena, Calif
 CHARLES GOLDRING, Los Angeles, Calif
 JOHN L GOLDWATER, New York, N Y.
 MYRON L GORDON, Madison, Wis
 MRS BESS MYERSON GRANT, New York, N Y
 *SEYMOUR GRAUBARB, New York, N Y.

*BENJAMIN GREENBERG, New York, N Y
 MAXWELL E GREENBERG, Los Angeles, Calif
 LESTER GROSS, Buffalo, N Y
 RICHARD GUTSADT, Chicago, Ill
 LESTER GUTTERMAN, New York, N Y
 LOUIS HERMAN, Toronto, Canada
 EDWARD HIRSCHFELD, Denver, Colo
 *BURTON M JOSEPH, Minneapolis, Minn
 SIDNEY J KARBEL, Detroit, Mich
 *RABBI JAY KAUFMAN, Washington, D C
 MOSES L KOVE, New York, N Y
 MRS MOE KUDLER, Los Angeles, Calif
 *MOE KUDLER, Los Angeles, Calif
 CHARLES Y LAZARUS, Columbus, Ohio
 *RICHARD M LEDERER, JR, White Plains, N Y.
 SAM W LEVY, Houston, Texas
 BILL LEVINE, Los Angeles, Calif
 DR ALEXANDER LIPSON, Toronto, Canada
 IRVING LOUIS, New York, N Y
 THOMAS D MANTEI, Indianapolis, Ind
 LOUIS MATUSOFF, Dayton, Ohio
 CHARLES M METZNER, New York, N Y.
 SIGMUND O MEYER, Butte, Mont
 PHILIP H MITCHELL, Chicago, Ill
 ROBERT M MORGENTHAU, Riverdale, N Y
 *AIAN R MORSE, Boston, Mass
 *BERNARD NATH, Chicago, Ill
 *LIONEL M NATHAN, Chicago, Ill
 ROBERT R NATHAN, Washington, D C
 *MAYER U NEWFIELD, Birmingham, Ala
 *NORMAN N. NEWHOUSE, Jamaica, N Y
 BEN Z NUDELMAN, Chicago, Ill
 *LAWRENCE PEIREZ, Woodside, N Y
 *MRS LOUIS PERLMAN, Highland Park, Ill
 SIDNEY L RABINOWITZ, Providence, R I.
 MRS GRACE RABKIN, New York, N.Y.
 NATHAN RICH, Silver Spring, Md
 I BUDD ROCKOWER, Philadelphia, Pa
 *BERNARD ROMAN, Chicago, Ill

*DAVID A ROSE, Newton Centre, Mass
 *CHARLES ROSENBAUM, Denver, Colo
 *MRS ARTHUR G ROSENBLUTH, Hawletr, N Y
 MATTHEW B ROSENHAUS, New York, N Y.
 MAX ROSEMAN, Wilkes-Barre, Pa
 *BURNETT ROTH, Miami Beach, Florida
 *CHESTER H ROTH, New York, N Y
 HAROLD S RUBENSTEIN, Woodmere, N Y
 ROBERT S RUWITCH, Northbrook, Ill
 *PAUL H SAMPLINER, New York, N Y
 HY SAMUELS, Portland, Ore
 *DORE SCHARY, New York, N Y
 *NORMAN J SCHLOSSMAN, Highland Park, Ill
 LEO SCHNEIDER, New York, N Y
 ARMUND J SCHOEN, Chicago, Ill
 LEE SCHOOLER, Chicago, Ill
 AARON R SCHWARTZ, Galveston, Texas
 LLOYD S SCHWENGER, Cleveland, Ohio
 PAUL SEIDERMAN, Miami Beach, Florida
 MRS MICHAEL SHAPIRO, Washington, D C.
 *S O SHAPIRO, New York, N.Y
 MRS DAL GIEGEL, Salt Lake City, Utah
 *MRS CHARLES D. SOLOVICH, Southfield, Mich
 MURRAY SPIEGEL, Montreal, Canada
 HAROLD STAENBERG, South Orange, N J
 NELSON F STAMLER, Elizabeth, N J
 MAURICE STEINBERG, Augusta, Ga
 MRS HARRY STRAUSS, Knoxville, Tenn
 EUGENE L SUGARMAN, Bronx, N.Y.
 *SAMUEL W TARSHIS, Seattle, Wash.
 COLEMAN TAUBE, Minot, N D
 A. RAYMOND TYE, West Roxbury, Mass
 MRS D J WASSERSTROM, Kansas City, Mo.
 *SIMON S WEIL, Nashville, Tenn.
 *DR WILLIAM A WEXLER, Savannah, Ga.
 LAWRENCE H. WILLIAMS, Cleveland, Ohio
 HARRY YUDKOFF, Detroit, Mich

*Members of Executive Committee

REGIONAL BOARD
Abe Goldstein, Atlanta
Honorary Chairman

Jac. H. Rothschild, Columbus
Simon S. Weil, Nashville
Honorary Vice-Chairmen

Irving K. Kaler, Atlanta
Chairman

Rabbi Randall Falk, Nashville
Sylvan Meyer, Gainesville
David Wallace, Columbia
Vice-Chairmen

M. William Breman, Atlanta
Treasurer

Leo Bearman, Memphis
David Blumberg, Knoxville
Aaron Buchsbaum, Savannah
William I. Crosby, Atlanta
Edward Elson, Atlanta
Washington Falk, III, Atlanta
Alfred Garber, Atlanta
Leon Goldstein, Atlanta
Morton Harris, Columbus
Bernard Howard, Atlanta
Ben Hyman, Atlanta
A. J. Koblentz, Chattanooga
Alvin Koplin, Macon
Kieve Landesberg, Atlanta
Elliott Levitas, Atlanta
Isadore Lourie, Columbia
Ben Massell, Atlanta
Sam Massell, Jr., Atlanta
Dr. Richard Morton, Athens
Dr. Sol Neudich, Beaufort
Rabbi Jacob Rothschild, Atlanta
Jay Solomon, Chattanooga
Maurice Steinberg, Augusta
Morris Strauch, Memphis
Mrs. Harry Strauss, Knoxville
Dr. William Wexler, Savannah
Mrs. I. Wilen, Atlanta
Executive Committee

NATIONAL COMMISSION
Dore Schary
Chairman

Leonard L. Abess
Barney Balaban
Jack Y. Berman
Harry Brandt
Samuel H. Daroff
Arthur J. Goldberg
Edward Goldberger
Benjamin Greenberg
Jacob K. Javits
Philip M. Klutznick
Richard M. Lederer, Jr.
Leon Lowenstein
Mrs. Louis L. Perlman
Abraham A. Ribicoff
David A. Rose
Chester H. Roth
William Sachs
Melvin H. Schlesinger
Henry E. Schultz
S. O. Shapiro
Merer Steinbrink
Norman Tishman
Simon S. Weil

Dr. William Wexler
President, B'nai B'rith

Rabbi Jay Kaufman
Exec. Vice-Pres., B'nai B'rith

Mrs. Wally Rosenbluth
President, B'nai B'rith Women

STAFF DIRECTORS
Benjamin R. Epstein
National Director

Nathan C. Belth
Public Relations

Oscar Cohen
Program

Arnold Forster
General Counsel

Alexander F. Miller
Community Service

J. Harold Saks
Administration

Charles I. Scher
ADL Appeal

Lester J. Waldman
Organization and Planning

SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE

Irwin Schulman
Regional Director

SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

41 EXCHANGE PLACE, S E. - 523-3391 - ATLANTA, GA. 30303

November 1, 1967

Dear Friend:

Attached hereto is a paper delivered by Baynard Rustin last month to the staff of the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Equality. Mr. Rustin addresses himself to the political situation in the United States today in light of the forthcoming 1968 elections.

Our need to understand the sources of frustrations which lead to physical dislocations is great; our need to have before us analyses of all levels of Negro thought is great. These Baynard Rustin helps us to understand in his paper.

If you have any comment or question, I would appreciate hearing from you.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,



Irving K. Kaler
Board Chairman

IKK/ds

This meeting, like all gatherings and serious discussions from now on, takes place in the shadow of the 1968 elections. The importance of these elections, in my view, cannot possibly be exaggerated. It is therefore with profound sincerity, and not out of mere formality, that I welcome this opportunity to talk with you. And I hope that in the coming year we will be seeing more of one another.

Next year, the United States comes to a fork in the road. We confront, not just rhetorical, but real political and social prospects of returning to yesterday -- or, what amounts to the same thing, of standing still while the world keeps moving, and our internal problems deepen.

Looking back over the past seven or eight years, we can see that far too little has been done to resolve these problems. But important beginnings were made; historic commitments were undertaken -- in civil rights, poverty, minimum wages, education, civil liberties, and so forth. Indeed, just to speak of the 60's in American life is to denote, not only a point in time, but a resurgent spirit of social reform.

I need not tell you what this spirit represented. It was not decreed from above by the Kennedy or Johnson Administrations. It emanated from concerted action by thousands and even millions of Americans. They were determined that this society achieve justice and equality in the second half of the Twentieth Century. And I need not tell you that the organized political base of this determination has been the labor-Negro-liberal coalition.

The achievements of the 1960's -- the greatest advances in social legislation since the New Deal -- are our achievements. We struggled for them; and, indeed, lives were lost in that struggle. Again, no one in this room suffers from the illusion that the gains have been adequate to the need. In fact, the turmoil in our cities -- and the confusion in our political life -- are signs that, having made a beginning, we have not gone far enough. We have gone far enough to arouse expectations but not to satisfy them -- and that is a dangerous thing to do.

Nonetheless, it is hard for me to understand the opinion, now fashionable in some quarters, that to make more progress requires the denial of progress already made. This opinion not only dishonors our own struggles and the sacrifices they entailed; it blurs political vision and saps political will. For if the gains of recent years are worthless, why bother to defend them against conservative and reactionary assaults?

But much more is involved in the 1968 elections than the preservation of past victories. The road ahead is far, far longer than the distance we have come. At stake is whether we shall travel that road, and at a faster pace, or be detoured onto a path that leads back whence we came.

This country boasts resources, human and technological, which no land in the history of mankind ever had or dreamed of having. We can perform miracles in practically every field. As we have sent vehicles to explore the atmosphere of Venus, so we can make devices to cleanse the atmosphere of our cities. We can not only abolish slums and poverty but reconstruct the face of the nation. President Johnson has said that between now and the year 2000 we shall have to construct as much in the way of public facilities of all kinds as we have built since the birth of the Republic. Literally, we shall create a second America. Under whose leadership will it be created, and in what image, and for whose benefit?

Will we build new slums into this second America, or decent, pleasant housing for all its inhabitants? Will we build 4 percent unemployment into this second America, or meaningful jobs with good pay for all? Will we build overcrowded, inferior and segregated schools into this second America, or quality, integrated education? (Or will we, as some intellectual "pioneers" have suggested, turn our public schools over to private enterprise?) Will public employees have the right to bargain collectively and to strike in this second America, or will an increasing number of workers be reduced to peonage for the state?

These questions will not be explicitly stated in the ballots in 1968, but they will be answered nonetheless -- perhaps decisively for a generation. I believe that the elections of 1968 will prove to be as crucial for the national destiny as the elections of 1860, 1876, and 1932.

For the Negro, 1968 holds the threat of repeating the fateful election of 1876 and the infamous Compromise of the following year -- when the Federal government removed its remaining troops from the South, and the nation turned its back on the Negro.

The parallels are disconcerting. As in 1876, there is today among many whites a weariness and disillusionment with the cause of the Negro. As in 1876, the conservatives exploited alleged excesses of Negro politicians in the Reconstruction governments, so today the riots are used to deny the Negro an equal place in American society.

In 1876, they said: "We fought a bloody war to free the Negro. Must we also give him 40 acres and a mule?" Today they say: "We have given the Negro the right to eat at our lunchcounters. Must we also give him a job so he can afford a hamburger?" Had the answer been "Yes" in 1876, the question would not have arisen in 1967. And if it is not answered affirmatively in 1968, it will be with us in the year 2000.

I am not saying that the victory of the right wing in 1968 would bring

the reimposition of legal segregation and discrimination, or the disfranchisement of Negro voters. But it can bring the kind of social and economic stagnation in which the existing problems will fester and multiply. After all, the Eisenhower Administration did not consciously legislate the slums into existence. But the priorities and policies it followed encouraged the spread of, and further deterioration in, the slums of the nation. And the inhabitants of the black ghettos are as surely segregated, exploited and discriminated against as any racist lawmaker could wish.

The nation simply cannot afford -- and the Negro least of all -- a return to conservative rule, even in its cleaned-up, well-dressed, broad-grinned Madison Avenue varieties. We cannot afford four years of substituting cliches about the genius of private enterprise for intelligent and vigorous public policy. We cannot afford four years of rhetoric about states rights in place of massive Federal action. We cannot afford four years of highway construction at the expense of mass transit, of subsidized suburban sprawl at the expense of urban reconstruction, of budget-balancing at the expense of starved school systems, or soaring profits at the expense of wages and salaries, of lucrative technological rampage at the expense of jobs and human dignity.

This prospect can -- and must -- be averted. Just as we possess enormous technological resources for social progress, so do we possess potentially overwhelming and irresistible political resources for progress. We have an immense labor movement, the largest organized social force in the country -- with a trained leadership and a loyal, if not always obedient, membership. It has acquired increasing experience and sophistication in political and economic action in the past generation. It is on the verge of even greater growth.

We have in the 10 percent of the population represented by the Negro people **another** consistent force for social reform. In the urban centers the Negro vote has proven decisive in important contests. And in the South, where Negro voting is on the rise, dramatic political shifts have taken place. The power of the Dixiecrats can now be undermined at its source.

We have seen a resurgence of liberalism in the middle classes -- among professional, technical, and academic people. Many religious groups have displayed an awareness of social problems, and the need for solving them, such as we have not seen in a long, long time.

While many elements of middle-class liberalism are in a state of disarray and uncertainty, they nonetheless represent an enormous potential for progress in our political and social life. That potential will be severely tested in 1968. And the results depend largely on the ability of the labor and civil rights movements to project strong leadership around clear issues.

If the forces I have described could be brought together and united behind common objectives, then I am convinced that they could prevail against all of the obstacles to progress now being erected. For proof we need only look back to the historic victories of the liberal coalition between 1963 and 1965 -- including the smashing defeat of Barry Goldwater and the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition in 1964.

But as powerful as the liberal forces can be, a number of factors have contributed to delaying or weakening the union among them that is indispensable for a sure -- and even easy -- victory for all of us.

The first factor is the Vietnam war. The tragedy here is not that there are disagreements over the purposes and conduct of the war -- for such disagreements are inevitable in so complex a war. It is rather that the disagreements threaten to weaken the liberal coalition in its struggle for domestic progress. Thus, instead of resisting conservative efforts to use the war as an excuse for cutting back the war on poverty, many liberals are fighting among themselves and with the labor movement.

Indeed, some liberals unwittingly assist the right-wing by arguing that such programs as the "Freedom Budget" must be shelved until the war in Vietnam is over. Only their proposals for ending the war distinguish these liberals from Senator Dirksen.

Still others talk of defeating Lyndon Johnson with a Republican "dove," even if the result is a more conservative Congress, with the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition even more firmly in control. Thus, we are told, the price for ending the war, assuming that a Republican President could do so more readily than the incumbent, must be born by Negroes, workers and the poor.

If this disastrous viewpoint is to be overcome, we must do a major educational job in the coming months. And the labor movement is best equipped to articulate the basic social and economic issues at stake in 1968. These issues are the foundation on which an effective and unified liberal coalition can be constructed.

The second factor weakening this coalition grows out of the riots, the disunity within the civil rights movement, and the white backlash.

The divisions within the civil rights movement, let me make clear, are irreconcilable. They cannot, should not, and must not be glossed over, patched up or concealed in the interest of a false unity. Some important disagreements have existed all along, but they did not challenge the very principles on which the movement was based -- democracy, integration, opposition to racism in all its forms. These principles are today rejected and their advocates reviled by a fresh crop of adventurist demagogues and apostles of violence who claim to speak for the black masses but consistently demonstrate their inability to attract or organize mass support. For such support they substitute intimidation,

sensationalism, and authoritarian political styles. And in making this substitution, I must say, they have the full cooperation of the mass media.

It would be a mistake, however, to dismiss the Rap Browns and Stokely Carmichaels, for they do articulate a growing frustration, anger and bitterness in the ghettos. These feelings result from broken promises, from the failure of government programs to live up to their rhetoric. The right-wing will exploit this failure; it will call for the promises to be revoked. We must see to it that they are fulfilled.

Throughout the Negro's struggle, the labor movement has been an obvious and natural ally, for the enemies of one have traditionally been the enemies of the other. Now that the Negro's struggle for legal and constitutional rights has largely been won, and his attention has turned toward social and economic equality, his alliance with the labor movement becomes more crucial. For while he finds that many groups in society are prepared to support his constitutional rights, the labor movement is pre-eminent among those who believe that he has a right to a job, good pay, a decent home, quality education, and the other good things in life.

More needs to be done, however, to educate Negroes in the ghetto as to labor's economic program. The Wall Street Journal has already noted with satisfaction that underlying the strident Black Power ideology is an economic conservatism with which Business should be sympathetic. The emphasis is on self-help and local initiative, as against political action and national economic policies. It is not surprising that the Black Power Conference in Newark was financed by Bell Telephone and other large corporations. Another company advertises in a full page that its hiring practices are the "American Way to Black Power." Needless to say, these activities are coupled with a propaganda campaign which blames the unions for discrimination in employment.

The discontent in the ghettos, if it is not to take a politically as well as literally destructive form, must be channeled into constructive action for economic reform. The "Freedom Budget," which embodies labor's economic program, is a start, but more needs to be done to counteract conservative propaganda and the pseudo-economics of Black Power.

Even more important, no doubt, is the educational work that must be done in the white community and among the trade union rank and file. This is no easy task, and I would not presume to tell you how to go about it. But somehow it must be done. The white worker must be made to look beneath the riots and beyond the Rap Browns to the essential, underlying economic and political interests which bind him to the Negro's aspirations.

And so the nation moves toward 1968, a year of historic importance, in a mood of confusion, unrest, uncertainty. Exploiting Vietnam and the

Negro's agony, the right wing prepares to launch a comeback. If successful, it will profoundly alter the direction of American politics and most grievously set back the Negro. What it cannot do, however, is to resolve the fundamental problems in American society. It can only prolong and exacerbate them; it can only twist the country out of shape. There is no alternative but what we offer and fight for. And the prerequisite of our victory, the victory of the liberal coalition, is a stronger alliance between the Negro and the labor movement.

The New York Times
Times Square

10/10

November 9, 1967

Dear Mr. Rustin:

Thanks for the article on the Negro and the unions. It is an important subject and we plan to run it soon in the TOPICS column.

We will let you know before it appears.

Sincerely yours,

Herbert Mitgang

Herbert Mitgang
Editorial Board

Mr. Bayard Rustin
A. Philip Randolph Institute
217 West 125 Street
New York, N. Y. 10027

The Negro and the Unions

Bayard Rustin

*1 Part
outlets*

Harry Van Arsdale, President of the New York City Central Labor Council, has said that the trade union movement is the most successful anti-poverty organization in our nation's history. He is right. The Labor movement has not abolished poverty, and could not by itself have been expected to, but it has lifted more American people out of poverty than any other institution or agency organized to that end. To say this is also to say that it has lifted more Negroes out of poverty than any other institution.

I do not mean to say the labor movement could not have done more for Negroes. I certainly cannot dispute the charge that for many years some unions discriminated against Negroes. But it is worth noting that discrimination now persists only in a minority segment of the labor movement. In any event, that past history tended to obscure an equally important truth: that, despite discriminatory practices, the labor movement was, and remains, the single most integrated institution in our society.

Hundreds of thousands of Negroes, devastated and set adrift by the great depression, first found refuge and economic mobility when the unions organized them in many industrial areas of the North. Since the depression, Negro membership in organized labor has climbed steadily and today some fifteen percent of the fourteen million workers in the AFL-CIO are Negroes. The consequent rise in their economic base and standard of living stimulated in hundreds of thousands of Negroes an awakening of those social and political aspirations that found dramatic and constructive expression in the great mass protest movement of the late 1950's and the early 1960's.

Today, as the focus of the Negro struggle has shifted from constitutional issues to economic and political equality, the labor movement remains the

-2-

only major institution in our society that articulates the economic demands that are now at the heart of the Negro struggle. It is certainly the only major institution that wholly subscribes to, and substantially embodies in its own program, the proposals and priorities outlined in the Freedom Budget for All Americans.

As recently as September 12th of this year, the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO passed a resolution on the urban crisis in which it specifically called for the following: the creation of one million public service jobs for the unemployed; the building of 2 1/2 million new housing units; expanded mass transit; and accelerated construction of public facilities.

However, labor's support of programs that are of immediate economic interest to millions of deprived Negroes cannot obscure the fact that vestiges of discrimination remain in certain segments of that movement. For example, for many young Negroes and Puerto Ricans, the building trades have become a symbol of their lack of progress in the trade union movement. The building trades have the greatest appeal for young Negroes and Puerto Ricans to whom an opportunity to be trained in the skilled crafts at high rates of pay stands as one of the most effective antidotes to their frustration and despair.

But even the building trades are now adjusting to the winds of change. In New York City alone the building trades unions are cooperating with the Joint Apprenticeship Training Program of the Workers Defense League and the A. Philip Randolph Educational Fund which has succeeded during the past three years in placing more than 300 Negro and Puerto Rican youngsters in the building trades unions of New York City and Westchester County. Negro and Puerto Rican sheetmetal workers, iron workers, electrical workers, plumbers, machinists, plasterers, elevator constructors, carpenters, roofers etc., are now on jobs where previously ^{few} - if any - were employed.

The program recruits young men who are interested in the building trades and advises, counsels, and tutors potential applicants. Over the past three months the program has opened additional offices in Cleveland, Ohio; Buffalo, N.Y.; and Newark, N.J.; and in each of these cities minority group youngsters are now being admitted to unions that were previously closed to them.

Our program has been successful for many reasons. It has a dedicated staff and is headed by an extraordinarily creative and determined young man, Ernest Green; it has had the support of ^{George Meany and} the Civil Rights Department of the AFL-CIO from the outset. Peter Brennan, President of the N.Y. Building Trades Council has actively urged all unions to cooperate with the program. The ILGWU, the United Federation of Teachers, and the UAW have given youngsters temporary jobs while they wait for placement in union-management programs. Local 3 of the IBEW has expanded its apprenticeship program and also provided summer employment for Negro youth.

The New York model is also being used by other organizations. The Department of Labor has funded, and the AFL-CIO and Building Trades Council are cooperating with, the Urban League's LEAP[®] program and the O.I.C.; as well as with the Trade Union Leadership Council in Baltimore, Atlanta, Dayton, Denver, Phoenix, Chicago, Oklahoma City, ~~XXXXXXXX~~ and Detroit.

I am confident that this model will play the leading role in helping to remove the last vestiges of discrimination in the labor movement.

12

**INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF ELECTRICAL, RADIO AND MACHINE WORKERS
AFL-CIO • CLC**

INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

MARCH 26, 1968

**Bayard Rustin
talks with
the I.U.E.**

On March 26, 1968, life-long civil rights activist Bayard Rustin engaged in a 2 1/2-hour long question and answer period with the IUE International Executive Board. Rustin, Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute probed issues on the minds of every American: black nationalism; the war in Viet Nam; riots; political action.

Mr. Rustin's comments were timely; and following the tragic deaths of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, they are even more so. What he had to say about the United States and its problems should be read by every American.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Tuesday, March 26, 1968

PRESIDENT JENNINGS: Will the Board meeting please come to order.

Sorry for the delay of a few minutes. We had a brief meeting down in my office.

I don't think that Bayard Rustin needs any introduction to the IUE or this Executive Board. But my knowledge of Bayard probably goes back much longer than he realizes it does. The one thing that has constantly given me a sense of tremendous satisfaction as I listened to him down through the years, and I started to listen to him a long, long time ago, is that he has been the one articulate voice that has been consistent that has not run away from a problem and has not been afraid to lay out solutions, even though those solutions were not necessarily simple.

He has refused to just become emotionally involved or embittered, and has insisted in the face of some pretty rough situations on articulating the kind of realities that this country has to have, particularly, and as the Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, he does a service to America that goes far beyond the labor movement.

Bayard, I am happy that you are here and proud that you are here, and proud of this opportunity for us to listen to you, and I think the Board members will probably want to engage in a question session afterwards.

BAYARD RUSTIN

Director, A. Philip Randolph Institute

I have a feeling that this Board knows much better what everybody would want me to talk about than I do, so I would like to try a little different experiment today and see if we can develop our thinking together through questions and statement periods, rather than a talk.

I think in a group this size it is ridiculous to make a talk. I can respond better to what is on people's minds. We will try that and if it doesn't work, I will make a talk.

I should think that in your own minds, you have a number of questions about the things I am interested in that would be better coming from you and I can deal with them on the basis of real interest rather than just another talk.

QUESTION: Why is it this report (President Johnson's National Advisory Commission's Report on Civil Disorders) blames the white people for all the excesses that were committed during the riots when it was the black people who were doing the rioting?

MR. RUSTIN: Well, I don't think you have read the report carefully. The report does not blame anybody for what happened during the rioting. The report blames white American society for having created the conditions that made the ghetto, that profits from the ghetto, and whose lack of interest sustains the ghettos.

Now let me be just quite historically clear with you about this matter.

First of all, the white community is fundamentally responsible for whatever happened. We were in Africa minding our own business in 1619 when white traders from Europe came and brought us to America. At that time we had the highest form of democracy that is known to man, infinitely higher than Greek democracy. I can go into that if anybody doubts it, but I don't want to bore you with a lot of historic facts. We had a family life in which both murder, suicide and illegitimacy were unknown in the western African tribes before the coming of Europeans. Syphilis and gonorrhoea were unknown and brought in by European traders and slavers. That is one fact.

Second, what the report means is that America should re-examine history. The founders of this nation, including Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin and all the other great leaders had the audacity to write that all men are created equal, that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights, among these being the pursuit of happiness. But these men held slaves. They meant all white men are created equal.

Furthermore, even the abolitionists who were for freeing the slaves were not in fact for Negroes having social, economic and political freedom. And the very abolitionists who wanted to free the slave, and you labor people ought to understand this, turned their back on creating a movement following the abolitionist movement to get any economic places for Negro freedom.

It was the Negroes who cried out that they wanted 40 acres and a mule to start life. It was the abolitionists who said, "We have done our job and we wash our hands."

Now when the Irish and the Italians and other immigrants came to this country, they did not lift themselves up by their bootstraps. It is a perfectly ridiculous notion to believe that they did. Anyone knows that there is a parallel relationship between the development of social institutions and the ability of these people to rise. There is a direct line between the ability of men to organize in trade unions, and the ability of the poor to overcome their poverty.

Furthermore, the Irish, the Italians and many others were given a big hustle. They were given all the free land they wanted, all they had to do was go west to get it. And the Negroes were not permitted to go west to get land, so that a society that gives land to white people free, but denies it to Negroes, a society which writes a Constitution about freedom but does not mean it for Negroes—it was Ben Franklin who created the most grievous of acts. He said we will count all Negroes like a fraction. Every Negro becomes three-fifths of a man, not in order that Negroes should go into a Legislature? No, Negroes were counted in the states where they were as three fifths of a man to increase the number of representatives in the House of Representatives who were white with no fundamental interest in the Negro.

Now that report was saying that when you permit a society to create safe steps for other people to get out of poverty, but damn Negroes to ghettos, to inferior jobs, then that society is sooner or later going to reap disorder.

The Catholic Saints, the Protestants, the Jews, and any other high religion, whether Mohammedism, or Buddhism or Laodism, all said the same thing; if you create a society with disorder in it, with injustice in it, then you will get disorder. When you create a society which has justice in it, you will get order. When you create a society with injustice in it, then disorder is inevitable.

Now they were trying to point out both the psychological and the economic and the sociological truth, that the society which crippled people and did not permit them to grow is the society which is responsible for those acts of violence.

I don't believe in violence, and I have been on the streets of Harlem and Watts and other places during riots trying to stop it, but it never occurred to me that Negroes were responsible for the conditions which inevitably lead to rioting.

I conclude on this point by giving you an example. The greatest

riot in this country took place in Philadelphia and in New York, and had nothing to do with Negroes. Let's take the New York riot. It was a riot in which 300 people were killed; 29 Negroes were lynched; four babies were torn to bits and their fingers and toes given to the mob as souvenirs. Property damage was greater than the combined property damage of Detroit and Watts. That was the riot of 1863 in which Lincoln was required to pull troops out of Virginia in order to stop that riot. That riot was on the part of the Irish.

The interesting thing about that riot is this, if you would do what I have done and gone to the New York Times to read about that riot of 1863, you would have discovered that the same conditions prevailed for the Irish in housing in New York as prevailed for Negroes in Newark; the same degree of unemployment of Irishmen, youth and women occurred in 1863 as occurred in Newark; the same problems with the Irish getting an education for their children occurred in New York at that time as occurs now in Detroit.

What is my problem? To castigate the Irish? No, my problem is to show that given the same circumstances where society brutalizes the people, ultimately those people will revolt whether they are Irish, Italian, Mexican-American or Negro.

I think that is what the report was trying to say, it was not laying blame. Obviously it was Negroes who threw Molotov cocktails; it was Negroes who were fighting the police. They were not dealing with the problem at that level. That is the wrong level from which to deal with it, and they were trying to deal with it in terms of its causal factors. A doctor does not limit a person who has cancer and talk about the marvelous effects of iodine and mercurochrome or aspirin.

We have spent a long, long time trying to find the root causes of cancer and—until the root causes of cancer are found, people will die of cancer. And until the root causes in the white community of prejudices, or of racial discrimination, of job discrimination, of housing discrimination, of educational discrimination, until they are rooted out, there will be rioting, much as King and I don't like it. (Rustin's remarks were made prior to Dr. Martin Luther King's murder.)

QUESTION: I just wanted to find out what your opinion is with regard to the separatist movement on the part of some of the so-called Negro militants, what their appeal is to the young. It isn't to the older generation, it is to the young. What headway are they making? Is it something that is serious, or is this something that will disappear after a while?

MR. RUSTIN: It will disappear, don't worry about it.

Let's go back into history again because it seems to me if you don't understand history then there is nothing that you can understand. Everything has its roots back there. You will find that very often what we now call black power separatists' concepts have appeared amongst the Negro. In fact, you will discover in any minority which has a majority on top of it which mistreats it, you will find that the minority periodically jumps into separatism. I have worked among the tribes in Africa, I have found the same thing there. I have worked in India with Ghandi with the untouchables and I found it there.

Now let's look at American history. It always comes in a psycho-

logical pattern. What is that pattern? A period of great hope, followed by a period of despair, followed by a period of separatist theories.

Now the first time it occurred was right after the Civil War. While people do not know it, almost 300,000 Negroes fought in the Civil War for their own freedom. They had great hope that at the end of that war they would get 40 acres and a mule. Now, an election took place in 1876 similar to the election we are going to have this year. The crucial point of that election was to elect a man who would re-enslave Negroes. He was elected. In fact, he wasn't elected, the election was stolen for him.

Now the Union Army was withdrawn from the South killing all of the hope that black people had. That was followed by a period of separationism and that separationism was led by one Booker T. Washington whose theory was—operate out of the political process, don't try to vote and get your rights, turn in on yourselves, lift yourself up by your bootstraps, drop your buckets where you are, make decent people of yourselves, and they will ultimately let you in.

That was a very extreme form of separationism from American politics.

The second time it occurred in its drastic form was following World War I. In World War I again there were 300,000 Negroes fighting in France, not to make the world safe for democracy. They weren't paying any attention to Mr. Wilson who had come to Washington where no segregation existed whatsoever; he segregated every cafeteria in the government offices; segregated Negroes and white from each other, segregated the streetcars in Washington; segregated everything in Washington. They knew he didn't stand for any democracy. What they went to France for was the hope that if they fought they would get something when they came home.

So the highest movement of Negro aspiration was World War I. What happened? Well, a series of things happened. The Ku Klux Klan came along, a northern based organization, instead of a southern based organization in the Twenties. Its headquarters were in Indianapolis. More Negroes were lynched in the four years following World War I than had been lynched up to that time. There were riots against the Negro communities, in East St. Louis and Chicago, about which many of you know.

Furthermore, Negroes in 1920 were chased off the farms in Mississippi at gunpoint, because machines came in to do the cotton picking. That is what the report meant. The reason you have Bedford Stuyvesant, Harlem and Detroit with too many uneducated Negroes in them is not because they elected to come; it is because they were driven off the South by the American mode of production and by the guns of the people who only yesterday needed them, but now do not.

Therefore, the hope of World War II was followed by utter despair. What did you then get? You got Marcus Garvey, the supreme separatist, saying, let's go back to Africa, we will never make it here.

Now the same pattern flows, 1963, March on Washington, 1964 Civil Rights Bill, 1965, voters rights bill. But I want you to know, Congress did nothing in that great period of Negro protests which affected Negroes in northern ghettos. The march on Washington was directed towards getting the Civil Rights Bill which affected the South. The voter rights bill affected the South. But nothing was

done in the North

There was great hope during the period of the marches on Washington, the passing of those bills. That is when everybody sang, "We shall overcome" and "We shall never be turned back" and this they believed.

Well, let me tell you what has happened since. Unemployment has doubled amongst the males, it has trebled amongst the Negro teen-agers; it has quadrupled in the cities.

The 34 figure of unemployment has absolutely no meaning whatsoever as you ought to know, as labor men, because the government only counts people who are looking for work.

In the ghettos, every ghetto, unemployment of Negro youth between 17 and 22 is 38 to 42%. The ghettos are bigger, with more rats, roaches and despair. Therefore there is now, or there has now appeared the absence of hope. And now again, you get the cry that you got following the Civil War and the Reconstruction period, that you got following World War I, let's separate, let Whitey roll over and get out of our way, we want to have our own institutions.

If you will look carefully, there were social forces which came into play which changed the mood from separation to one of inclusion. The separationist movement that followed World War I lasted from 1920 until the formation of the CIO. The minute the CIO was formed, which was in fact taking Negroes out of the humble proletariat into the working classes, the separationist movement died. In the same way, the separationist movement will not die because King or Wilkins or Randolph says it is a bad thing. It will die when a new social force kills it by restoring work and hope again. It will pass. It will pass if we can get guaranteed income for those who cannot work; it will pass if we can get full employment through the construction of public works and services for those who want to work; it can pass when we are prepared to stop building highways to get wealthy white people back to their suburbs and invest the \$50 billion we are putting into highways into that massive transit system which can get this poor humble proletariat out to the suburbs where the jobs are now moving. But we will not get it because we want it, but because we do something about it.

QUESTION: I would like to direct our attention to some of the things you covered in the last couple of sentences. In other words, the question, what do we do, where do we go from here? Some of us represent suburban areas which are even more than the urban areas strongholds of these white attitudes that have created much of the problem. We represent middle class and upper middle class gains in the stronghold, and so, our resources are necessarily limited so that we have the problem of determining our priorities. Unfortunately we have to do this because we cannot solve all their problems at one time.

Most of us recognize the problem almost as simple as having to do with housing, education, employment, and back again into the same mess. Where then ought our main thrusts be placed? Is it safe to suggest that it is in the employment and economic areas and the other will follow, or is there some other area in which we must concentrate our thrust?

PRESIDENT JENNINGS: That is a speech.

MR. RUSTIN: Obviously men, all men are economic beings. They all have stomachs which have to be filled, they all have feet which have to be shod, and they all have to be kept out of the rain with a house over their head.

In a society like ours, you can have a house, you can have your teeth fixed, you can take care of your children, if you work. So obviously, the first priority has to be jobs.

Now I want to knock the education myth in the head to begin with.

The mode of production in society, the way in which we produce goods is the most fundamental means by which men make it or don't make it, not education. Let's stop fooling ourselves about education.

Let's take a Hungarian family that came here in 1910. Let us say that the Hungarian had nine children. He was uncouth and rude. He had no education. He couldn't read and write in Hungarian and obviously he couldn't read and write in English. Now you have to ask yourselves this question, here comes out of Mississippi a Negro not with nine children like the Hungarian, but with three; not ignorant like the Hungarian, but he has had five years of education. He can read and write English which the Hungarian could not. Why now do we never describe the Hungarian as being in tremendous need of education to get a job? And this more advantaged Negro in Mississippi as being unhappy because he is uneducated? Very simple, the mode of production determined that, not the Hungarian and not the Negro.

In 1900, no matter how ignorant or stupid you were, you didn't need a brain or an advanced education or even the ability to speak English. All you needed was a strong back and good muscles because the American capitalist method of production meant they bought muscle power. They are not going to buy the muscle power of that Negro or white from Appalachia today. Therefore the problem is not the Negro any more than it was the Hungarian who was more stupid, it is the society which now has evolved a new method of production.

Every society which has been sincere about lifting the underprivileged has not got involved in a debate about education. We didn't do it in World War II.

Let me show you what we did in World War II. Because we were committed to win the war, we were also committed to full employment. Now being committed to whole employment, we built factories. We never said that a woman was too old or too feminine. We said, "Come here." We never said that man is too black or too uneducated. We said, "Come here." We took people off the farms in Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia who could not read and write. We took youngsters as long as they were warm and could stand up. We said, this is a hammer, this is a tool, this is a chisel and this is a drill. We took men who knew how to build things and lined them up in front of them and behind them. They went in those factories with no preparation, and they created the miracle in two months of making planes which flew.

You must not talk about educating the humble proletariat in a vacuum. They can only be educated under circumstances of learning while doing, while being adequately paid. And many of those workers who didn't know one tool from another are now the most

skilled workers for Walter Reuther in the automobile industry. Where did they learn it? In a nationally controlled and paid for school.

Now, if by education you mean learning while doing while being paid, I am interested. If you mean some Head Start or some Job Corps or some foolishness which is not related to take-home pay, learning while being paid, then I am not interested, because it isn't going to work.

No, the first thing is jobs precisely because the education is bound up with the jobs.

QUESTION: I had thought about the same thing as was mentioned about where we started first. I would like to know where we go from there.

MR. RUSTIN: You mean after we get jobs?

QUESTION: After we get jobs, because the people around me, that I hear talking say that the riots do nothing but set back the case that much longer, so where do we go from here, because people have gotten the opinion that riots are unavoidable this summer.

MR. RUSTIN: I think riots are unavoidable this summer, and why should anybody be surprised?

QUESTION: Where do we start to try to help prevent them?

MR. RUSTIN: I think we have to understand why riots are unavoidable this summer, and they are unavoidable this summer because we haven't done anything since last summer except let the situation get worse.

You know, if it is written in every high religion what I said before, where there is justice there can be order; where there is injustice, disorder is inevitable, how can I sit here and act as if the Gods don't know what they are talking about? Not only are there going to be more riots, but they will be over wider areas and with greater intensity of method.

Now we have got to face the truth, if we are not going to provide these people with work, if we are not going to rebuild the houses, if we are not going to give them medical care, then the answer is very simply, there will be disorder. We've got to remove the causes.

Now if you say that is a politically difficult thing to do, I will agree. But if you make a simple analysis which is often made, that as long as we are in the war nothing can be done, I disagree. And the reason I disagree is that the war in Vietnam is a problem, but it is not an economic problem, because we have the money, as the Freedom Budget clearly pointed out, to do both.

The problem is that the war creates a psychological and political atmosphere where even if you can do both you won't get both done. And about that we need to be clear. It is not economic, it is political and psychological.

Furthermore, my friend, don't think for a minute that when this war is over everybody is going to clap their hands and say, now we can deal with the problems of the ghettos. I want you to note that this country has been in existence since 1776. Since 1920 our

ghettos have been becoming tinder boxes. Now there was no war in Vietnam in 1920, but the same forces of Republicans who are reactionaries and Democrats from the South have fought dealing with our urban and Negro problems long before the war in Vietnam, and they will be fighting them more vigorously when the war in Vietnam is over.

They are happy now because they have a nice patriotic platform from which to spew their reaction. We mustn't do anything because we must support the boys, and they don't give a hang about the boys.

QUESTION: Mr. Chairman, taking history into consideration and all of the very clear illustrations that you have given, and the things that you have said, are you trying to say that the Negro revolution, if that is the proper term, is not going to be successful or that there really isn't any acceptable solution in our time, or that there is a solution and that the things that need to be done will not be done because of the posture of the white community in adjusting itself to the requirements of the whole society? Where are we going?

The second part of it is, the Negro making this very noble effort which as you say is no different than any one other group's efforts, most of which have been successful, aren't they themselves very much divided? Aren't there at least a dozen or fifteen or more different Negro groups which apparently are trying to reach the same goal, but going in different directions? We are going to march, but we hope that Carmichael will not interfere with the march, and all of these other frustrations. I mean, is there progress? Has anything been accomplished? Will we see it?

MR. RUSTIN: Well sir, you have raised five different questions. And I will try to deal with them very shortly.

First of all, gentlemen, there are two kinds of progress, real progress and progress by aspiration. The real progress is always the least important; the progress by aspiration is always what makes for social mobility.

Now let me spell this out quite clearly. Suppose this were a graph (indicating the desk) showing that in 1940 Negroes were asking for this much of the society and the society was willing to accommodate to that degree. Let's assume this is 1968.

If you will watch where white people were willing to accommodate to, you will see a line going up like this, recording real progress.

I want you to know that in 1940, the distance between what the situation was and what Negroes wanted it to be was very narrow.

Now you made all this progress, but that doesn't mean anything. What is meaningful is that this degree of aspiration (illustrating with hands) on the part of Negroes has grown through the roof, making the distance between real progress and the aspiration for progress so wide as to be revolutionary.

So if you will talk to the average Negro, he will say, we haven't made any progress. The fact is we have made fantastic progress, but it was not enough to keep galloping behind his desire for progress.

Now again, you get back to the fact, why is the Negro so dissatisfied? And while there are thousands of reasons, one of the reasons is the development of American television which continuously tells you you are nobody if you don't possess everything that

everybody else has in the society; pimply little boys being lied to on the television telling them that if they get a certain kind of after shaving cream, which they don't even need to shave at this age, they will get a girl friend. How ridiculous!

Well, look at the number of cars stolen. Ninety-eight percent of all cars stolen in society are stolen by relatively poor white boys who live in the suburbs. But since you cannot move in the suburbs without a car, to say nothing about visiting a girl, I don't really get so excited about car stealing. Now I don't want them to steal mine, but sociologically, you see what I mean?

That is on the question of progress

The next, on division between the Negro, my friend, anybody who expects skin coloration to be a basis for organization is wrong. Whites could not organize on the basis of skin coloration, why should Negroes? The fellows who fight you when you go to get 10¢ more for your men are white, but they are white dyed in the wool capitalists who are not going to give you a penny that you don't fight for.

Negroes cannot be organized on the basis of skin color, either, only on the two bases that you set up a Union or a civic society or something else, and there are two things, program and philosophy.

Now I want you to know that the biggest fight that ever took place in this country between minority groups, and here again, I have some literature I can refer you to if you want to see the struggle, took place between the Irish, the so-called "lace curtain Irish" and the "shanty Irish." The most dirty treatise of how dirty, useless, shiftless and irresponsible the Irish were, was written by well established Bostonian Irishmen who didn't want the migration in.

I am not picking on the Irish. You can take other groups. Take the Jewish groups. Why is there an American Jewish Congress and an American Jewish Committee? The answer is very simple. The wealthy well-heeled capitalist Jews with plenty of money, and not all Jews have it, are in the Committee. The poor radical social changes are in Congress. It couldn't be any other way. So there will not be unity.

You want me to sit down in a room on a committee with Carmichael? If you do, you don't know Carmichael, not because I dislike Stokely. I know him very well. He worked with me during the March on Washington, or I worked with him during the March on Washington and he did a very brilliant job. But since then, he accepts a philosophy which I think takes Negroes down the wrong road. And he adopts tactics which I think will build up a backlash. Therefore, I cannot sit down in the same organization with him.

And I want you to know that he thinks I am an "Uncle Tom," and therefore it is mutual. He doesn't want to sit down with me.

On the question of program, now you want to know whether I say I am blaming white people and think that they can't move—no, I am blaming no white people because I don't think blaming is important. Since the question was raised in relationship to the report, I have made clear where I thought the blame lay, but you do not get future progress on the basis of pointing your finger at people and calling them dirty dogs.

I have a program, and it is very simple. It is essentially labor's program for social and economic progress, with a \$2 minimum wage, free medical care for people who need it, and increased social in-

11
surance of all kinds, guaranteed income for those who cannot work public works. I have a program. It is all written out in the "Freedom Budget."

But I know this, for that program to work, the Trade Union Movement, the minority groups, the intellectuals, the students, the Catholics, Protestants and the Jews and everybody who thinks decently in this country will have to emerge as a political force beyond political parties to push that through Congress. And if you ask me what is the most important thing we can do, it is very simple.

In the November elections, the first thing we have to do is return the 47 liberals who were kicked out in '66. That is not a job that is impossible if we all register and vote and stick with the issues. We need to bring more radical men into the Senate. We need to continue to fight for Negroes voting in the South, which is now realigning the nature of the Democratic Party in the South.

Twenty years from now those Southern Democrats, with Negroes voting, will never be able to dominate those committees which are established for the brutalization of everybody, regardless of color, race or creed. The motto of those Senators is, we hate everybody, regardless of color, race or creed. They don't pick on Negroes particularly, they pick on the poor whites of the South, and they make it impossible for you to organize them in the South; they work for right-to-work laws; they are just not interested in Negroes, they are out to brutalize everybody.

Now I have great hope that the American people can come to their senses and eradicate this problem, but you will not eradicate it by eradicating prejudice. You eradicate it by bringing in social and economic programs which push prejudice down so it cannot be socially and economically organized. What I didn't like about the report is that once you say the problem is white racism, then the only answer is for me to go to the government and say, we need to line up 30 million psychiatrists and go out and psychoanalyze the American people. Now it takes about ten years to get anywhere with a patient, and you know, I haven't got that kind of time to wait.

Let's be honest—prejudice is universal. Every group on earth is prejudiced, and if you don't believe it, just let one little thing happen, and you will see that the veneer of civilization will break away and prejudice breaks through it.

My argument is very simple. Dr. King will be hooted and booted by the Germans and Poles in Cicero every time he marches there because the objective, economic and social situation in Cicero and Chicago determines that prejudice can come to the surface and be organized.

Now when we give the economic program I have outlined so that there are really houses for all, decent schools for all, and jobs for all, prejudice will still be here, but it will be forced to the bottom where it is much more difficult to politically and socially organize it.

In the same way that Negroes are behaving badly now, not because they are Negroes, but because the objective situation in the ghettos just by mathematics means irrational behavior, so I am for eliminating the causes for everybody.

QUESTION: Bayard, could you tell us about Martin Luther King's program of the poor people marching on Washington? You

say that you and he are opposed to violence. Won't this activity inevitably bring violence to Washington.

MR. RUSTIN: Well, that is what they said about the March on Washington and it didn't.

QUESTION: That was in 1963.

MR. RUSTIN: Right, I admit the situation is somewhat different now.

But let me go back to the beginning. I talked with Dr. King on numerous occasions about this march. And at the present time I am not working with him on it, though I wish him well. The reason I am not working on it is I was never able to get out of Dr. King and his lieutenants the answers to three questions—What are your objectives? I don't think they really worked them out yet clearly. What are your tactics going to be? Are you going to disrupt government buildings and hospitals and other areas? Or are you going to have peaceful demonstrations, picketing that is within the law, or are you going to use something extra? They told me they didn't know. When it came to the strategy of how they are going to keep 3,000 people in tents, I was not able to get any answer, even though I had drawn up several pages showing the millions and millions of dollars it would take to keep 3,000 people in tents in Washington. By the time you run electricity in, by the time you buy your tents, by the time you rent your toilets—mobile toilets which are up to \$80 a day for four-seaters, and \$40 a day for two-seaters, by the time you bring in portable showers and do the plumbing at Union rates for installing those showers, the price was astronomical.

Now because I could not get answers about those problems of strategy, tactics and objectives, I felt that until I could get those answers, I ought to stay away from them. Whether Dr. King has answers to those questions as yet, I don't know.

Now in terms of the violence, if the demonstrations are peaceful and other people are violent to King, then that is a problem for society. If King's people were to resort to violence, then that is a problem which the black people are going to have to bear. And therefore, I would hope there would be no violence, but I am not afraid of violence, per se. The question is, that if other people direct violence toward us, as they did in Selma and Birmingham, that will make the nation come to us. And to the degree that Negroes envision violence, that drives the nation and our allies away from us.

QUESTION: As an alternative question to the one raised, earlier from what we read about the plans Dick Gregory has in making sure that we can't have a Democratic Convention in Chicago and grasping your idea, I believe on the basis of the prejudices and the psychological effect a situation like this could develop, and knowing full well that all the candidates down there from LBJ down to Wallace that are going to be introducing names at this Convention, is this not a very dangerous type demonstration? Will not this retard the type of platform that these candidates hope to have in the interest of progressive legislation on Civil Rights matters? Is this not a very dangerous thing for Gregory to try to plan to block out that Convention activity?

MR. RUSTIN: Yes, I think it is. I think that any irrational behavior around the Democratic Convention will not help the programs or philosophy that we believe in. It will make more backlash at a time when backlash is growing much too rapidly. Now as regards Dick Gregory, Dick is a very peculiar person. He gets 1% of the vote in a situation where Daley never got such a big vote, and he announces the next day he is going to run for President. So I think that describes Dick Gregory.

Dick Gregory does not purport to be a political being as such. Now I don't think Dick Gregory is going to be able to get enough people to join him to make any tremendous fracas. Furthermore, when the time comes, what Dick Gregory probably will do will be to march on the Convention, and if he is told he is under arrest, unlike many left wingers, he is not going to put up a fight and be carried off. He is going to say, okay, I am under arrest, I will go with you. I think that is the reality.

Dick Gregory is the least dangerous element there. The real dangerous elements, I think are going to be some of the younger peace groups because Daley has plans that they know about for not only surrounding the Convention with police, he is going to have four wings of police so nothing breaks through. And Daley has had to make that promise to the Democratic National Committee and the President, because as you know, there was some talk some time back about changing it. And Daley has a tremendous apparatus which isn't going to let anybody through, unless they are a fairly peaceful group.

During the Conference last week end where the young peace groups got together, they made a decision that if they were not allowed to go to the Convention, they were going to go into the Negro areas. If they do that, I think there is a real possibility of confrontation because the one thing the poor Negro does not like are hippies. And there is a good reason they don't like hippies, and that is they are saying, those g-d hippies come from decent families in Westchester County and all over, they could be clean; they could have decent clothes, and here they come to us all masquerading. And we hate their guts, because they have rejected the very things we are trying to get. So that the conflict between the hippies and the Negroes is a bad one, and if those hippies pour into the Negro community, I think they are going to start trouble. Now I think that is where the trouble will take place, not around the Convention.

By the way, just let me add that since 1948 Mr. Randolph and I have organized demonstrations in front of every political convention, Democratic and Republican. This year, we decided it was too dangerous, because we could not control the elements which would come into it and turn it in their direction.

QUESTION: I would like to know whether people like Carmichael and Rap Brown and some of these other extreme militant people have any real legitimate objective as far as the Negro people are concerned. And I am particularly interested in Carmichael because of the speeches he has made in countries like Cuba and this type of thing. Do they really have any legitimate objectives that mean anything to the Negro people?

MR. RUSTIN: They have real legitimate objectives in their own

terms; in terms of economic and social and political, they don't. Nobody in this room can tell me what Carmichael's claim is on Medicare, on jobs, on housing, on schools, nothing. But then, you have to understand why that is true.

And for many of these young Negroes today, and they represent about one half of one percent of the Negro population, and sometimes when we talk about these things, if you think we are talking about a big mass, we are not, but they are very interesting, psychologically, and here is where they begin.

Number one, the society which has brutalized Negroes for 300 years will never give Negroes freedom.

Number two, if the society is not viable then you cannot have a program, because if you have a problem you are misleading people. And when I said to Carmichael, why don't you do a, b and c, he said to me, you are crazy, you want me to mislead a lot of these Negro youth in really believing they can get decent jobs, housing and education in the society? I won't mislead them.

Now if this society, number one, is not viable and therefore, number two, you don't need a program, then number three, your heroes cannot come from the society, and the methods used by your former heroes must be rejected.

Dr. King, Mr. Randolph, Roy Wilkins, they are the big enemy, and they are the enemies because they stick to programs in a society where programs cannot work. Now therefore, if I can't have my heroes in Mr. Randolph and Whitney Young and Roy Wilkins and Martin Luther King, I have to select my heroes somewhere else. So the heroes then become Castro, Che Guevara, Ho Chi Minh, but don't be misled by that, they are not adopting the Communist philosophy of these men. They like those men because in their view, their methods of revolutionary violence is what they like.

Now it follows from that, therefore, that if you cannot have victories out here, you must have internal psychological victories. Therefore, talking about Negro culture as being superior to white culture gives them an internal satisfaction where there are no jobs out there. Talking about how you wear your hair African style becomes the substitute for no education out there. Talking about soul food as being better than what white people cook, of great debate on whether I want to be called a Negro or an Afro-American or an Afro or a black or colored becomes a substitute for no housing out there.

So these people are what I call believers in frustration economics, frustration sociology, frustration politics. Everything they think is unbasically, unworkable, such as that Negroes ought to go in small businesses and lift themselves economically.

Now for Negroes to go into business, I am all in favor of it, but I have to be a realist; small business is not developing in the United States, small business is being cut out. Or the argument that we have to have Negro teachers for Negro people and only Negro supervisors for Negroes. Now this is a Pandora's Box, because if Negroes in Harlem set a precedent of only Negro teachers and Negro supervisors, Rosemary Guling out in Queens is going to end up saying we only want Anglo-Saxon supervisors and she will get them much quicker than they will in Harlem because she is better organized.

Now what does that do to all the Jewish school teachers and supervisors? It is a Pandora's Box.

Now I believe there should be more Negro history. I believe that more Negroes should be superintendents, but I want them to take their place in line the way everybody else does, and become supervisors of whatever schools are open for them to be supervisors and principals of, and not to divide it. Nor do I agree with the insistence that there be nothing but Negro cops in the ghetto.

The fact of the matter is, under given pressures, nothing can be more brutal than a Negro cop that is trying to make it higher in the police force, and I am talking about personal experience.

QUESTION: I would like to know, rather than either advising or condemning or querying why Carmichael is doing what he is or why Brown is doing it or why King or Rustin are doing what they are doing, I want to know what we are doing, and what we ought to be doing. It strikes me that everybody in this room is moving in three basic spheres where he could be doing something. Those spheres are collective bargaining, direct confrontation with his company, his community affairs, his Union affairs. It strikes me that what we have to understand, if I understand your message correctly, the area in which the only solution can be found is to get to work in the COPE and legislative area to make sure that the people are elected that can do the job. We can't do it with a collective bargaining contract or convincing my neighbor that prejudice ought to go away, the only way I can do it is by electing the people right now and changing the government in regard to riots, in terms of our social affairs, and that is where the people in this room ought to be concentrating their efforts.

MR. RUSTIN: I agree with you. Three years ago I wrote an article which now has appeared in some 24 books. It was called "From Protest to Politics." If you don't have any copies, I would like to send you some. I would like to send them to the Board because I think it is an important article.

The point in the article is three points, one, this nation is going to do nothing special for the Negro.

Two, that this nation can be brought politically to do something special for the poor. If this nation does something for the poor, since the Negro is the most grievously poor, he will be lifted. Therefore, the basic economic program of the AFL-CIO is what has got to be sold to Congress, and that means getting a Congress which would buy it.

And you see, that is one of the reasons I am very much opposed to the scapegoatism around President Johnson. I am afraid the President's scapegoatism around Johnson is going to obscure us from seeing the realities.

Now I don't think Johnson has proposed enough. He hasn't proposed my program. But what we forget in jumping on Johnson is that he has proposed an awful lot more than Congress has been willing to pass, number one.

Number two, we must avoid permitting this election to become a duplicate of 1952 or we are finished.

I want to say a word to my peace friends here. I happen to be a peace man. I have been in jail for three years because of my peace position. But I never obscure the fact that a single issue election will kill this nation. In 1952 when we elected Ike with that

tremendous plurality around one thing, are you going to Korea and stop the war? Now the fact is, the war is still going on, we have 500,000 guys, you know, over there. Interesting.

After Ike got that plurality around the single issue only of the war, for ten years he did absolutely nothing on labor and Civil Rights issues except the wrong things. And therefore, in this election we have got to raise right up there with the question of Vietnam, the question of domestic policy, and if we don't, we are finished. And you let anybody slip through on the basis that he is going to merely stop the war in Vietnam, McCarthy for an example—now I happen to respect Mr. McCarthy, but he certainly has been playing it very strange. He was not in the Senate on the vote on cloture. He was not in the Senate on the vote against the so-called riot bill which is going to get us into deeper trouble. Now if he thinks that he should run off in all directions pursuing Vietnam, we are in very serious trouble.

Let me say one other thing about Vietnam. For some people the tragedy, and for other people the joy, is that Johnson actually holds every card on Vietnam and can destroy the Kennedy and McCarthy campaign any minute he wants. They have only raised two fundamental questions, the escalation of troops and stopping the bombing. Johnson knows exactly what I know, that the leadership of North Vietnam does not intend to and will not in fact sit down at a table until after the election. They are so convinced that we are going to get a President who is going to negotiate with them on terms different from Johnson's.

What is the situation before the election? Johnson will, either for honest or dishonest reasons de-escalate by 50,000 and stop bombing for three weeks. What is left? Certainly the Kennedy and McCarthy campaigns will have all the wind taken out of them because they have not asked for anything other than those two things. Kennedy has taken pains to say he is not interested in a pull-out. So I think we are in for some very serious surprises around the war, but precisely because we can get daily surprises around Vietnam, we are going to have to work very vigorously to keep the problems of the poor and the minority people at the center of this election.

Now that is your job, and that is a very hard job, and that is a job which determines whether we put liberals back in.

QUESTION: Something just developed in Pennsylvania that leads me to be fearful of situations.

In the General Assembly in Pennsylvania in the House, all the Negro members of the House, most of them coming from Philadelphia have set up what they called a "Black Bloc." By doing this, I am fearful that they are going to antagonize lots of votes on legislation, on relief, support to Medicare and everything else. With the exception of certain ministers, we don't seem to get the support of the so-called knowledgeable men and knowledgeable women. I am fearful, coming from the capital there, that the setting up of this Black Bloc, unless it is stopped, will create more division than we want to see. And I want to know if that is a move in any direction, and I don't know whether you know of that situation in Pennsylvania which has just occurred.

MR. RUSTIN: I do. I want to be again very honest, and an-

alytical if I can be, and without emotion.

We are simply going to get more and more black blocs; we are simply going to get more and more people saying, I don't care what his record is, he is white, therefore we are going to have to vote against him, because we would rather have a man of our own even if he isn't any good rather than a white man in our district. You are going to get all kinds of frustration reactions instead of real politics.

You are going to get many Negroes being vetoed by a tiny minority. And I will give you an example of what I mean by that. When this problem came up about all Negroes being school principals, Mr. Randolph brought a number of very responsible Negroes into his office and we had written a statement for them to sign protesting this. They all agreed with the statement, but nobody wanted to sign it. One man said, I own a bank down the street, and I have got a lot of these black nationalists in my bank, separationists. I don't want to say anything to make them mad.

Another fellow said, I own a furniture store across the street, and I don't want them breaking my windows, because they don't like my signing of that statement.

A doctor said that he had too many patients that were extremists, and he didn't want to be bothered, so that everybody agreed with the statement, and nobody would sign it.

QUESTION: See, these are people who are aware of the political facts of life. I am not speaking of somebody who has a business concern, I am not speaking of somebody who is frustrated, I am speaking of men who have been in the General Assembly, and in the labor movement for years. And they are setting up barriers to cause vetoes to take place. Now with the exception of a few ministers, I am not looking for anybody to sign a statement, I am looking for somebody to adhere to a principle, and these men are elected to office.

MR. RUSTIN: All I am saying here, I agree with your general sentiments, I am simply saying that as long as the conditions exist and the separationists, black power people exist, they are going to have an effect on those men and intimidate them into taking certain positions they don't really hold.

You know if the white community would stop jumping on Adam Clayton Powell, he couldn't be elected in New York. He is elected because every time you pick up the paper some white person is calling him something.

Now therefore, Adam has all kinds of sensible people in Harlem backing him up. I don't happen to be one of them. But he has got all kinds of sensible people ready to vote for him again, not that they like him, but that this is the way of their protesting.

I will bet you I know why that black caucus was organized, because they were under pressure from the Negro community to stand up and show some spirit. They didn't want to organize that thing. Furthermore, what in the name of God in the Pennsylvania Legislature can five or six Negroes do calling themselves a bloc? What are they going to block? Seriously, but they do this for appearance purposes. If you go into a Negro church now to speak at a NAACP meeting, and you use the word "Negro," you get 15 or 20 people in the back to shout you down unless you say "black." Now

most people sitting there don't care, but they take the initiative by what I call "pushists," "elitists," and what has been called by one philosopher, infantile leftism, if you know what I mean.

This is the kind of thing that happens, but my friends, we are not going to get rid of those aberrations right through the classes until we get some major break through on houses, schools and jobs. That is the problem we don't like to face.

It can't be done by lecturing and arguing, it's got to be produced out of something.

PRESIDENT JENNINGS: Kind of bad, it can't be produced out of a Congress that has as its high spot almost a standing ovation when the President talked about crime in the streets. It has to come, the point that you made, from a Congress that is going to have to act across the board to very, very basic inequities in our society.

MR. RUSTIN: For black and white.

PRESIDENT JENNINGS: Black and white.

QUESTION: Mr. Chairman, you said something about having a great hope. Now we talked about the brutality among the blacks for a few hundred years. We talked about the bitter disappointments that grew out of the 300,000 Negro soldiers in the Civil War and the great expectations that were expected as a result of that service and similar disappointments that grew out of other major contributions made by the Negro community. We have talked about a hostile Senate and Congress, and we spent time talking about the caliber of these people, not only what they would do to the Negro community, but in fact what they would do to labor and anybody else and all of the other inhibitions.

What I am trying to grasp or see is upon what do you base this great hope that you have? If nothing happened between last summer and this summer, what is going to happen next summer and the summer after? Are we facing the same failure or what is this hope that you have? From this I think we can get the biggest message.

MR. RUSTIN: I have three possibilities of hope.

Number one, as I told you before, twice the number of Negroes are now voting in the South as voted in 1965. They are pushing Negroes in the Southern Legislatures, and if the rate of voting continues as it is, the nature of the United States Senate ultimately must change. You will not find Eastland and his ilk sitting on those committees. That is one hope, a realignment of the political forces of the South with Negroes voting, because once Negroes are in fact voting, the poor whites who have never had an honest chance to vote are not going to let the Negroes get away with that, they are going to come out too and they are going to vote in their interest for a change. So I see an alliance there at the voting level. Whites in the South are getting more educated, they are not going to say any longer, just because I am white I can live like a pig, and since I am better than a "nigger" I am somebody. And the industrialization of the South, the unionization of the South, all of these things are making a new South which is going to make a new Congress.

Secondly, my faith rests and my hope rests in the fact that I

think Americans can be very silly, but then I have lived in India, and they have been very silly; I have lived in England and went to school there, and they can be very silly. And in fact, England has just passed legislation in the last few years which is going in the wrong direction of solving their problems as our legislation is going in the right direction, no matter how slow.

I have an abiding faith that if the American people can be honestly told the truth as I think the Commission's report tried to do, they will move.

And my third hope is in the nature of our doing a good job. I cannot be hopeless and face the big job we have to do in November.

I am only going to inspire people in the ghettos to get out and vote in their interest if they feel I have some sense that something can happen. And that is the faith around selling them the kind of economic and social program which I roughly describe as the AFL-CIO economic and social program.

Now I refuse to cry in my beer about the situation. I just think if we who are trying to lead people don't see a new way and have a great sense of hope and enthusiasm, that we are going into a fight and we are going to win, you know, why shouldn't they give up? //

Bayard Rustin, director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, was born on March 17, 1910, in Westchester, Pennsylvania. He was the first field-secretary of the Congress of Racial Equality, and served as a youth organizer for A. Philip Randolph's march on Washington.

During World War II, he was imprisoned in Lewisburg Penitentiary as a conscientious objector. In 1947, he participated in the first Freedom Ride, the Journey of Reconciliation. Arrested in North Carolina, he served 30 days on a chain gang.

Rustin assisted the late Dr. Martin Luther King in organizing the Montgomery Bus Protest, and, at Dr. King's request, drew up the first plans for the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

He organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, and, in 1964, organized the first school boycott in New York City. He has been arrested more than two dozen times in the struggle for civil rights.



The Labor-Negro Coalition — A New Beginning



Over 40,000 mourners pack the plaza in front of Memphis City Hall after march memorializing Dr. King and backing strikers.

by Bayard Rustin

The murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has thrust a lance into the soul of America. The pain is most shattering to the Negro people. We have lost a valiant son, a symbol of hope and an eloquent spirit that inspired masses of people. Such a man does not appear often in the history of social struggle. When his presence signifies that greatness can inhabit a black skin, those who must deny this possibility stop at nothing to remove it. Dr. King now joins a long list of victims of desperate hate in the service of insupportable lies, myths and stereotypes.

For me, the death of Dr. King brings deep personal grief. I had known and worked with him since the early days of the Montgomery bus protest in 1955, through the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Prayer Pilgrimage in 1957, the youth marches for integrated schools in 1958 and 1959 and the massive March on Washington in 1963.

Though his senior by 20 years, I came to admire the depth of his faith in non-violence, in the ultimate vindication of the democratic process and in the redeeming efficacy of social commitment and action. And underlying this faith was a quiet courage grounded in the belief that the triumph of justice, however long delayed, was inevitable. Like so many others, I

watched his spirit take hold in the country, arousing long-slumbering consciences and giving shape to a new social movement. With that movement came new hopes, aspirations and expectations. The stakes grew higher.

At such a time, so great a loss can barely be sustained by the Negro people. But the tragedy and shame of April 4th darken the entire nation as it teeters on the brink of crisis. And let no one mistake the signs: our country is in deadly serious trouble. This needs to be said because one of the ironies of life in an advanced industrialized society is that many people can go about their daily business without being directly affected by the ominous rumblings at the bottom of the system.

Yet we are at one of the great crossroads in our history and the alternatives before us grow more stark with every summer's violence. In moments like these there is a strong temptation to succumb to utter despair and helpless cynicism. It is indeed hard to maintain a clear perspective, a reliable sense of where events are heading. But this is exactly what we are called upon to do. Momentous decisions are about to be made—consciously or by default—and the consequences will leave not one corner of this land, nor any race or class, untouched.

Where, then, do we go from here?

We are a house divided. Of this Dr. King's murder is a stunning reminder. Every analysis, strategy and proposal for a way out of the American dilemma must

BAYARD RUSTIN is Executive Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute and a board member of the League for Industrial Democracy. He helped plan the march of the Memphis sanitation men which was to be led by Martin Luther King, Jr. When Dr. King was assassinated, the march was carried on as a memorial to King.



Mrs. Coretta King fulfills husband's pledge to lead Memphis march. At right is Rev. Abernathy; at right corner is Rustin.

begin with the recognition that a perilous polarization is taking place in our society. Part of it is no doubt due to the war in Viet Nam, part to the often remarked generational gap. But generations come and go and so do foreign policies. The issue of race, however, has been with us since our earliest beginnings as a nation. I believe it is even deeper and sharper than the other points of contention. It has bred fears, myths and violence over centuries. It is the source of dark and dangerous irrationality, a current of social pathology running through our history and dimming our brighter achievements.

Most of the time the reservoir of racism remains stagnant. But—and this has been true historically for most societies—when major economic, social or political crises arise, the backwaters are stirred and latent racial hostility comes to the surface. Scapegoats must be found, simple targets substituted for complex problems. The frustration and insecurity generated by these problems find an outlet in notions of racial superiority and inferiority. Very often we find that the most virulent hostility to Negroes exists among ethnic groups that only recently “made it” themselves or that are still near the bottom of the ladder. They need to feel that somebody is beneath them. (This is a problem which the labor movement has had to face more acutely perhaps than any comparable institution in American life. And it's a problem which some of labor's middle-class critics have not had to cope with at all.)

Negroes are reacting to this hostility with a counter-hostility. Some say the white man has no “soul”; others say he is barbaric, uncivilized; others proclaim him racially inferior. As is so often the case, such a *reaction* is the exaggerated obverse of the original *action*.

And in fact it incorporates elements of white stereotypes of Negroes. (“Soul,” for example, so far as it is definable, seems to consist in part of rhythm, spon-

taneity, pre-industrial sentimentality, a footloose anti-regimentation, etc.—qualities attributed to Negroes by many whites, though in different words.)

This reaction among Negroes is not so new as many white people think. What is new is the intensity with which it is felt among some Negroes and the violent way it has been expressed in recent years. For this, the conservatives and reactionaries would blame the civil rights movement and the federal government. And in the very specific sense, we must conclude that they are right.

One effect of the civil rights struggle in the past 10 years has been to convince a generation of young Negroes that their place in society is no longer predetermined at birth. We demonstrated that segregationist barriers could be toppled, that social relations were not fixed for all time, that change was on the agenda. The federal government reinforced this new consciousness with its many pronouncements that racial integration and equality were the official goals of American society.

The reactionaries would tell us that these hopes and promises were unreasonable to begin with and should never have been advanced. They equate stability with the preservation of the established hierarchy of social relations, and chaos with the reform of that unjust arrangement. The fact is that the promises were reasonable, justified and long overdue. Our task is not to rescind them—how do you rescind the promise of equality?—but to implement them fully and vigorously.

This task is enormously complicated by the polarization now taking place on the race issue. We are caught in a vicious cycle: inaction on the poverty and civil rights fronts foments rioting in the ghettos; the rioting encourages vindictive inaction. Militancy, extremism and violence grow in the black community; racism, reaction and conservatism gain ground in the white community.

Personal observation and the law of numbers per-

suade me that a turn to the "right" comprises the larger part of the polarization. This, of course, is a perilous challenge not only to the Negro but also to the labor movement, to liberals and civil libertarians, to all of the forces for social progress. We must meet that challenge in 1968.

Meanwhile, a process of polarization is also taking place within the Negro community and, with the murder of Dr. King, it is likely to be accelerated.

Ironically and sadly, this will occur precisely because of the broad support Dr. King enjoyed among Negroes. That support cut across ideological and class lines. Even those Negro spokesmen who could not accept, and occasionally derided, Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence and reconciliation, admired and respected his unique national and international position. They were moved by his sincerity and courage. Not, perhaps, since the days of Booker T. Washington—when 90 percent of all Negroes lived in the South and were occupationally and socially more homogeneous than today—had any one man come so close to being *the* Negro leader. He was a large unifying force and his assassination leaves an enormous vacuum. The diverse strands he linked together have fallen from his hands.

The murder of Dr. King tells Negroes that if one of the greatest among them is not safe from the assassin's bullet, then what can the least of them hope for? In this context, those young black militants who have resorted to violence feel vindicated. "Look what happened to Dr. King," they say. "He was non-violent, he didn't hurt anybody. And look what they did to him. If we have to go down, let's go down shooting. Let's take whitey with us."

Make no mistake about it: a great psychological barrier has now been placed between those of us who have urged nonviolence as the road to social change and the frustrated despairing youth of the ghettos. Dr. King's assassination is only the latest example of our society's determination to teach young Negroes

that violence pays. We pay no attention to them until they take to the streets in riotous rebellion. Then we make minor concessions—not enough to solve their basic problems, but enough to persuade them that we know they exist. "Besides," the young militants will tell you, "this country was built on violence. Look at what we did to the Indians. Look at our television and movies. And look at Viet Nam. If the cause of the Vietnamese is worth taking up guns for, why isn't the cause of the black man right here in Harlem?"

These questions are loaded and oversimplified, to be sure, and they obscure the real issues and the programmatic direction we must take to meet them. But what we must answer is the bitterness and disillusionment that give rise to these questions. If our answers consist of mere words, they will fall on deaf ears. They will not ring true until ghetto-trapped Negroes experience significant and tangible progress in the daily conditions of their lives—in their jobs, income, housing, education, health care, political representation, etc. This must be understood by those often well-meaning people who, frightened by the polarization, would retreat from committed action into homilies about racial understanding.

We are indeed a house divided. But the division between race and race, class and class, will not be dissolved by massive infusions of brotherly sentiment. The division is not the result of bad sentiment and therefore will not be healed by rhetoric. Rather the division and the bad sentiments are both reflections of vast and growing inequalities in our socioeconomic system—inequalities of wealth, of status, of education, of access to political power. Talk of brotherhood and "tolerance" (are we merely to "tolerate" one another?) might once have had a cooling effect, but increasingly it grates on the nerves. It evokes contempt not because the values of brotherhood are wrong—they are more important now than ever—but because it just does not correspond to the reality we see around us. And such talk does nothing to eliminate the inequalities that breed resentment and deep discontent.

The same is true of most "Black Power" sloganeering, in which I detect powerful elements of conservatism. Leaving aside those extremists who call for violent "revolution," the Black Power movement embraces a diversity of groups and ideologies. It contains a strong impulse toward withdrawal from social struggle and action, a retreat back into the ghetto, avoidance of contact with the white world. This impulse may, I fear, be strengthened by the assassination of Dr. King.

This brand of Black Power has much in common with the conservative white American's view of the Negro. It stresses self-help ("why don't those Negroes pull themselves up by their own bootstraps like my ancestors did?"). It identifies the Negro's main problems in psychological terms, calls upon him to develop greater self-respect and dignity by studying Negro history and culture and by building independent institutions.

In all of these ideas there is some truth. But taken

An Atlanta scene during King's funeral as nation mourned.





King at 1961 AFL-CIO session with Vice Pres. Lee Minton.

as a whole, the trouble with this thinking is that it assumes that the Negro can solve his problems by himself, in isolation from the rest of the society. The fact is, however, that the Negro did not create these problems for himself and he cannot solve them by himself.

Dignity and self-respect are not abstract virtues that can be cultivated in a vacuum. They are related to one's job, education, residence, mobility, family responsibilities and other circumstances that are determined by one's economic and social status in the society. Whatever deficiencies in dignity and self-respect may be laid to the Negro are the consequence of generations of segregation, discrimination and exploitation. Above all, in my opinion, these deficiencies result from systematic exclusion of the Negro from the economic mainstream.

This exclusion cannot be reversed—but only perpetuated—by gilding the ghettos. A “separate but equal” economy for black Americans is impossible. In any case, the ghettos do not have the resources needed for massive programs of abolishing poverty, inferior education, slum housing and the other problems plaguing the Negro people. These resources must come primarily from the federal government, which means that the fate of the Negro is unavoidably tied to the political life of this nation.

It is time, therefore, that all of us, black and white alike, put aside rhetoric that obscures the real problems. It is precisely because we have so long swept these incendiary problems under the rug that they are now exploding all around us, insisting upon our attention. We can divert our eyes no longer.

The life and death of Martin Luther King are profoundly symbolic. From the Montgomery bus protest to the Memphis sanitation workers strike, his career embodies the internal development, the unfolding, the evolution of the modern civil rights struggle.

That struggle began as a revolt against segregation in public accommodations—buses, lunch counters,

libraries, schools, parks. It was aimed at ancient and obsolete institutional arrangements and mores left over from an earlier social order in the South, an order that was being undermined and transformed by economic and technological forces.

As the civil rights movement progressed, winning victory after victory in public accommodations and voting rights, it became increasingly conscious that these victories would not be secure or far-reaching without a radical improvement in the Negro's socio-economic position. And so the movement reached out of the South into the urban centers of the North and West. It moved from public accommodations to employment, welfare, housing, education—to find a host of problems the nation had let fester for a generation.

But these were not problems that affected the Negro alone or that could be solved easily with the movement's traditional protest tactics. These injustices were imbedded not in ancient and obsolete institutional arrangements but in the priorities of powerful vested interests, in the direction of public policy, in the allocation of our national resources. Sit-ins could integrate a lunch counter, but massive social investments and imaginative public policies were required to eliminate the deeper inequalities.

Dr. King came to see that this was too big a job for the Negro alone, that it called for an effective coalition with the labor movement. As King told the AFL-CIO convention in 1961:

“Negroes are almost entirely a working people. There are pitifully few Negro millionaires and few Negro employers. Our needs are identical with labor's needs—decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children and respect in the community.

“That is why Negroes support labor's demands and fight laws which curb labor.

“That is why the labor-hater and labor-baiter is virtually always a twin-headed creature spewing anti-Negro epithets from one mouth and anti-labor propaganda from the other mouth.

“The duality of interest of labor and Negroes makes any crisis which lacerates you, a crisis from which we bleed. As we stand on the threshold of the second half of the twentieth century, a crisis confronts us both. Those who in the second half of the nineteenth century could not tolerate organized labor have had a rebirth of power and seek to regain the despotism of that era while retaining the wealth and privileges of the twentieth century.

“... The two most dynamic and cohesive liberal forces in the country are the labor movement and the Negro freedom movement.

“... I look forward confidently to the day when all who work for a living will be one, with no thought to their separateness as Negroes, Jews, Italians or any other distinctions.

“This will be the day when we shall bring into full realization the American dream—a dream yet unful-

filled: A dream of equality of opportunity, of privilege and property widely distributed; a dream of a land where men will not take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few; a dream of a land where men will not argue that the color of a man's skin determines the content of his character; a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are held not for ourselves alone but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity; the dream of a country where every man will respect the dignity and worth of human personality—that is the dream.”

And so Dr. King went to Memphis to help 1,300 sanitation workers—almost all of them black—to win union recognition, dues checkoff, higher wages and better working conditions. And in the midst of this new phase of his work he was assassinated. Since then, the sanitation workers have won their fight. But the real battle is just beginning.

The Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders is the latest in a series of documents—official, semi-official and unofficial—that have sought to arouse the American people to the great dangers we face and to the price we are likely to pay if we do not multiply our efforts to eradicate poverty and racism.

The recent recommendations parallel those urged by civil rights and labor groups over the years. The legislative work of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and of the AFL-CIO has been vital to the progress we have made so far. This work is now proceeding effectively on a broad coordinated basis. It has pinpointed the objectives for which the entire nation must strive.

We have got to provide meaningful work at decent wages for every employable citizen. We must guarantee an adequate income for those unable to work. We must build millions of low-income housing units, tear down the slums and rebuild our cities. We

need to build schools, hospitals, mass transit systems. We need to construct new, integrated towns. As President Johnson has said, we need to build a “second America” between now and the year 2000.

It is in the context of this national reconstruction that the socioeconomic fate of the Negro will be determined. Will we build into the second America new, more sophisticated forms of segregation and exploitation or will we create a genuine open, integrated and democratic society? Will we have a more equitable distribution of economic resources and political power or will we sow the seeds of more misery, unrest and division?

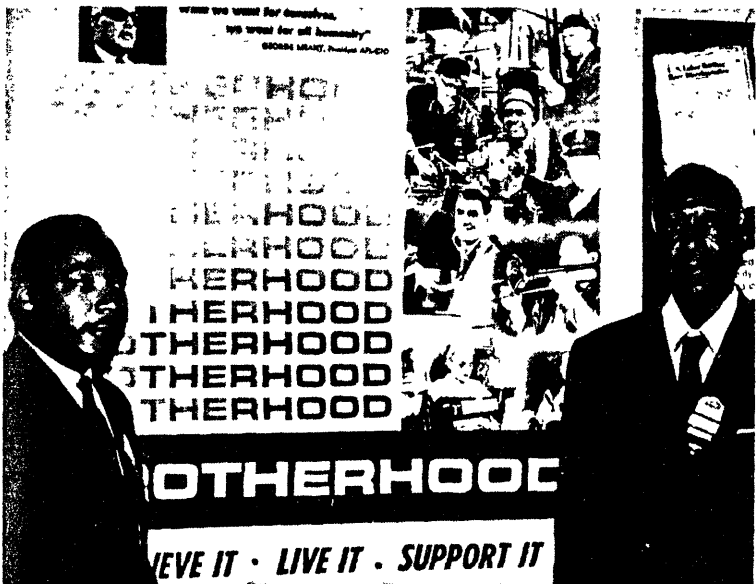
Because of men like Martin Luther King, it is unlikely that the American Negro can ever again return to the old order. But it is up to us, the living, black and white, to realize Dr. King's dream.

This means, first of all, to serve notice on the 90th Congress that its cruel indifference to the plight of our cities and of the poor—even after the martyrdom of Dr. King—will not be tolerated by the American people. In an economy as fabulously productive as ours, a balanced budget cannot be the highest virtue and, in any case, it cannot be paid for by the poor.

Next, I believe, we must recognize the magnitude of the threat we face in an election year from a resurgence of the rightwing backlash forces. This threat will reach ever greater proportions if this summer sees massive violence in the cities. The Negro-labor-liberal coalition, whatever differences now exist within and among its constituent forces, must resolve to unite this fall in order to defeat racism and reaction at the polls. Unless we so resolve, we may find ourselves in a decade of vindictive and mean conservative domination.

We owe it to Martin Luther King not to let this happen. We owe it to him to preserve and extend his victories. We owe it to him to fulfill his dreams. We owe it to his memory and to our futures.

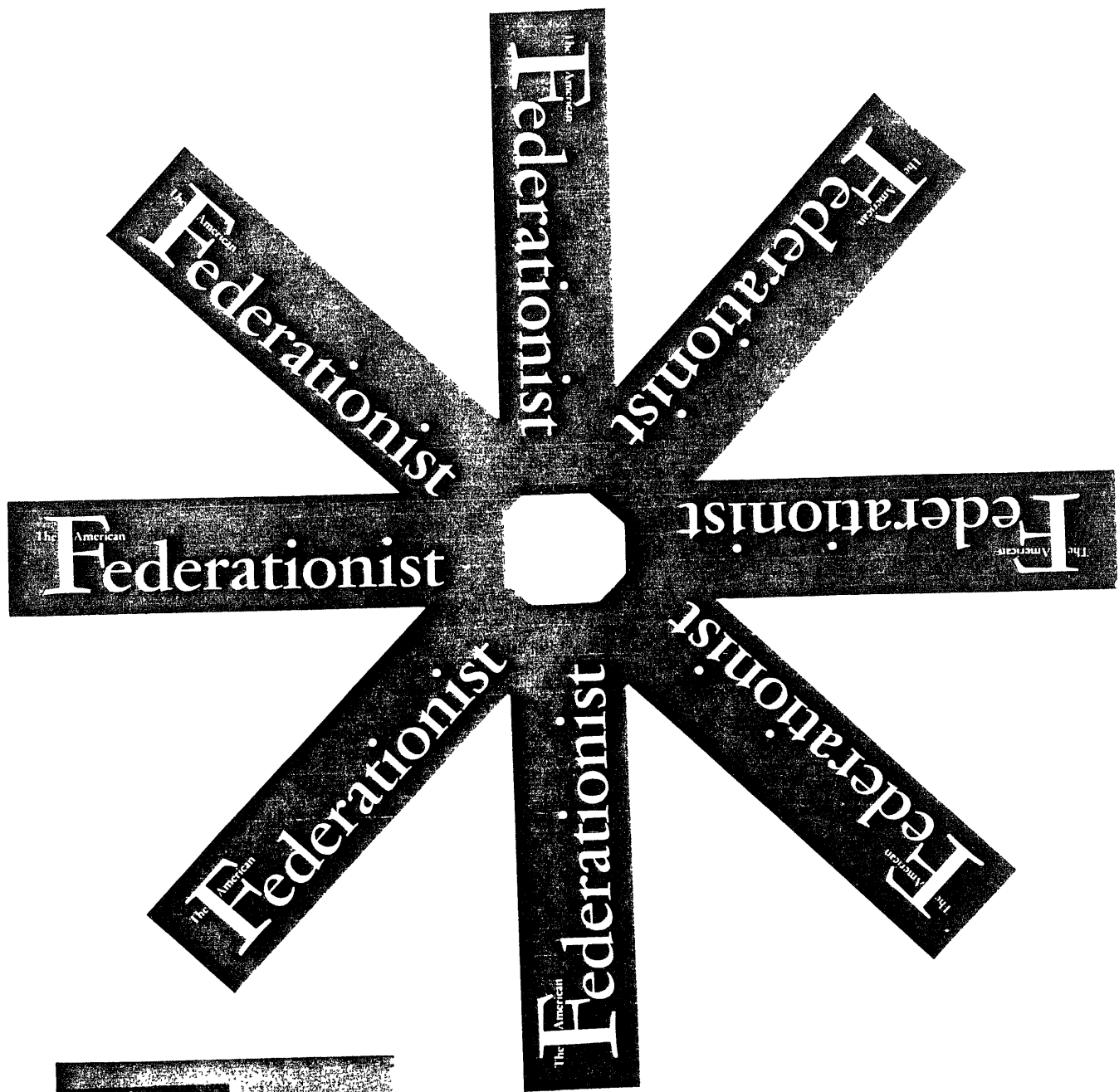
King, here with Phil Randolph, stressed labor-Negro ties.



After struggle and tragedy, Memphis strikers cheer victory.



Reprinted from May 1968
AFL-CIO AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST



LABOR'S JOURNAL OF OPINION

subscribe today to the labor movement's
journal of opinion — an influential guide
for trade union leadership
only \$2.00 per year

May 8, 1968

*Article's
Done*

Mr. T.K. Mahadevan
GANDHI MARG
221/223 Rouse Avenue
New Delhi-1 India

Dear Mr. Mahadevan,

I'm sorry it has taken me so long to answer your letter, but I've been terribly busy. I can do the article you wanted for GANDHI Marg, a somewhat longer version will appear in an American magazine published by the AFL-CIO. Please drop me a line if you still want the article.

Sincerely,

Bayard Rustin

Gandhi Marg

journal of the gandhi peace foundation
221/223 ROUSE AVENUE NEW DELHI-1 PHONE 273376

15 April 1968

Mr Bayard Rustin
c.o. The A. Philip Educational Fund
New York City
U.S.A.

Federer

Dear Mr Rustin

The assassination of Martin Luther King has come at a time when the black people of America are particularly leaderless. First Malcolm X, then Evers and now King -- the erosion of black leadership in America is ruthless. Nevertheless, we have to go forward in the belief and faith that these and many other named and un-named martyrs have not died in vain. If the black Americans are not to get completely bogged down in despair and anarchy, they will have to walk the future days, weeks, months -- and maybe years -- with the unseen courage and determination that come from faith and hope.

GANDHI MARG would like to devote almost the whole of its next issue (July 1968) to a consideration of the historical role of Martin Luther King in the development of nonviolent resistance. As one close to his work and thought, I feel such a symposium will be incomplete without a brief article from you. Though it might be helpful, I would not like to break up the theme into compartments lest your thinking on the subject is unwittingly inhibited.

The nature and suddenness of King's death has naturally produced a wave of uncritical adulation of the man and his work. What we propose to have in GANDHI MARG is, however, a more balanced, objective and constructively critical assessment of King's contribution. We want his strong points as well as his weak points to be weighed equally; for as with Gandhi so with King, we shall gain most from their life, work and death by honest, critical understanding.

I thought an article from you of between 1500 and 2000 words would be ideal for our purpose -- of course, leaving you the option to write a longer piece if you so choose. The July number is due to be published on 15 July 1968 and we go to press around the first week of June. I should therefore like to have your article in my hands not later than the last week of May.

I shall be thankful if you will drop me an immediate line to say you are writing.

Sincerely

T.K. Mahadevan
T.K. Mahadevan

*I remember our brief
discussion in your office
last year.*

M

Gandhi Peace Foundation
221 Rouse Avenue : New Delhi 1

ME/68(Pt)/ 352 ✓
13 May 1968

Mr Bayard Rustin
A Philip Randolph Institute
217 West 125 Street
New York, N.Y.10027
U.S.A.

Dear Mr Rustin

Yes indeed, I still want your article;
it is not yet late. I get the AFL-CIO
journal and it is certainly all right if
the longer version of your article would
appear in it more or less simultaneously.

Sincerely



T.K. Mahadevan