

HASALMUN'25



CABINET

OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

STUDY GUIDE

Under-Secretary General: Şevval Bilge Şimşek

"Youth will shape the world"

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1. Letter from the Secretary-General

Dear Delegates of the Cabinet of Martin Luther King Jr,

It is my utmost pleasure and honour to welcome each and every one of you to the 12th annual session of HASALMUN and specifically to the Cabinet. I am proud to say, on behalf of our whole academic and organisation team, that every detail of this conference was devised with careful dedication and sincere enthusiasm so as to provide all of you with pleasant and unforgettable memories.

MUN is not just about building connections, the value of it goes much deeper; MUN is about bonding over world issues. It is about realising how all human beings are bound by different problems and understanding that the world is waiting for courageous, intellectual, kind-hearted leaders and individuals to heal the broken hearts, and rebuild the shadowed dreams.

HASALMUN has, since its day of foundation, been a stage where everyone is provided with the opportunity to express, debate, and negotiate. Every delegate is received with the greatest amount of excitement, happiness and pride; because, as young individuals ourselves, we know the importance of being recognized as worthy individuals. I assure you that HASALMUN'25 will be a place for growth, in every possible context.

This year, the Cabinet will be tackling an issue that requires great commitment, a versatile approach, deep thought processes, carefully written-directives and heated debates. The topic of the arrest of Rosa Parks and the Civil Rights Movement, holds a special place in my heart as they are brave strikes for justice. Impactful however non-violent protests that aim to establish equality within a segregated country. Our irreplaceable Under-Secretary General and my dearest friend **Ms. Şevval Bilge Şimşek** has prepared this amazing study guide with invaluable efforts and utmost attention in order to ensure that all delegates receive every piece of information they need from this document alone. I thank her for being the greatest in her job and her marvelous commitments to the conference. Moreover, I also want to thank our academic trainees **Mr. Sinan Mert Uluçay** and **Ms. İdil İskender** for their contributions to the study guide.

Last, but definitely not the least, I want to thank you delegates for making this conference truly meaningful. Without your words and actions, HASALMUN would not be what it is today. Thank you to all the youthful minds for adding value into this conference and the world we live in. Youth will shape the world!

Best wishes & Yours sincerely,

Öykü Tekman

Secretary-General of HASALMUN'25

2. Letter from the Under-Secretary General

Esteemed participants of HasalMUN'25,

It is an honour to welcome you to the 12th edition of HasalMUN. I hope that this conference brings you an unforgettable experience and lasting memories. I am Şevval Bilge Şimşek, the Under-Secretary General for the Cabinet of Martin Luther King Jr. and I am looking forward to seeing you on the 17th of June.

As we dive into one of the most defining chapters of the 20th century, you will not only represent historical figures but also explore the challenges of a movement that changed the course of history. I hope you approach this committee with curiosity, compassion and courage, three qualities that defined the Civil Rights Movement. I can't wait to see the spirit and creativity you will bring to this committee.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our Secretary-General, Öykü Tekman, for her constant support and trust in this committee which we started planning months ago and has meant a lot to us ever since. I also would like to thank Sinan Mert and İdil for their valuable contributions while preparing this extensive study guide.

If you have any questions about the committee, please do not hesitate to reach me from my email address below. Lastly, remember that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere and in this committee, indecisiveness is a threat to the movement. You've got the dream so write fearlessly and bring the dream to life.

Sincerely,

Şevval Bilge Şimşek

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Under-Secretary General of the Cabinet of Martin Luther King Jr.

3. Introduction

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s was not just a fight for racial equality, it was a significant challenge to the American moral conscience. At the heart of this movement stood the Montgomery Bus Boycott that would ignite a nationwide struggle for justice. With origins in the Reconstruction Era, this movement aimed to abolish racial segregation and discrimination through nonviolent protests. The milestone that would lead to a broader struggle in the Civil Rights Act was the moment Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white passenger. This refusal may seem simple or small but following her arrest it sparked a boycott to the Montgomery bus system. The formation of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) not only broadened the boycott but also introduced a powerful voice for justice to the nation: Martin Luther King Jr.

During the boycott King's leadership was not merely symbolic, he united black community leaders under a non-violent activism idea depending on the courage of Rosa Parks. They staged the Montgomery Bus Boycott that would last 381 days and result in a court decision stating the unconstitutionality of segregated seating. Organising a non-violent boycott, Martin Luther King and other MIA members won the public's trust in a short time. This local boycott highlighted the injustice in the United States of America carrying its goal beyond Alabama. This movement starting with the brave stand of Rosa Parks contributed to the struggle for racial justice but only beating segregated seating was not enough, they gathered strength to live with equal rights and dignity s in the USA. What kept them tightly together was the belief that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

4. Historical and Social Context of the United States of America

4.1. Racial Segregation and Jim Crow Laws

Racial segregation was a prominent phenomenon in the pre-Civil Rights USA. Although slavery was abolished in 1865 with the 13th Amendment, the stigma and condescending treatment faced by the black community was yet to disappear. White and "coloured" people were separated with concrete societal norms and laws: Interracial marriage was taboo and outlawed in many states, educational system segregated black and white

children (and most universities either wholly restricted black people from enrolling or embraced a similar segregative approach), healthcare and public services denied serving black people etc. The systematically created lack of education fueled further prejudice against black people, compromising and strengthening the societal perception that black people are ignorant and dull-witted. This and the other segregative actions helped label black communities as “second grade” or lower citizens. Another facet of racial segregation which contributed to this label, was segregation within the work environment. White people were prioritised in hiring processes and the lucky portion of black people who were hired worked in worse terms and were denied entrance to labor unions. The poverty within black community caused by this segregation, aggravated their low position within the society, because of the worse overall socioeconomic status.

One of the main instruments used to implement racial segregation were Jim Crow Laws. The term Jim Crow Laws include a wide range of legislation made by the Southern States. The aim of these laws was to sustain the harshly separated structure of the pre-abolishment American society, even without slavery. One of the main reasons for the emergence of Jim Crow Laws was *backlash politics*. Backlash politics refer to political actions aiming to reverse the -usually progressive- changes made in the status quo by using legislative power to pass conservative laws. Backlash politics occur when societal conventions, which were once thought to be concrete and unchangeable, are challenged by political actions, and the abolishment of slavery fulfills this condition.

The *economical anxiety* the abolishment of slavery caused within the white community was another important reason for the Jim Crow Laws’ creation. Economical anxiety refers to the doubts and worries individuals have about losing their future economic prospects, and it encourages these individuals to manufacture safe spaces or comfort zones. The Southern States had economies which were dependent on agriculture, especially cotton and tobacco. Agriculture required high amounts of labor force, as mechanisation in the sector was very low. So, white employers utilised slavery to acquire a cheap labor force which they could use to maximise their profit. The abolishment of slavery jeopardised this source of cheap labor, incentivising white communities to sustain segregation. The possibility of black competition in the market was also a cause of economic anxiety. Liberation of black people allowed them into the trading sector and entrepreneurship, putting companies and institutions led by white people in a market with increased competition. This competition escalated the

risk of losing customers, resources and hence profit. Reasonably not wanting to lose economic prospects, white people searched for a way to bar black people's entrance to these sectors. Jim Crow Laws allowed white people to manufacture the safe space they wanted due to economic anxiety by continuing segregative policies and ensuring the dependency of black people on white people.

Due to economic anxiety and backlash politics, Jim Crow Laws emerged with high amounts of support from the white community and sustained the segregated structure of American society. The separation of white people and black people continued, even without slavery. Thus, all the problems aforementioned at the start of this chapter continued to affect black people as they were treated as lower citizens. Segregation in education, work environment, healthcare and even in public transport was maintained.

4.2. The Status of Black Society in the 1950s

During the 1950s, black communities faced severe segregation in the education sector which resulted in lower educational status compared to white people. The main ways for segregating black and white people in education were separating schools on racial basis, barring black people's entrance to universities and providing fewer opportunities like scholarships. Separation of schools by race facilitated the delivery of insufficient education to black people, as underqualified teaching staff, materials which were not up to date, and buildings in worse physical condition were allocated for black students. Additionally, the academic rigor in these schools were very little, as their priority was to give vocational training to black people so that they could start working as soon as possible. This reduced the educational status of black people as the education they received was inferior to the education white people received. Another facet of segregation in schools was the social facet, because black children internalised the sense of inferiority during their tuition. Disallowing black people's entrances to universities and providing less opportunities further damaged the educational status of black people, since access to higher education in black communities was very little to none compared to white people.

Another area which black people experienced segregation was the working industry, and this lowered the economic status of black communities. Black people suffered job segregation and occupational ceilings. They were either not promoted to higher or managerial positions, regardless of performance, or were wholly excluded from such positions and allocated in labour-heavy, low salary jobs. These increased the economical discrepancy between white and black people, lowering the economical status of black communities. Another issue, which exacerbated this discrepancy, was the wage disparity. Black people received less money for equal work, compared to white people. And because black people were not allowed into labour unions, they held no bargaining power, hence had to abide the poor treatment. Black people were also excluded from professional networks, which are advantageous for financial gain. Using these white-only networks, white people were able to scale up their businesses, collaborate with other white-led companies and overall increase their financial capital. Because black people were excluded from these networks, they became even more impoverished compared to white people. The greatest victims, however, were black women, who faced dual discrimination for their race and gender simultaneously. The combined stigmas against women and black people meant that they were restricted to housekeeping, baby sitting and similar custodial or domestic jobs.

The systematic oppression of black people also had a legal basis, serving as an instrument to legitimise segregation. Black people were deterred from voting by laws which were against their interests and suppressed them as voters. Some of these laws are: literacy tests (in order to exploit the systemic injustice in the education system for political gain), poll taxes and intimidation tactics. In court, black people faced harsher sentences for similar crimes compared to white criminals. The injustice in courts were exacerbated by exclusion of black people from juries. This exclusion meant that white people, who were affected by racial biases they have internalised due to the status quo, inherently made trials racially biased and verdicts which the black party was guilty, no matter what. The exclusion in juries and harsher punishments meant that black people were guaranteed an unfair verdict if they were to be judged. Another important facet of the legal actions used to oppress black communities, were laws for obstructing the civil rights activism that could emerge within black people. Black people's permits for demonstrations and parades were denied by local governments in order to silence civil rights movements, and violent police crackdowns -which often included use of disproportionate force and physical assaults- aimed to scare black communities away from

standing up for their rights. Overall, black people had the “second class citizens” status in law, among other areas as discussed in this chapter. Legal actions aimed to both worsen and continue this lower status of black people.

4.3. The role of the NAACP

During the 1950s, NAACP played a critical role in advancing desegregation in the USA. Brown’s case against the Board of Education, Sweatt v. Painter and McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents cases were important advancements towards abolishing segregation in the education system. NAACP pressured local governments, school boards and congress for desegregation via courts. It helped black people gain the right to vote by monitoring elections for fraud and intimidation, providing legal aid to black people who were arrested while voting, and lobbying federal agencies to investigate voter suppression. NAACP also defended the Civil Rights Movement from *McCarthyism*. McCarthyism is the action of delegitimizing a movement by labeling it socialist or communist, thus it is also called *red-baiting*.



In addition to these, one of the most important contributions of NAACP to the Civil Rights Movement was increasing mobilisation and organising protests. One of the greatest protests NAACP helped was the famous Montgomery Bus Boycott. NAACP provided legal support for protests. Attorney Fred Gray represented Rosa Parks and Claudette Colvin in court, defending them against segregation charges.

The organisation allowed for higher publicity, as leaders like Edgar Daniel Nixon worked together with local activists to continue the boycott while linking the protest to national civil rights goals. NAACP quickly became the management center of the Bus Boycott, which helped better coordinate the boycott. NAACP played a critical role in not only planning but also initiating the boycott. NAACP utilised its human and financial capital to finance and support local civil rights groups, including Montgomery Improvement

Association, and mobilised successful one-day protest - which would later turn into the Montgomery bus boycott- via distributing around 35 thousand leaflets.

NAACP assisted the Browder v. Gayle case, which was about the constitutionality of segregation in buses. NAACP-affiliated lawyers such as Fred Gray and Robert Carter, represented the meticulously selected plaintiffs for the case. NAACP helped find credible plaintiffs with clean legal standings in order to make the boycott and the case as representable as possible. These plaintiffs included Claudette Colvin and Aurelia Browder, whose surname was given to the case. Due to present segregation in the justice system, direct case filings would have been immediately rejected. Thus, NAACP coordinated legal action to ensure these problems were bypassed. Throughout the entire process, NAACP channeled its funding and human resources in order to maximise the case's publicity and sustain proper legal representation. And eventually, using the constitutional argument which stated that racial segregation in buses were against the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, the NAACP successfully concluded the Browder v. Gayle case and the Montgomery Bus Boycott with a federal ruling.

5. The Rise of Civil Rights Movement

5.1. Civil Rights Movement Before 1955

The Civil Rights Movement was a struggle against racial segregation and discrimination mainly taken during the 1950 and 1960s America. Although Rosa Parks's case in 1955 marked a pivotal turning point, the history of the Civil Rights Movement predates a long time ago. Throughout history, racial segregation towards Black people including unequal rights and discrimination existed. This situation caused black people to react to the problem and started the Civil Rights Movement.

With the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) which would become the largest and most influential civil rights organisation in the United States in 1909, black American people started to work for discrimination in housing, education, employment, voting and transportation to ensure African Americans their constitutional rights. Its legal efforts culminated in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954 with its legal arm Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF). One of the organisations which were active before 1955 was the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Established in 1942, CORE pioneered the use of nonviolent direct action including sit-ins and freedom rides, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of peaceful resistance. Its early strategies later defined the features of the larger movement.

Some individual acts rose such as Irene Morgan, Sarah Keys and Claudette Colvin laying the groundwork for a larger civil obedience by challenging segregated bus systems before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus. During WW2 *Double V Campaign* was initiated by the Pittsburgh Courier magazine in 1942. This campaign called for both victory in the war and victory against racism in the US through the slogan "Victory Abroad and Victory at Home". Despite serving in the military many African Americans were still facing racial segregation and discrimination in the country. Therefore this period is stated as a double war for African Americans. This campaign played a role in unifying the Black community and preparing the ground for future movements by raising awareness in the post-war era.

These organisations and individuals fought against the racial discrimination in the US by uniting the Black people and raising public awareness. All these efforts prepared a ground for a remarkable and larger movement. When Rosa Parks was arrested in 1955, her act changed the direction of the struggle, shifting it from individual protests to organised, collective actions like the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

5.2. Rosa Parks and Her Arrest

Rosa Parks was a woman from Alabama who became the face of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and fought for equal rights throughout her life. She grew up in the segregated environment of South America and experienced racial discrimination and violence firsthand. This situation prompted her to be involved in the civil rights movement at a young age. She served as the secretary to E. D. Nixon in the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP where she got in 1943 and was responsible for documenting racial injustice in Montgomery.

By the time the calendars turned to December 1, 1955, when Parks refused to leave her seat for a white passenger, the history of the Civil Rights Movement stepped into a new phase where black people would unite for their rights more than ever. That day Parks was riding a crowded Montgomery city bus after work when the driver asked Black passengers



including Parks to give up their seats and stand upon noticing that white passengers were standing in the aisle. While three of the passengers left their seats, Rosa refused to do so arguing that she was not in a seat reserved for whites. She was arrested on the same day and fined \$10 for the offense and \$4 for the court costs. Instead of paying costs and accepting the fact that she did not obey the laws which were designed for the benefit of whites, she worked with E. D. Nixon who helped her appeal the conviction and thus challenged legal segregation in Alabama. Both Nixon and Parks were aware of the harassment and death threats but they also knew that the case had the potential to spark national movement. Their belief and decisiveness despite these threats that would increase rapidly throughout the process started the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

5.3. Involvement of Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a young pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church who became the most prominent figure in the Civil Rights Movement with his leadership and efforts. After Rosa Parks's arrest, he got involved in the case which marked the beginning of his leadership in the movement. His role as a pastor drawing inspiration from both his Christian faith and the peaceful teachings of Mahatma Gandhi led him to be an advocate of nonviolent movement in the 1950s and 1960s to achieve legal equality for the Black community in the US.

As a nonviolent activist, King used the power of words through his influential speeches and acts of nonviolent resistance such as protests, grassroots and collective civil obedience through the Civil Rights Movement. Just four days after Rosa Parks was arrested, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) was formed under the leadership of King to maintain a boycott regarding the segregation system in Montgomery. King was chosen as the president of MIA since he was young and not yet entrenched in local Black leadership roles which made him a unifying and neutral figure. He gave one of his most influential speeches at the first meeting of the MIA to Hold Street Baptist Church in a black working-class section of Montgomery. In his speech, he described the mistreatment of black bus passengers and the civil disobedience of Parks and justified the nonviolent protest. Emphasizing unity and the power of nonviolent protest, King stated "And you know, my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression." resonating deeply with the massive crowd and proving his leadership skills.

Giving hope, union and civil act messages to the Black community, King won the hearts and minds of people in his early stage of leadership. Despite the assassination threats and attempts, he protected his commitment to the nonviolence movement idea and the boycott, inspiring his followers with his mindset and calm response to violence. Martin Luther King Jr.'s immediate involvement in the case of Rosa Parks marked not only the beginning of his leadership which would lead to several wins for Black people in the future but also a turning point in the Civil Rights Movement.

6. The Montgomery Bus Boycott

6.1. Reactions to the Arrest of Rosa Parks and Formation of MIA

When Rosa Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955, Jo Ann Robinson from the Women's Political Council (WPC) and E. D. Nixon from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began to plan a one-day boycott of Montgomery city buses on December 5. To plan the future of this boycott a mass meeting was held in Dexter Avenue Baptist Church where Martin Luther King Jr. was working on December 2. Her arrest would become a test case to allow Montgomery's black citizens to challenge the segregated bus system of the city. Despite the previous actions like Rosa Parks, her case sparked a boycott that would last one year and reach success.

On December 5 approximately ninety percent of the Black community in Montgomery stayed off the buses. Seeing this one-day boycott reaching success with empty city buses people were excited to continue this boycott. On that day another meeting was held at the Mt. Zion AME Church, Black leaders of Montgomery established the Montgomery Improvement Association to maintain the boycott and spread this act to the community. They decided to extend the overall aim of the organisation beyond the bus boycott and stated as advancing "the general status of Montgomery, to improve race relations and to uplift the general tenor of the community". Martin Luther King Jr. was chosen as the president of the MIA since he was young and too new to the Montgomery community to make enemies. He spoke to thousands of people for the first time: "I want it to be known that we're going to work with grim and bold determination to gain justice on the buses in this city. And we are not wrong. If we are wrong, the Supreme Court of this nation is wrong. If we are wrong, the Constitution of the United States is wrong. If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong." While King was elected as the president, Reverend L. Roy Bennett was also elected to be vice president (later he was replaced by Ralph Abernathy) and E. D. Nixon to be the treasurer.

On the following days, the MIA talked with some city commissioners and bus company officials but the response was unsuccessful so they decided to gain their rights by themselves. On December 8 the MIA issued a formal list of their demands: courteous treatment by bus operators; first-come, first-served seating for all with blacks seating from the rear and whites from the front; and black bus operators on predominantly black routes.

When these demands were not met, Black people living in Montgomery started to stay off the buses in the city.

6.2. Organisation of the Boycott

The one-day boycott reached success with the mass participation of the Black community in Montgomery and with the formation of the MIA the Montgomery Bus Boycott that would last 381 days had started. Throughout the boycott, MIA officers negotiated with Montgomery city leaders coordinated legal challenges to the bus segregation ordinance with the NAACP and provided financial support by raising money by passing the plate at their meetings and demanding from other civil rights organisations.

During the first days of the boycott, the city began to penalize black taxi drivers for aiding the boycotters therefore the MIA started the carpool system in the city upon the advice of T. J. Jemison who had organised a carpool during a bus boycott previously. In the carpool system, car owners volunteer their vehicles or drive people to their destinations such as work, grocery and more. Some white housewives contributed to the carpool system by driving their black servants to work and black taxi drivers charged ten cents per ride which was equal to

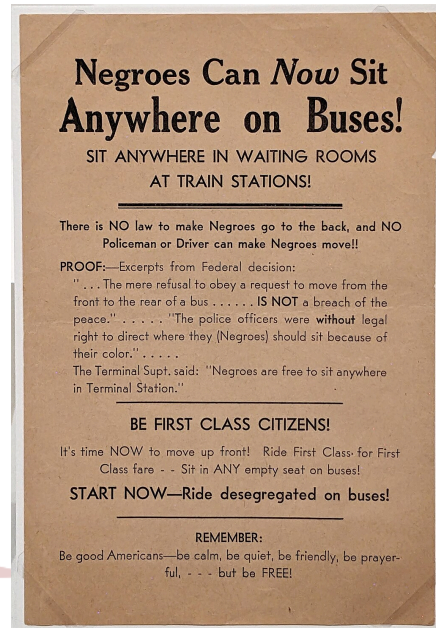


the cost to ride the bus. People got involved in the boycott quickly and effectively, even some of them used non-motorized vehicles such as cycling, walking and even riding mules. All across the nation black churches raised funds to support the boycott and collected new shoes to

replace the tattered ones of the Black citizens. The carpool system in general consisted of three hundred cars and went to the forty-eight and forty-two zones for dispatch and pick up with the help of the MIA. Another help for funding the boycott came from Georgia Gilmore and Inez Ricks and through their clubs “The Club from Nowhere” and “The Friendly Club” where they sold baked goods in the city.

Throughout the boycott King and Nixon faced threats, even their homes were bombed. Also, many boycotters were threatened or fired from their jobs. Sometimes the police arrested protesters and took them to jail. In February 1956 city officials obtained injunctions against the boycott and indicted over 80 boycott leaders including Martin Luther King Jr. under a 1921 law prohibiting conspiracies that interfered with lawful business. He was tried and convicted on the charge and ordered to pay \$500 or serve 386 days in jail in the case *State of Alabama v. M. L. King Jr.* The boycott reached a wide audience that included people outside of Montgomery like Bayard Rustin and Glenn E. Smiley visited the city and offered King advice on Gandhian techniques and nonviolence to the race struggle. Other Gandhian ideas supporters wrote the MIA offering support for the boycott.

Although the boycott mostly focused on the contributions of Black ministers, women played crucial roles when the boycott was reaching success. Many women worked in the MIA and other organisations supporting boycotts. Later their contributions would be attributed to “the nameless cooks and maids who walked endless miles for a year to bring about the breach in the walls of segregation” in the memoirs. One of the main organisations that contributed to the boycott was the Women’s Political Council (WPC). The organisation aimed to publicize the boycott by printing leaflets and passing them out around the city. Women not only represented leadership in the movement but also handled the day-to-day planning for protesters. Reaching out to a broad group of Black citizens, the Montgomery bus boycott lasted 381 days and demonstrated the strength of unity and perseverance in the fight against segregation.



6.3. Browder v. Gayle and End of the Boycott

Aurelia S. Browder v. William A. Gayle challenged the Alabama state statutes and Montgomery, city ordinances requiring segregation on Montgomery buses. Browder v. Gayle was filed by Fred Gray and Charles D. Langford on behalf of four African American women, Aurelia S. Browder, Susie McDonald, Claudette Colvin and Mary Louise Smith, who had been mistreated on segregated city buses, the case made its way to the United States Supreme Court that upheld a district court ruling that the statute was unconstitutional. This federal district court decision was filed on February 1, 1956, two days after segregationists bombed King's house. Jenanatta Reese was included as one of the original plaintiffs in the case but she withdrew from the case upon outside pressure. Rosa Parks was not included in the decision since they were thought that they were seeking to circumvent her prosecution on other charges. Therefore Gray stated the main aim of the case as "deciding the constitutionality of the laws requiring segregation on the buses". While Gray was aiding the case by Thurgood Marshall who was leading the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and other NAACP attorneys, the list of defendants included Mayor William A. Gayle who was the city's chief of police, representatives from Montgomery's Board of Commissioners and Alabama Public Service Commission, Montgomery City Lines and two city bus drivers.

On June 5, 1956, the case was brought before a three-judge US District Court panel and the panel ruled two-to-one that segregation on Alabama's interstate buses was unconstitutional, citing *Brown v. Board of Education* as precedent for the verdict. King called for a continuation of the Montgomery bus boycott until the ruling was implemented. On November 13, 1956, while King was being tried on the legality of the boycott's carpools, a reporter notified him that the U.S. Supreme Court had just affirmed the District Court's decision on *Browder v. Gayle*. King addressed a mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church saying that the decision was "a reaffirmation of the principle that separate facilities are inherently unequal and the old Plessy Doctrine of separate but equal is no longer valid either sociologically or legally."

On December 17, 1956, the US Supreme Court rejected city and state appeals to reconsider their decision and three days later the order for integrated buses arrived in Montgomery. On December 20, 1956, King and the MIA members voted to end the Montgomery bus boycott that lasted 381 days. That day King said that “the year-old protest against city buses is officially called off and the Negro citizens of Montgomery are urged to return to the buses tomorrow morning on a nonsegregated basis”. And on the following day, the citizens of Montgomery used the non-segregated buses of the city.

6.4. Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was established in 1957 to coordinate the action of local protest groups throughout the South. In 1956 after the success of the Montgomery bus boycott, Bayard Rustin wrote working papers to address the possibility of expanding the efforts in the city to other cities in the South so he asked whether an organisation was needed to coordinate this expansion activity. Upon this suggestion, King invited southern Black ministers to the Southern negro Leaders Conference on Transportation and Nonviolent Integration (later named the Southern Christian Leadership Conference) at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. In the conference, ministers released a manifesto in which they called upon white southern people and encouraged black Americans to “seek justice and reject all injustice” and to dedicate themselves to the principles of non-violence.

SCLC played an umbrella role as it coordinated with the activities of local organisations such as the MIA and the Nashville Christian Leadership Council. Under this aim, SCLC staff trained local communities in the idea of Christian nonviolence by conducting leadership training programs and opening citizenship schools. Its first major campaign was the Crusade for Citizenship which aimed to register thousands of disenfranchised voters in time for the 1958 and 1960 elections with an emphasis on educating prospective voters. The campaign helped raise awareness among African Americans that their chances for improvement rested on their ability to vote through the voter education clinics in the South. The crusade was funded by small donations from churches and large sums from private donors and continued in the early 1960s.

Besides the crusade, SCLC also joined local movements to coordinate mass protest campaigns and voter registration drives all over the South. It also played a huge role in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom where King delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Efforts of SCLC laid the groundwork for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Later tensions grew between SCLC and more militant protest groups like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Through these tensions, King and the SCLC were mostly criticized for being too moderate and overly dependent on the support of white liberals.

In 1962 SCLC began to broaden its focus to include issues of economic inequality. It began Operation Breadbasket in Atlanta to create new jobs in the black community as poverty was the root of social inequality in the South. In 1966 the program spread to Chicago as part of the Chicago Campaign. Next year the Poor People’s Campaign began to bring thousands of poor people to Washington D. C. and push for federal legislation that would guarantee employment, income and housing for economically marginalized people.

After the assassination of King in 1968 SCLC’s momentum was crippled and the success of the Poor People’s Campaign was undermined. The organisation resumed plans for the Washington demonstration as a tribute to its leader, King. As the new president of the SCLC, Ralph Abernathy was elected and 3000 people camped in Washington from 13 May to 24 June 1968 under the leadership of their new leader.

7. Legacy and Aftermath

7.1. Broader Impact and Expansion of the Civil Rights Movements

Starting in 1954, the American Civil Rights Movement continued over the years fighting for racial justice and equal rights for all citizens. Throughout this movement, the Montgomery Bus Boycott became a pivotal event and introduced a young leader who would become a defining person later, Martin Luther King Jr to the world. The Montgomery Bus Boycott resulted in success after a 381-day long boycott and with the *Browder v. Gayle* decided that the segregated bus system was unconstitutional. After this legal victory that led

to a broader impact throughout the nation, King and other civil rights leaders took action to expand the movement.

When four black college students in North Carolina staged a sit-in at a drugstore lunch counter reserved for whites, a new phase in the movement was sparked on February 1, 1960. In the wake of the Greensboro sit-in, thousands of students joined the sit-in campaign during the winter and spring of 1960. Despite the efforts by some organisations such as NAACP, SCLC and CORE to impose some control over this movement, the student protestors decided to form their own group which was the Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC) to coordinate a new and independent movement. They gradually acquired a staff of full-time organisers and launched a number of local projects designed to achieve desegregation and voting rights. The organisers stressed the need to develop self-reliant local leaders to sustain grassroots movement despite having roots in King's nonviolent tactics.

The Freedom Rides of 1961 was the beginning of a period in which the civil rights movement grew in scale and intensity. CORE sponsored the first group of bus riders who sought to desegregate Southern bus terminals. After white mobs' attacks turned back the initial protesters, student activists from Nashville and other centers of sit-ins



continued the rides into Jackson, Mississippi. Despite the “cooling off” period, the Freedom Rides showed that militant but nonviolent activism could confront Southern segregation at its strongest points and pressure the federal government to intervene to protect the constitutional rights of African Americans. Freedom Rides also encouraged similar acts in other Southern communities where people were against segregated transportation facilities.

SCLC leaders worked with the minister of Alabama to launch a campaign featuring confrontation between nonviolent demonstrators and brutal law-enforcement personnel directed by Birmingham's police commissioner. Televised confrontations between nonviolent

protesters and policemen with clubs and police dogs attracted Northern support and resulted in federal intervention to bring about a settlement that included civil rights concessions. John F. Kennedy introduced legislation that eventually became the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or nationality and banned discrimination in public accommodations, public education and employment and prohibited race-based restrictions on voting. Ending many laws and practices of the Jim Crow Era, this legislation had been a longtime goal of the civil rights movement.

Mass protests made white Americans more aware of the antiquated Jim Crow laws though Black militancy prompted a white backlash. In the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom which attracted hundreds of thousands of participants mass protests were cultivated



in 1963. King delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech as an opportunity to link Black civil rights aspirations with traditional American political values. During the following year, however, mass protests in Selma and Montgomery led Lyndon B. Johnson to introduce the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Selma to

Montgomery march in March 1965 became the last sustained Southern protest campaign THAT was able to secure widespread support among whites outside the region. The growing militancy of Black activists inspired by the recently assassinated Black nationalist Malcolm X spawned an increasing determination among Black people to achieve political power.

In 1966 when King launched a new campaign in Chicago against Northern slum conditions and segregation, he faced a major challenge from Black power proponents such as SNCC. This ideological conflict came to a head during a voting rights march through Mississippi following the wounding of James Meredith who desegregated the University of Mississippi in 1962. By the late 1960s not only the NAACP and SCLC but even SNCC and CORE faced challenges from new militant organisations such as the Black Panther Party whose leaders argued that civil rights reforms were insufficient because they did not fully address the problems of Blacks. Dismissing nonviolent challenges principles and questioning American citizenship as goals for African Americans, Black power proponents called for a global struggle for Black national self-determination rather than merely for civil rights.

Although King criticised calls for Black separatism and armed self-defense, he agreed that African Americans should seek compensatory government actions to redress historical injustices.

After King's assassination in 1968, the Black Panther Party and other Black militant organisations encountered intense governmental repression from local police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO). That year the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders concluded that the country was moving towards two separate and unequal societies, one black and one white. By the time of the commission's report, claims that Black gains had resulted in "reverse discrimination" against whites were effectively used against new civil rights initiatives later.

7.2. "I have a dream" Speech

Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, delivered during the March on Washington in 1963, had a powerful and lasting impact on the Civil Rights Movement and American society. It was a speech that the world cannot forget. On August 28, 1963, an estimated 250,000 people marched to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, where they heard Martin Luther King Jr. give a speech destined to resonate through the ages. King gave an impassioned voice to the demands of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, which was equal rights for all citizens, regardless of the colour of their skin. The four words "I have a dream" almost did not make it into the speech. King

had used the phrase "I have a dream" in several speeches at least nine months before the Equal Rights March in Washington. His advisors discouraged him from



using the same theme again; they felt the phrase was cliché, but he used it to connect with the audience and the great timing of it changed our world with its effects. It was a rare moment for a nation that made huge changes for the future. The speech inspired many people and opened the way to support racial equality and the transformation of American law and life. He was not just speaking to African Americans, but to all Americans.

Furthermore, the speech didn't just influence the United States, it became a global symbol of the struggle for justice and civil rights. Less than a year after the march, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which banned discrimination in public facilities, such as hotels and restaurants, and also prohibited employment discrimination. The following year, the passage of the Voting Rights Act ensured African Americans could freely exercise their franchise. Further Acts became law to prevent segregation and discrimination, striving for fairness and equal rights, with the Movement empowering people to rise and fight. In 1968, the Fair Housing Act sought to remove discrimination in the buying and renting of housing. That legislation was complemented by new policies, such as affirmative action, designed to counter the legacy of discrimination. King's speech raised public support not just from Black Americans but from moderate white Americans and opened the way for political improvements. He showed the world his ability to deliver such an emotional and controversial topic within his speech, convincing many Americans with different opinions. Still to this day, his speech is indicating its effects and is a timeless legacy.

7.3. Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

Throughout his leadership in the Civil Rights Movement, King was regularly threatened by phone calls, letters, and in person. He and his family lived under frequent danger, especially after major speeches or protests. In 1964, just before King received the Nobel Peace Prize, the FBI anonymously sent him a letter, accusing him of being immoral and a fraud, saying his secrets would soon be exposed. The message ended by implying that King should "do the right thing," a suggestion that he should kill himself. Before his assassination, a lot of people, including himself, feared it; he included the possibility of his death in his speeches.

At 6:05 P.M. on Thursday, 4 April 1968, Martin Luther King was shot dead while standing on a balcony outside his second-floor room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. News of King's assassination sparked widespread racial violence across the country, resulting in more than 40 deaths and extensive property damage in more than 100 American cities. James Earl Ray, a 40-year-old fugitive and the alleged assassin, pleaded guilty on March 10, confessing to the crime, and was sentenced to 99 years in prison. During King's funeral, a tape was played of King talking about how he wanted to be remembered

after his death: "I want someone to remember that day when Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life to serve others."

King had arrived in Tennessee on Wednesday, April 3, to prepare for a march on Monday for striking Memphis sanitation workers. As he was preparing to leave the Lorraine Motel for dinner at the home of Memphis pastor Samuel "Billy" Kyles, King stepped onto the balcony of Room 306 to speak with his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) colleagues in the parking lot below. An assassin fired a single shot, severely wounding the lower right side of his face. SCLC officers rushed to him, while the others on the balcony pointed to the back of a boarding house on South Main Street, where the bullet had come from. He was rushed to St. Joseph's Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. President Lyndon B. Johnson called for a national day of mourning on April 7. In the following days, public libraries, museums, schools, and businesses were closed, and many events were postponed. On April 8, King's widow, Coretta Scott King, and other family members joined thousands of others in a march in Memphis to honor King and support sanitation workers. Many of the nation's political and civil rights leaders attended his funeral, including Jacqueline Kennedy, Vice President Hubert Humphrey, and Ralph Bunche.

FBI agents and police in Memphis produced evidence that Ray had registered on 4 April at the South Main Street roominghouse and that he had taken a second-floor room near a common bathroom with a view of the Lorraine Motel. On July 19, 1968, Ray was taken from England to the United States to stand trial. In a plea bargain, Tennessee prosecutors agreed to drop their pursuit of the death penalty when Ray pleaded guilty to murder charges in March 1969. The circumstances leading to the plea later became a source of controversy when Ray recanted his confession shortly after he was sentenced to 99 years in prison. In the years following King's assassination, doubts about the adequacy of the case against Ray were fueled by allegations of extensive surveillance of King by the FBI and other government agencies. After the reexamination of the situation, the report concluded that there was no convincing evidence of government complicity in King's assassination. After retracting his guilty plea, Ray continued to maintain his innocence, claiming that he had been framed by a gunrunner he knew as "Raoul." Despite the support from many people to reopen the case, Tennessee authorities refused to reopen the case, and Ray died in prison on April 23, 1968 and allegations of conspiracy continued even after his death.

Although the movement had lost one of its greatest leaders, King's legacy continued to inspire generations to seek justice through peaceful means.

8. Significant Figures

E. D. Nixon



Edgar Daniel Nixon was a union leader and civil rights advocate. He played a key role in launching the MIA and organising the Montgomery Bus Boycott. He worked with the Women's Political Council to gather people for the boycott. He helped Clifford Durr who was the advocate of Rosa Parks to bail her out of jail. As the treasurer of the MIA, he provided financial and political support for the boycott and became one of the primary architects of the Montgomery Bus Boycott suggesting a mass movement and mobilising black community leaders. He was president of the local chapter of the NAACP and other black community organisations. Being a bridge between social classes and having a diverse network in the Black Community he was the man of practical actions rather than too soft approaches. Even though this situation caused him to be overshadowed and tensions to rise between Martin Luther King Jr. and him, he respected him and retained his influential role within the movement.

Bayard Rustin



Bayard Rustin was a human rights activist known for being Martin Luther King Jr.'s advisor. He played an active role in the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and creation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). He had a background role during the Civil Rights Movement because of the criticism and discrimination about his sexuality and relations with the Communist Party. He mostly gave advice about the nonviolence part of the movement and organised the well known "I have a Dream" speech. Throughout his life he organised many protests including the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963.

Jo Ann Robinson



Jo Ann Robinson was a woman instrumental figure in initiating and sustaining the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Being verbally attacked by a public bus driver for sitting in the “whites only” section of the bus led her to prioritize the segregated bus seating in the Women’s Political Council that she was the president of. After the WPC’s repeated complaints about seating practices and abusive driver conduct were dismissed, Robinson began planning a bus boycott by the city’s African American community. Although she did not accept an official MIA position because of her job at Alabama State, she worked behind the scenes of the MIA, especially editing the MIA weekly newsletter. But she was still among a group of boycott leaders arrested but never tried. She contributed to the boycott with the WPC and she was proud of the role that women played in the boycott’s success highlighting the women’s leadership within the civil rights movement.

Fred Gray



Fred Gray was a renowned civil rights attorney, best known for representing Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. during the movement. Despite Gray’s efforts, Parks was convicted of disorderly conduct and violating civil ordinance. During the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Gray supported the MIA as a legal advisor and he served as a lead counsel in the *Browder v. Gayle* case that ended segregation on city buses. Gray also provided legal counsel to the NAACP for a while. In 1960 when Martin Luther King Jr. was charged with tax evasion, Gray was a member of the defense team that won an acquittal from the all-white jury. He became an important figure in the legal side of the movement supporting expelled students during sit-ins and African Americans who sought permission to march from Selma to Montgomery. During his life, he contributed to black people in their action to racial equality by filling numerous cases.

Coretta Scott King



Coretta Scott King who was the wife of Martin Luther King Jr. contributed to the civil rights movement with her own legacy even after the assassination of her husband. She was one of the early supporters of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and she helped the organisation by speaking at rallies and connecting the movement to global human rights issues. Even though she was under the threat of assassination with her family, she remained active in the issue keeping the movement morally centered. She was directly involved in the direction and tone of the non-violent activism influencing the moral ground of the decisions during the boycott and movement. Beside being a civil rights activist, she was a voice for anti-war and women's rights advocacy.

Thelma Glass



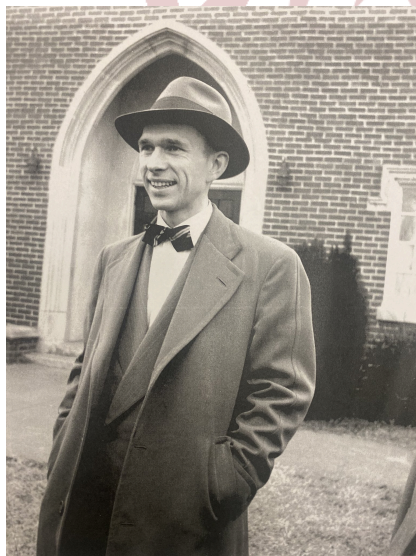
Thelma Glass was a geography educator at Alabama State university. She was an early member of the WPC's secretary. She and other WPC members called for a boycott of the Montgomery bus system after Rosa Parks' arrest. Throughout the boycott she was involved in communicating and uniting people for the boycott by passing out some 35.000 flyers, alerting the community and urging passengers to walk or carpool. She became a bus driver in her car, transporting people to and from campus. After the boycott she continued to contribute to the Civil Rights Movement through education and local acts.

Mary Fair Burks



Mary Fair Burks co-founded the Women's Political Council where they helped organise and lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Her activism started at an early age when she launched her own "private guerilla warfare" by defying Jim Crow rules to use white-only restrooms and other facilities. In 1935 she was involved in an accident with a white motorist that led to her being arrested by a white officer. This incident that demonstrated the racism in Montgomery inspired Burks to found the WPC later. Along with other members of the WPC she helped initiate and provide support for the Montgomery Bus Boycott following Rosa Parks' arrest.

Robert Graetz



Robert Graetz was a white minister of an African American congregation in Montgomery. After the boycott began, he called for white ministers to attend the boycott explaining the protest's objectives and asking them to consider the issue prayerfully with Christian love. He as a member of the executive board of the MIA participated in the boycott carpool driving African Americans to work or shopping for several hours each day. Although his home was bombed several times and he was harassed by white residents for his participation in the boycott and received many threatening phone calls. He remained active in civil rights issues operating a street ministry Washington D. C. after the boycott was resolved with the Browder v. Gayle case.

Mary Louise Smith



Mary Louise Smith was an African-American civil rights activist. She was one of the women who were arrested for refusing to give up her seat on the segregated system prior to Rosa Parks in 1955. On February 1, 1956, Smith was one of five women named as plaintiffs in the federal civil suit, *Browder v. Gayle*, challenging the constitutionality of the state and local bus segregation laws. Smith followed the civil rights movement, but was not actively part of the political organization. She did attend the 1963 March on Washington.

Johnnie Carr



Johnnie Carr was an Alabama native and civil rights activist who participated in the Montgomery bus boycott. She befriended Rosa Parks at school, later working together in various organisations for civil rights issues. In the NAACP she worked closely with E. D. Nixon and Rosa Parks. During the boycott Carr was part of the carpool, served on committees and spoke at meetings. From 1967 until her death she served as president of the MIA. Also in 1964 she sued the Montgomery County Board of Education in the pursuit of desegregation and later the case resulted in eliminating the effects of past

discriminations of the schools and Carr's son enrolled in a white school along with other black students.

Aurelia Browder



Aurelia Browder was a civil rights activist arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white rider eight months before the arrest of Rosa Parks. When she met Jo Ann Robinson at Alabama State University, her journey in the civil rights movement began with Robinson's inspiration to tackle the injustices in the transportation system and encouragement to participate in the lawsuit proposed by the MIA. Prior to her involvement in the boycott she was already active in the voter registration campaign in the 1950s and she spent time tutoring African Americans who wanted to take the voter registration exam. In the *Browder v. Gayle*, her name was listed as one of

the plaintiffs. She continued to be an activist and involved with the NAACP, MIA and SCLC after her case was settled.

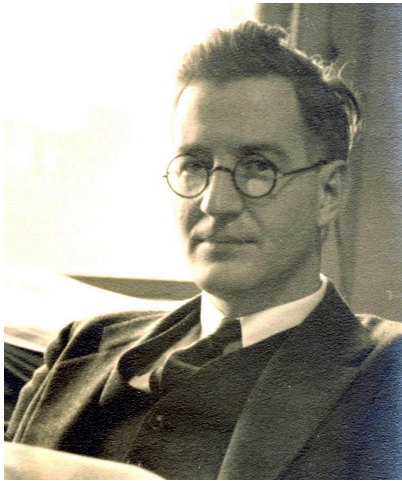
Georgia Gilmore



Georgia Gilmore was a Black woman from Montgomery and a cook, midwife and activist who fundraised for the civil rights movement. When King was holding meetings of the MIA at the Holt Street Baptist Church, Gilmore was there selling food to the folks who had gathered. She organised Black women to sell food at beauty salons, laundromats, cab stands and churches. She reinvested her profits in the boycott. The funds that she raised helped pay for the alternative transportation system that Black communities relied on during the boycott. Gilmore and other Black women organized under the group name "the Club from Nowhere" and their earnings

were donated each week to the MIA. She inspired people by her efforts driven by a pursuit of justice during the boycott.

Clifford Durr



Clifford Durr was a lawyer, nationally respected defender of the civil rights movement and counsel to Rosa Parks. He served as a commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) from 1941 to 1948. He assisted in bailing out Rosa Parks following her arrest on December 1, 1955 and collaborated with her attorney Fred Gray to represent Rosa Parks in her legal challenges against bus segregation laws. Throughout the height of the civil rights era, he defended clients protesting police brutality or wrongful prosecution. Clifford opened his law library, and his wife Virginia opened their home, to new civil rights lawyers needing assistance and to civil rights workers drawn to Montgomery.

Virginia Durr



Virginia Durr was the wife of Clifford Durr who supported the civil rights movement like her. On the day that Rosa Parks was arrested, he along with her husband went with E. D. Nixon to bail her out of jail. In 1955 she arranged a scholarship for Rosa Parks to attend an integration workshop at the Highlander Folk School, which later became an inspiration to Parks to challenge the segregated bus system. Throughout the bus boycott she remained an avid supporter highlighting the importance of white involvement in the protest. Throughout her life Virginia Durr remained involved with numerous civil and human rights organisations, including the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Stanley Levison



Stanley Levison was a Jewish attorney from New York who raised funds to support the Montgomery bus boycott. He developed a close relationship in which Levison not only advised King but also aided him with day-to-day administrative demands of the movement. In the early 1950s the FBI considered Levison to be a major financial coordinator for the Communist Party in the United States and began to monitor his activities. Later he created In Friendship with Bayard Rustin and Ella Baker which was an organisation that raised money for southern civil rights activists and organisations including the MIA. So they formulated the concept of a regional “Congress of organisations” dedicated to mass action grounded in nonviolence, an idea that would later develop into the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). After the FBI believed that he was a Communist agent and he influenced King’s actions in that way, they warned King to end his relationship with Levison. Although King refused this since he didn’t want to lose a trusted advisor just because of vague allegations, Levison took the initiative to cut off all visible ties with King. He continued to advise King on important matters indirectly.

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