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"IT IS A NEW KIND OF MILITANCY":
MARCH ON WASHINGTON MOVEMENT, 1941-1946

A Dissertation Presented

by

DAVID LUCANDER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

MAY 2010

AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES

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“IT IS A NEW KIND OF MILITANCY”:
MARCH ON WASHINGTON MOVEMENT, 1941-1946

A Dissertation Presented

by

DAVID LUCANDER

Approved, as to style and content by:

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John Bracey, Chair

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DEDICATION

To the late Howard Zinn, for inspiring a generation of historians.

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This project was substantially improved by a number of individuals and institutions. Like any graduate student, I am beholden to my dissertation committee: John H. Bracey, James Smethurst, Ernest Allen, and Dayo F. Gore, all from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. At some point in this project, they all offered criticism, bibliographic and archival recommendations, and insights that enhanced my understanding of the subject. I am especially indebted to my dissertation advisor, John H. Bracey, for sharing his knowledge of archival sources, presumption of excellence, and for ensuring that I will never run out of good books to read. His appreciation for African American Studies and what this field tells scholars about the human condition is infectious – I am proud to be one of his intellectual protégés. I am also grateful to the Gilder Lehrman Institute, Nellie Mae Foundation, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, and the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies for financially and institutionally supporting me during all or parts of this project.

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ABSTRACT

"IT IS A NEW KIND OF MILITANCY": MARCH ON WASHINGTON MOVEMENT, 1941-1946

MAY 2010

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This study of the March on Washington Movement (MOWM) investigates the operations of the national office and examines its interactions with local branches, particularly in St. Louis. As the organization's president, A. Philip Randolph and members of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) such as Benjamin McLaurin and T.D. McNeal are important figures in this story. African American women such as Layle Lane, E. Pauline Myers, and Anna Arnold Hedgeman ran MOWM's national office. Of particular importance to this study is Myers' tenure as executive secretary. Working out of Harlem, she corresponded with MOWM's twenty-six local chapters, spending considerable time espousing the rationale and ideology of Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action, a trademark protest technique

developed and implemented alongside Fellowship of Reconciliation members Bayard Rustin and James Farmer.

As a nationally recognized African American protest organization fighting for a "Double V" against fascism and racism during the Second World War, MOWM accrued political capital by the agitation of its local affiliates. In some cases, like in Washington, D.C., volunteers lacked the ability to forge effective protests. In St. Louis, however, BSCP official T.D. McNeal led a MOWM branch that was among the nation's most active. David Grant, Thelma Maddox, Nita Blackwell, and Leyton Weston are some of the thousands joining McNeal over a three-year period to picket U.S. Cartridge and Carter Carburetor for violating the anti-discrimination clause in Executive Order 8802, lobby Southwestern Bell Telephone to expand employment opportunities for African Americans, stage a summer of sit-ins at lunch counters in the city's largest department stores, and lead a general push for a "Double V" against fascism and racism.

This study of MOWM demonstrates that the structural dynamics of protest groups often include a discrepancy between policies laid out by the organization's national office and the activity of its local branches. While national officials from MOWM and National Organization for the Advancement of Colored People had an ambivalent relationship with each other, inter-organizational tension was locally muted as grassroots activists aligned themselves with whichever group appeared most effective. During the Second World War, this was often MOWM.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

"We, of the Black Labor Movement and long in the struggle of support for Mr. Randolph do not boast of Ph.D.'s but we know what we know!!!!! We know that the co-opting of Mr. Randolph's contribution, creativity and concern for the Black masses by 'younguns' on the scene with Ph.D.'s and similar degrees must be combated with all the energy working Black people can generate."

– John M. Thornton[1]

A. Philip Randolph's call for somewhere between 10,000 and 100,000 African Americans to arrive at the Lincoln Memorial on the National Mall July 1, 1941 is well known by scholars and students of African American history, the history of social movements, and grassroots protest.[2] Considerably less is known, however, about the organization Randolph created to facilitate the dramatic protest that, ironically, never occurred.[3] Historians have generally overlooked what the March on Washington Movement's national office and local branches did between 1941 and 1946. This is puzzling because MOWM had local branches throughout the country, some of which were led by individuals who remained involved in racial activism well beyond the Roosevelt years. One would expect greater scholarly attention to an organization thriving in a culturally and politically dynamic era that Ella Baker biographer Barbara Ransby identified as a time that "unsettled the class, gender, and racial order of the United States, creating a new sense of possibility for women, working people, and African Americans" and of a movement that at least one scholar in the 1940s recognized consisted of "many phases" which merited "critical study and appraisal."[4]

Existing studies of the organization tend to over-emphasize Randolph's role as a national leader and make limited use of archival sources presently available to scholars. The latter of these criticisms is understandable because source material and archival holdings utilized by this study were simply not available to previous generations of historians.[5] Unfortunately, relatively few scholars have picked up on Ella Baker's observation that, "The work of the National Office is one thing, but the work of the branches is in the final analysis the life blood of the Association," and applied her insights to achieve a more thorough investigation of MOWM's rapid rise during the Second World War.[6]

George Schuyler's 1942 opinion that "The March-on-Washington movement is A. Philip Randolph" stubbornly continues to influence MOWM historiography. Schuyler recognized that Randolph had a genuine ability "to appeal to the emotions of the people," but his skills were severely limited and "leadership capacity and executive ability required …is simply not there." The "Sage of Sugar Hill" attacked MOWM for having "no organizational set-up" to keep the upstart civil rights group "alive and functioning." Schuyler assailed MOWM for relying on a leader who depended on "ballyhoo and oratory," and lacked the "guts" of anti-colonial crusaders like Nehru and Gandhi. As if to salve anxious NAACP officials, Schuyler wryly commented, "The March-On-Washington movement is no threat to the NAACP." Ever the iconoclast, Schuyler pointed out that he was comparing a fledgling organization run by a leader with a "Messianic Complex" to a NAACP that, despite thirty years on the national scene, failed to garner more than 70,000 members out of 13,000,000 African Americans.[7]

As part of an attack on MOWM criticizing the organization for being "openly antagonistic," the *Courier* also ran an editorial by Herman Moore, a federal judge in the Virgin Islands, criticizing MOWM's leadership for being visionary but only "succeeding merely in staging a few giant Mass meetings and stirring indignation and unrest."[8] Even Bayard Rustin, who worked alongside Randolph during MOWM's reign as a leading voice of Black protest, commented that, prior to his work with the organization, MOWM represented "only a partial answer to the present need…it has no program, educational or otherwise, for meeting the present need."[9]

Surely, more was needed in a historical moment described by MOWM member Lawrence Ervin as "a time of great racial tension and stress…when the tides of democracy are running very low for the Negro people."[10] Ervin's prophesy of a dismal future for African Americans if they did not, as a group, rally to seize the opportunity to close the chasm of racial inequality speaks to historian Patricia Sullivan's analysis of wartime activism half of a century later when she argued, "the war fueled a national movement for civil rights."[11] Indeed, the march that never transpired was the first of its kind to force prompt federal action. This was made possible through the establishment of a precedent for successful protest demonstrations that used coalitions, large numbers, and explicit confrontation in order to press for reform.[12]

Historiography

Any historiography of the March on Washington Movement must begin with Herbert Garfinkle's *When Negroes March*, a book that has been the dominant

narrative on MOWM for fifty years. *When Negroes March* is an adequate, if not exceptional, study of organizational dynamics, relationships between a minority group's self-appointed spokespeople and the federal government, and leadership in a social movement. Garfinkle established a standard for looking at MOWM as a transient protest organization with strong but anonymous grassroots support and no long-term program beyond the cancelled march on July 1, 1941. Garfinkle stated that "There can be little doubt that this was a thriving movement" but his study did not attempt to discover who made it thrive.[13]

When Negroes March set a precedent for looking at MOWM from the top-down and in the context of, in Garfinkle's words, "the organizational history of the Negro March on Washington Movement in the genesis of FEPC politics."[14] Since 1959, most narratives of MOWM recognize Randolph's ability to galvanize the enthusiasm of incalculable masses for an exclusively Black protest during the Second World War and end with the leader's unfortunate inability to keep a national office together so that the organization could remain relevant throughout the war years. This reading of MOWM is as simplistic as attributing the 1963 March on Washington to Martin Luther King's charisma and oratory.

Limited in scope as a study of leadership within the national office and in methodology for relying on BSCP papers that severely restricted Garfinkle's understanding of MOWM, *When Negroes March* is as important for what it accomplishes as for what it leaves out of the story.[15] As the original and only book-length study of MOWM, *When Negroes March* set the standard for how other studies related to this organization interpreted its history as driven almost solely by

Randolph.[16] An example of this is Garfinkle's conclusion that MOWM rallies in New York, St. Louis, and Chicago were publicly identified as "Randolph's show" because "he was founder and spokesperson" and "the people who were loyal only and directly to him…bore the major work load. They looked to him for leadership and direction."[17] With greater sensitivity to ideological trends among African Americans in various campaigns to increase employment opportunities, Toure Reed's study of the National Urban League enriches Garfinkle's interpretation of top-down change by arguing that MOWM was part of a broader impulse towards "calls for state intervention" to open more job prospects for African Americans.[18]

As demonstrated by this dissertation, activists in St. Louis MOWM were much more committed to the very real concepts of Black freedom, economic integration, and racial equality than to serving a distant but highly respected national figurehead. Their efforts surely deserve more chronicling than the one sentence that Garfinkle makes of this vibrant local unit.[19] By focusing on the actions of grassroots activists instead of proclamations by the national office, this dissertation necessarily complicates the standard chronology of MOWM. In the original study, "decline" begins immediately after the afore-mentioned rallies and was precipitated by supporters from NAACP and Urban League backing away under the threat of MOWM becoming a permanent organization. Garfinkle is correct in saying that MOWM was at the height of its national prominence in summer 1942, but this is when local units like St. Louis MOWM were just beginning their activity.[20] Garfinkle's chronology is adequate for interpreting affairs of the organization's national office, but it is insufficient for describing the lifespan of St. Louis MOWM. At

the same time national leaders like Roy Wilkins and Lester Granger were cautiously distancing themselves from MOWM and the organization was losing prestige in highly-circulated African American newspapers, activists in St. Louis MOWM staged major marches at Carter Carburetor and U.S. Cartridge, a Prayer Meeting at Memorial Plaza, successful picketing at Southwestern Bell Telephone, and a summer of sit-ins that desegregated eateries in St. Louis. Clearly, St. Louis MOWM did not collapse after the 1942 Kiel Auditorium rally or disintegrate without Randolph's watchful eye in close proximity.

Clarence Lang's recently published *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936-75*, offers one of the most detailed accounts of MOWM activities in a single city. Lang's account of St. Louis MOWM is situated within an outstanding longitudinal study of twentieth century African American protest politics and activism in a border state. With an entire chapter devoted to MOWM, *Grassroots at the Gateway* presents the most comprehensive account of St. Louis MOWM available, prior to this dissertation.[21] One of the more useful aspects of Lang's work is that readers accrue a full appreciation for the Depression-era political schooling that MOWM's members underwent, as well as the culturally and politically conservative factors behind their relative silence in the Truman and Eisenhower years. An important lesson in *Grassroots at the Gateway* is that prolonged studies of social and political movements inevitably encounter a generation gap. Lang demonstrates that the contributions of Roosevelt-era activists such as T.D. McNeal and David Grant were either ignored or discounted by later

generations of African Americans who were active in the civil rights and Black freedom struggles.[22]

Lang looks at MOWM as facet of St. Louis' "vibrant and deeply rooted traditions of black resistance."[23] He uses MOWM as one of many examples in which working-class African Americans organized amongst themselves to address issues beyond the scope of traditional labor unions. *Grassroots at the Gateway* sees MOWM as part of a multi-generational struggle of "black people working for fair and full employment, better wages, union protection…racial fairness under law, political representation, fair housing, education, health care and other social wages, equitable access to parks and similar public amenities, and urban development policies geared toward black communal preservation – in short, a minimum program for full citizenship and self-determination."[24] As such, Lang effectively traces the careers of MOWM stalwarts like David Grant and T.D. McNeal. Of particular interest is his account of their maturation through Depression politics and their impressions of civil rights-era protests. This dissertation expands on Lang's work by offering a more detailed account of St. Louis MOWM's operations, as well as greater insights into the biographical and ideological backgrounds of major players within this seminal organization. Additionally, by using St. Louis MOWM as a case study in conflict and cooperation between competing African American protest organizations, this dissertation situates MOWM within the context of intra- and extra-organizational affairs of groups and individuals aligned with the struggle for Black equality. Thus, while Lang looks at St. Louis MOWM as part of a study in St. Louis' grassroots protest, this dissertation scrutinizes MOWM in the context of

organizational dynamics that arose between its national office and the daily activities of local branches.

Unfortunately for scholars and teachers of African American history, Robert A. Hill was correct when, in 1995, he identified FBI files as "the most detailed chronicle that exists" on MOWM. Hill's effort compiling and cross-referencing FBI documents to uncover blacked out or deleted sections makes *RACON* extraordinarily valuable as a primary source for students of World War II-era African American history, techniques of federal surveillance, and problems associated with relying on FBI documents as primary sources. FBI surveillance of African Americans and Black protest during the Second World War unintentionally left historians with a record of the identity and roles of "individuals who participated in the movement's meetings."[25] This dissertation attempts to do for contemporary historiography what Hoover's G-men did over fifty years ago – namely, look at MOWM through its local machinations. Needless to say, the methodology and author's intent of this study differs greatly from the FBI's, and it is hoped that the irony of suspicious investigators searching for fifth column activity being recognized as an authority on African American protest through MOWM will be corrected.

John Bracey and August Meier made an important addition to Garfinkle's work with the discovery of documentary evidence in the NAACP Papers that this organization "played a crucial role" in MOWM's success and its demise.[26] NAACP's initial enthusiasm for the march resulted in its urging of all branches to help "organizing marchers, distributing March buttons…and disseminating publicity."[27] Without publicizing their heavy subsidy of Black protest, the NAACP contributed as

much, and sometimes more, to MOWM's coffers as the BSCP.[28] Even the simplest interpretation of cooperation between NAACP and MOWM recognized the symbolic significance of the NAACP wrapping up 1942 by awarding Randolph its highest honor, the Spingarn medal.[29] After this, however, the elder organization's support for MOWM declined rapidly when MOWM sought to institutionalize itself and become a permanent star in the constellation of African American protest and uplift organizations. NAACP kept its distance from MOWM in the ensuing years and purposely remained publicly quiet about its position towards MOWM's institutionalization.[30] Even though local activists in St. Louis remained dedicated to both organizations, the working relationship between the national offices of NAACP and MOWM eroded considerably.[31]

Bracey and Meier's study outlined "the ambivalent and complex relations that have historically existed among black leadership and organizations."[32] Their findings necessarily complicate and enrich the perspective that any localized study of MOWM must take. Methodologically, this team of scholars proved that a more complete understanding of MOWM requires the use of papers from organizations that Randolph's group cooperated with. For instance, while BSCP rightfully takes a leading role in historical accounts of MOWM, Bracey and Meier discovered that Walter White made some of the largest individual contributions to MOWM and that the NAACP donated as much money as the BSCP towards keeping MOWM afloat. NAACP's financial support for MOWM must be understood in the context of how its leaders perceived Randolph's vision for MOWM. Even though White was cautious to not throw the NAACP completely in with MOWM until he and Randolph "met to

decide and discuss the present status of the MOWM," White privately and quietly backed the organization.[33] In 1942, the same year that Randolph won the Spingarn Award, Anna Arnold Hedgeman wrote Randolph reporting that the organization was "not sending an official delegate to the policy conference because they believe MOW has gotten away from its original plan" as an umbrella organization through which attacks against racial inequality could be coordinated.[34]

Randolph was not unaware that he risked making his organization's program too close to that of other established organizations. He was, however, blind to the fact that some NAACP officials advocated developing "some scheme…whereby we can work with them, absorb them" and harness MOWM's energy to entrench NAACP even more deeply within the ranks of Black institutions.[35] Randolph knew that he shouldn't step on NAACP's toes and he frequently played up things that differentiated MOWM from the elder organization. He also quickly shot down a proposal from one member for MOWM "to publish a 42-page monthly magazine," that would have certainly been seen as an attempt to nudge aside *Crisis*.[36] It was difficult enough for MOWM to construct an identity that did not alienate the NAACP without sponsoring a rival publication to *Crisis*, and it would have been impossible had MOWM come out with its own journal. The potential for conflict was written into MOWM policy, which explicitly identified NAACP and the Urban League as "established recognized agencies" whose campaigns should not be superseded by MOWM protest unless the organization was invited to collaborate. At least on paper, MOWM was careful to emphasize that cooperation was its "fundamental

policy" for coordinating "a multiple attack on the problem" identified by local activists.[37]

Scholarly works on BSCP history often mention the union's support of MOWM in passing or offer anecdotes from retired porters claiming that their union was the engine behind MOWM.[38] This body of work, however, makes little attempt to examine connections between BSCP and MOWM beyond the obvious conclusion that Randolph led both organizations and that union loyalty inspired an indeterminate amount of anonymous members to participate in MOWM activity.[39] Though overlooked by many, the contributions of BSCP Field Organizers T.D. McNeal and Benjamin McLaurin to MOWM's campaigns were, like their efforts in the union, difficult to understate.[40] Beth Bates' *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Black Protest Politics* is by far the most useful study of the BSCP's connections to MOWM. In addition to a fresh interpretation of MOWM's all-Black membership policy, this monograph points towards the need for local studies of MOWM to document "cross-fertilization between [NAACP and MOWM] at the local level" and remove the "mystery of the movement at the local level."[41]

Only recently has the ferment of grassroots protest coordinated by MOWM attracted scholarly attention that Mary McLeod Bethune, writing in 1944, recognized when she pointed out that "in such people's movements, the real leadership comes up out of the people themselves."[42] Previous studies, such as Harvard Sitkoff's *New Deal for Blacks*, Patricia Sullivan's *Days of Hope*, Philip Foner's *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, Beth Bates' *Pullman Porters*, Philip A. Klinker and Rogers M. Smith's *The Unsteady March*, and John Egerton's *Speak Now Against*

the Day all mention MOWM and E.O. 8802 in passing as components of a broader study.[43] Even then, Randolph, White, and LaGuardia dominated the historical narrative. Consequentially, these books scarcely mention the local organizers who gave life to MOWM's grassroots protests.[44] Thorough studies such as Melinda Chateauvert's monograph on the BSCP Ladies' Auxiliary, for instance, only offer a brief overview of activity in St. Louis led by T.D. and Thelma McNeal. Just a single page in length, Chateauvert's recognition of protest in wartime St. Louis is one of the few instances in which historians even recognized African American grassroots activism within the context of national organizations during the Second World War.[45] *Marching Together* offers concrete details about social and political networks within the mid-twentieth century Black Left and also suggests that the depth of MOWM protest in St. Louis was probably equaled in Chicago and possibly other cities. Chateauvert's portrayal of the Chicago Ladies' Auxiliary is the study's most lively section. Under the watch of Charles Wesley Burton, strengthened by the social network of BSCP Women's Auxiliary president Helena Wilson, and then reinforced by the combined organizing expertise of Domestic Workers Association president Neva Ryan and Irene McCoy Gaines, women involved in Chicago's Ladies' Auxiliary contributed mightily to MOWM's operations in the Windy City.[46] Gaines, for example, brought a political and social network into MOWM that she created while working on previous organizing campaigns. It was Gaines, not Randolph, who secured parade permits for the "militant and definitely positive Demonstration for Democracy" that MOWM co-sponsored alongside 125 other African American organizations in Chicago.[47] Out of this march, Irene Gaines emerged with a plan

picked up by the Chicago Council of Negro Organizations for a protest trip to Washington, D.C., to occur in March – a full three months before Randolph's proposed national gathering.[48] Perhaps even more than St. Louis, Chicago had a longstanding tradition of African American activism through existing racial organizations that were familiar with marches, parades, and cooperation in single-issue campaigns.[49] Added to this, Chicago also had an activism-oriented NAACP that picketed outside of defense plants and a well-endowed BSCP that pumped money into the local MOWM.[50] The combination of MOWM activists with extensive localized political capital and a city with a tradition for activism was a fruitful recipe for MOWM in St. Louis and, as evidenced by a November 1941 push for MOWM members in Chicago, indicates that the Black Metropolis was a scene of MOWM activity deserving of further research.[51]

Another example of solid scholarship that addresses MOWM's local activity within the context of a larger academic monograph is Cynthia Taylor's *A. Philip Randolph: The Religious Journey of an African American Labor Leader*. This book-length study on Randolph's commitment to Christian humanism includes a surprising chapter about MOWM activism coordinated under church auspices by activists in Chicago. Even though this text does not attempt to contextualize MOWM's position within the spectrum of Black protest during the Second World War or explore daily operations within Chicago MOWM, this valuable study outlines religious networks that Randolph tapped when MOWM adopted non-violent civil disobedience as its *raison d'être* at the 1943 Chicago "We Are American, Too," conference. Taylor also gives voice to the cadre of African American women who

volunteered their organizing prowess and made Chicago MOWM exist. Without their contributions, Taylor demonstrates, Chicago's MOWM branch would be stagnant – leaving the city without grassroots supporters in a location that MOWM selected to host some of its most important conferences.[52]

Chicago is a superb case study of collaboration between African American religious leaders and MOWM but this example cannot be generalized to include St. Louis, where comparatively few church leaders supported MOWM. Likewise, while women in Chicago propelled the organization, a recently unemployed lawyer with a NAACP life membership and an economically independent organizer for the BSCP are who drove St. Louis MOWM. This is not to discount women's participation in St. Louis MOWM, for it was vital to the organization. While David Grant and T.D. McNeal were running the office, for instance, women were making local headlines with sit-ins protesting segregated food service at department stores.

Another historical monograph about a broader topic that is useful for this study of St. Louis MOWM is Andrew Edmund Kersten's *Race, Jobs, and the War: The FEPC in the Midwest, 1941-1946*. Kersten's analysis of how social, economic, and political conditions impacted FEPC's overall effectiveness in Midwestern industrial centers speaks directly to St. Louis MOWM's successful campaign to establish a stronger FEPC presence in their city. Even though small factual errors occasionally occur, *Race, Jobs, and War* dedicates an entire chapter to studying the FEPC in St. Louis. By doing so, Kersten pays more attention to MOWM demonstrations in that city than any available study at the time of its publication. Since Kersten is interested in studying wartime employment, however, his account understandably

leaves out aspects of St. Louis MOWM's activity that does not fit his narrative. Therefore, while one finds no mention of the 1944 sit-ins, cooperation between MOWM and other protest organizations like NAACP and FOR, or the impact of PMEW on protest rhetoric used by African American activists, this invaluable study makes good use of FEPC archives to tell the story of how the agency struggled to do its job and was assisted in its mission by volunteer activists.[53]

Missouri historiography usually mentions the presence of a vibrant MOWM chapter, but there is little in-depth investigation of this important protest movement.[54] Lorenzo J. Greene, Gary R. Kremer, and Antonio F. Holland's *Missouri's Black Heritage* is a wonderful survey of Black History in Missouri, but the breadth of this study from slavery through the 1980s necessitates brevity in order to maintain its status as a single-volume monograph. Consequentially, this team of scholars does not even mention the St. Louis MOWM chapter or one of major contributors, David Grant.[55] The fifth volume of Richard Kirkendall's *History of Missouri* is an invaluable resource for contextualizing MOWM activity in that city. Replete with statistics in defense production, employment percentages, and demographics, Kirkendall also recognizes the contributions of St. Louis MOWM and he mentions T.D. McNeal, George Vaughn, and Jordan Chambers several times. As demonstrated by this dissertation, however, this moment in St. Louis' history demands more thorough coverage. Kirkendall is also not familiar with the history of African American protest movements, and he argues that MOWM "excluded whites," a charge that is incorrect when looking at MOWM's local machinations.[56] In fact, though African Americans were the most important force driving the 1944 sit-ins

occurring in that city, this dirt action campaign was inter-racial. As seen in this dissertation, racial alliances between MOWM, White elected officials, and religious activists could sometimes be productive.

The number of historical studies that deal with MOWM in passing or as part of a chapter within a broader study is augmented by the growing cottage industry of biographies on A. Philip Randolph. All of these books describe Randolph's vision for MOWM and outline his contributions to this seminal vehicle for Black protest. Together, the biographies on Randolph prove that in MOWM, as in the BSCP, Randolph was an inspirational force drew people to him through peerless oratory and personal charisma. This scheme of Randolph's leadership places an emphasis on intangibles, making it difficult to develop a nuanced understanding of leadership that sufficiently explains how Randolph remained relevant throughout his long career in civil rights activism. Critical readers are left wondering how Randolph's "situational charisma," as one biographer put it, was enough to propel him to the head of so many movements but somehow could never sustain the very organizations that he envisioned.[57]

Andrew Kersten's recent biography on Randolph, *A. Philip Randolph: A Life in the Vanguard* is probably the best available overview of his life but Paula Pfeffer's *A. Phillip Randolph: A Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement* features a useful chapter on MOWM's national office. By utilizing NAACP papers more extensively than Garfinkle, Pfeffer explains the rift that developed between these two organizations. Like Garfinkle, Pfeffer has a tendency to overemphasize Randolph's personality in her analysis. Still, Pfeffer's work was the first biography on Randolph that

incorporated details about how MOWM's office functioned during Randolph's regular and prolonged absences, contextualize MOWM's ideology within the framework of Black nationalism, and situate the organization within the context of the Civil Rights Movement.[58] Though Kersten does not introduce new source material to his discussion of MOWM, he provides a clear and insightful interpretation of the national organization as part of a chapter on African American experiences in the Second World War. *A Life in the Vanguard* depicts MOWM's all-Black membership policy as a pragmatic blending of union experience and racial activism. After all, Kersten argues, BSCP carved a place for itself because it was an all-Black union.[59]

There are many studies of the BSCP that inform this dissertation's interpretation of the union's civil rights agenda, its importance to Black communities, and Randolph's tendencies as a leader. The best among these are William H. Harris's *Keeping the Faith*, Larry Tye's *Rising from the Rails*, and Jack Santino's oral history, *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle*.[60] Although these books do not intend to discuss MOWM, they give scholars a useful background for understanding the enthusiasm and ambivalence that members of this union had for its support of MOWM.

A recent trend in Civil Rights historiography to reappraise the Movement's geographic location and challenge conceptions of its chronology has inspired a new generation of historians to look at MOWM. Attempts to resituate the Civil Rights Movement's place on the twentieth century timeline are not, in fact, a recent phenomenon. In 1968, Richard Dalfiume argued that a sharp increase in incidents

of Black protest during the Second World War and the confrontational rhetoric used to challenge racial inequality in this era demonstrated that "the ground was prepared for the civil rights revolution."[61] Making connections between generations of activists by their use of a common rhetoric is a difficult task, to be certain, and caused one labor historian to point out, "rhetoric is not always an accurate gauge of reality."[62] Dalfiume saw the protests, platforms, and programs of organizations like MOWM as more than an antecedent to the Civil Rights Movement – instead, these were the "seeds" that sprouted in the form of mass marches, sit-ins, and bus boycotts two decades later.[63] Dalfiume's metaphor was refined and extended in an influential 1988 article by Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein that more explicitly made a case for locating the civil rights era's beginning in the 1940s. It was during World War II, this team of scholars argues, that African American activists tried to take advantage of "a time of opportunity, when a high-wage, high-employment economy, rapid unionization, and a pervasive federal presence gave the black working class remarkable self-confidence" that it was, to borrow a phrase from Merl Reed, "seedtime" for the Civil Rights Movement.[64]

The push to expand historical conceptions of the Civil Rights Movement through edited volumes like *Freedom North* provided a forum for Beth Bates to publish one of the best examinations of local MOWM operations. Bates' essay, "Double V Mobilizes Black Detroit," reveals that the Motor City had much in common with St. Louis: a tumultuous history of race relations, an increasing African American population, thousands of jobs in the defense industry, and a MOWM chapter that drew from long-established networks of African American institutions

created as a response to the *de jure* segregation of twentieth century urban life. Unique to Detroit, however, was Ford's paternalism towards Black workers, a major race riot, and a radical religious tradition of Afro-Christianity.[65] Bates' essay, which outlines industrial relations in Detroit and maps the complex terrain of African American organizations, points towards the need for more detailed studies of local MOWM chapters – a historiographical gap that this dissertation seeks to fill. It is not over-enthusiastic to say that when the project of documenting the personnel and operations of MOWM's local branches is complete, competent but inadequately informed historians will no longer incorrectly refer to MOWM's staff after the July 1 demonstration was cancelled as "skeletal" or portray the organization's activities as declining as the war progressed.[66]

The most recognizable recent examples of Long Movement scholarship are Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard's pair of edited volumes studying local manifestations of civil rights campaigns.[67] The first of these, *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980* uses local history to challenge what the editors see as an artificial dichotomy in Civil Rights Movement interpretation that incorrectly bifurcates the struggle into binaries such as north-south, violence-civil disobedience, and national-local. Theoharis and Woodard's repositioning of the Civil Rights Movement is a clarion call to re-interpret the geographical scope, ideological tensions, and chronological bookends of the Civil Rights Movement. It is the last of these re-interpretations, the chronological extension of the Civil Rights Movement into the 1940s, which this dissertation attempts to check. Commentators during the early 1940s and some of MOWM's participants interpreted E.O. 8802 as a

capstone to the New Deal that shattered racial discrimination in employment practices – not the start of a new phase in the struggle for Black liberation in the United States. MOWM's activity was part of a piecemeal struggle to win greater access to jobs, consumer markets, and public spaces. Arguing that there is no linkage between racially progressive activism in the Roosevelt era and the 1960s is obviously unreasonable, and I recognize that numerous activists and political strategies represent direct bridges between these two phases of the struggle. The reason that I interpret MOWM as the fulfillment of New Deal policy is simple: that's what members of this organization understood themselves as.

The trend in current historiography to recognize the Civil Rights Movement's "roots and branches" in popular struggles of the 1930s and 1940s as "not merely a dress rehearsal but a crucial birthplace and battleground for the mass movement that flowered in the 1960s," has, in the appraisal of one team of scholars, "become hegemonic" throughout the field.[68] Even scholars who hold scruples with this "fourth wave" of Civil Rights Movement historiography should recognize it as, at best, an unconvincing blessing that enriches and complicates our understanding of local activism by African Americans in the twentieth century. These studies reinvigorated historical scholarship about African-American activism in the generation before the Civil Rights Movement and shed light on the complex interplay between grassroots activists and national protest organizations. The result is a more nuanced mosaic that challenges the image of African-Americans marching in lock step around a singular ideology and program for struggle that the Black press sometimes presented.

To its credit, the "fourth wave" created a framework for excellent studies like Martha Biondi's *To Stand and Fight*. Biondi demonstrates that in the war's aftermath, local people staged sit-ins to desegregate municipal spaces and public interstate transportation, organized boycotts to advance consumer's rights, aligned with the radical left to secure employment in industries previously closed to Black workers, waged a publicity campaign through the media to expose police brutality, and organized voter registration drives.[69] The historical experience in post-war New York is instructive for this study of wartime St. Louis because it outlines multi-faceted campaigns against urban institutional racism that were very similar to those in the Gateway City. Likewise, in New York and St. Louis, African Americans had a variety of complimentary and sometimes competing organizational outlets for their activism.

The worst-case scenario of taking the line of thought advanced by proponents of the "Long Civil Rights Movement" school is that otherwise fine studies of African American history are tarnished by an over-enthusiasm to make every aspect of Black protest in the twentieth century part of the Civil Rights Movement. A case of this "excessive elasticity" that creates a false continuity of social movements is March Schneider's *We Return Fighting*.[70] This study of race relations in the interwar years and struggles for civil rights during the same period has an interpretive flaw that confuses the "New Negro" with a counter-factual consciousness that he or she was part of a wide stream of Black protest that eventually included the likes of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. Schneider disregards the usefulness chronological concepts when he argues, "the civil rights

movement is as old as the first slave's resistance to an overseer."[71] As Sundiata Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang remarked in a particularly incisive diatribe, this "ahistorical totalizing perspective" serves to "flatten chronological, conceptual, and geographic differences" in African American history.[72] There is increased danger for interpretive flaws because, as noted by Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, there was "no singular strategy" to the Civil Rights Movement.[73] It seems quite possible, then, for early manifestations of ideological persuasion and protest tactics popularized in the Civil Rights Movement to be incorrectly interpreted as early manifestations of the Movement when, in fact, it was only an antecedent. It is imperative to not allow similarities in aims, tactics, and rhetoric to obscure the fact that an entire generation separated the Civil Rights Movement's vanguard from members of MOWM and other Black protest groups in the Roosevelt years.[74]

This dissertation does not attack the traditional bookending of the Civil Rights Movement but it recognizes the importance of critical appraisal and investigation to discover the parameters of how social movements begin and ultimately dissolve.[75] It is undeniable that there was a bona fide Civil Rights Movement in some locales prior to 1954, but MOWM activism in the 1940s was not one of them.[76] MOWM was a prelude to struggles in the ensuing decades – an interpretation that I hope reminds us of the distinction between struggles for civil rights and the Civil Rights Movement. It must be remembered that even though the Roosevelt years were a catalyst for Black protest; they were not the beginning of a widespread nationally recognizable social movement.[77] This dissertation locates MOWM outside the realm of the Civil Rights Movement and, in the process, re-

affirms the importance of African American protest in periods *other* than the Civil Rights Movement.

"Fourth wave" scholars might suggest that MOWM was at the Civil Rights Movement's foundation, but the people who made history were not conscious of their role as forbearers to an epoch in the Black Liberation struggle that was two decades away. Members of St. Louis MOWM saw themselves as placing a capstone on the New Deal. For example, an editorial in MOWM-member Henry Wheeler's *St. Louis American* proclaimed, "Everyone knows that the committee on Fair Employment Practice is a creature of the New Deal."[78] Informed commentators like Robert C. Weaver and Horace Cayton shared a similar perspective. Weaver and Cayton both believed that the New Deal demonstrated the federal government's enormous capacity to create racial equality through top-down federal policy.[79] In 1974, Baltimore MOWM member John M. Thornton, a self-proclaimed "life-long friend" to Randolph, repudiated the idea that MOWM was part of the modern Civil Rights Movement. Thornton's opinion, though not bolstered by academic credentials, was based on a lifetime of volunteer work as a foot soldier in progressive groups including MOWM and the CIO union that represented him for twenty years as a steelworker. Thornton strongly believed that the "history of the Black struggle cannot be permitted to reflect a continuity of movement…[of] 1941 through the 1963 March-on-Washington."[80] Likewise, *Phylon* identified FEPC and the federal government's effort to incorporate more African Americans into defense works as "part of the administration to apply the New Deal to Negroes."[81] Over a decade later, Anna Arnold Hedgeman described MOWM in exactly the same terms,

defining the organization as a response to "discrimination in job opportunities" dating back to the Depression.[82] Andrew Kersten, a historian of the FEPC, defines it as "a quintessential New Deal agency," thus implicitly connecting the outcome of MOWM's protest with New Deal policy.[83] Historian A. Russell Buchanan concluded that African Americans learned from the Second World War "that they could expect more from the federal government than local governments."[84] If these analysts are correct, than it stands to reason that MOWM's ability to get Roosevelt to acknowledge the power of Black protest through E.O. 8802 was indeed the capstone in the long drive to getting the Executive Branch to acknowledge the cost of racial discrimination.

This dissertation intended to tell the entire organizational history of MOWM's national office and most, if not all, of its local chapters. A combination of naivety and unexpectedly rich sources from one locale, St. Louis, drastically curtailed this project's scope. Instead, what follows is a study of MOWM's national office and one particularly active and successful chapter that was richly documented. Chapters two and three focus on MOWM's national office, telling the well-known story of a protest that never took place in greater detail than any other existing account. By incorporating documentary sources from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, this chapter also provides an insider's view of how the White House and associated New Dealers responded to Randolph's audacious threat. Also included in the second chapter is a limited sampling of commentary from members of the African American radical Left that were publicly critical of Randolph's decision to cancel the march for what they saw as limited concessions from an

inherently antagonistic federal government. Chapter three traces the contours of inter-organizational cooperation between MOWM and other protest organizations that were involved in struggles for civil rights and racial equality. Public demonstrations galvanizing around the slogan "We Are Americans, Too," MOWM's rallying cry shortly after it institutionalized as what it hoped to be a permanent organization, are investigated because they indicate that numerous grassroots activists and indigenous institutions like churches and labor unions were involved in making this organization matter locally. This chapter discusses the rationale of MOWM's organizational identity as an all-Black vehicle for protest that was dedicated to non-violent goodwill direct action. It also demonstrates that critical local chapters like the one in Washington, D.C., were sometimes wracked with disorganization, rendering them functionally useless. MOWM's failure to develop logistically key local chapters was undoubtedly one of the reasons why this organization ultimately disintegrated.

Chapters four, five, six, and seven recount the activities of St. Louis MOWM. This particular branch is discussed in such rich detail because its members, particularly T.D. McNeal and David Grant, maintained and preserved comprehensive records of the organization and their contributions to it. Chapter four offers a demographic and historical context for understanding the phenomena of African American protest in wartime St. Louis. More importantly, it introduces previously unheralded figures in the history of MOWM's operations in the Gateway City. Specifically, T.D. McNeal, David Grant, Sallie Parham, Nita Blackwell, and Jordan Chambers are established as pioneers of protest in this upstart organization.

Finally, this chapter discusses the ways that St. Louis MOWM financially eked by on private donations and support from African American railroad workers. Chapter five shows how St. Louis MOWM used a major rally to launch a sustained campaign for the integration of African American workers into St. Louis' booming wartime economy. A public prayer demonstration, pickets, and marches were used to advance the position of Black workers in a number of defense contractors including U.S. Cartridge, the world's largest bullet manufacturer. By necessity, St. Louis MOWM stepped in as an arbiter of workplace dissention at job sites when greater inclusion of African American workers brought increased racial animosity. In doing so, this protest organization affirmed its commitment to Black workers and to maintaining productive order in the arsenal of democracy. Chapter six recounts a 1944 series of sit-ins waged by a predominantly Black group of women in large department store lunch counters and a push by this organization to integrate publicly funded workplaces that were likely to remain productive long after the war. Integrating the switchboards and local administration of Southwestern Bell Telephone was a critical step towards securing sustainable employment for a largely female contingent of working class African Americans desirous of long-term white-collar employment. Integrating, or at least improving, access to food service at major downtown retailers was an important step in the process of breaking down elements of Jim Crow segregation in arguably the most significant city in a border state like Missouri. Finally, chapter seven outlines the ultimate decline of St. Louis MOWM and the transition of its leadership into the local NAACP in the midst of a campaign for a permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee. Prior to its

dissolution, St. Louis MOWM played a pivotal role in forcing FEPC to open a branch in the city. St. Louis' FEPC office received a record number of employment discrimination complaints. This is attributable to the presence of widespread racial exclusion from large defense industries and to St. Louis MOWM's advocacy of city residents to complete the necessary paperwork seeking investigation and redress.

The last chapter of this dissertation is an epilogue summarizing MOWM's meteoric rise and rapid disintegration. This section includes an appraisal of MOWM's local and national activities, as well as an analysis of this organization's accomplishments in light of the fact that segregation and racial inequality remained long after MOWM ceased to exist. This chapter demonstrates that local leadership in this organization remained active in campaigns for civil rights after their organizational base of support collapsed. Without MOWM as a source of power for successful pressure politics, individuals like T.D. McNeal and David Grant simply lent their leadership skills to the NAACP. This elder organization was unquestionably a more stable base for organizing and it was receptive to absorbing activists who honed their skills through campaigns launched with MOWM.

CHAPTER 2

MARCH ON WASHINGTON MOVEMENT -

NATIONAL OFFICE AFFAIRS AND OPERATIONS

"The thing that did it was the March on Washington. That scared these people like no other thing. Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, all wrapped together, never had the power, the real power, and threat that that first March had."

– Richard Parrish[1]

A. Philip Randolph claims that he got the idea for MOWM in the Deep South while on an organizing and speaking trip for the BSCP.[2] Less well known is that the ideal caught on so quickly, in part, because longtime BSCP organizer and soon-to-be St. Louis MOWM chairman T.D. McNeal stayed in each city after Randolph and McLaurin moved on in order to "work up negroes to come to Washington for this demonstration.[3] Even though MOWM's most active chapters were in northern and midwestern urban centers that had expanding populations fueled by African American migrants from the countryside, consciousness of the upstart protest organization was nationwide.[4] There number of small branches throughout the country demonstrates MOWM's national appeal, but the most active chapters were in major urban areas with sizeable African American populations like Harlem, Chicago, Detroit, and St. Louis.[5]

MOWM caught on quickly in Harlem, where Milton Webster said that African Americans with MOWM badges were proudly "wearing them up and down the streets." These buttons were widely distributed through a network of pre-existing

African-American social and political institutions and by the initiative of MOWM supporters. In Harlem, for example, "young ladies on street corners and public spots" distributed 15,000 buttons throughout the New York metro area.[6] New York MOWM member T.T. Patterson reported that his organization "is making steady progress [and] is spreading quite definitely." Patterson was one of the more enthusiastic MOWM members. This, coupled with a penchant for rhetorical flourish, influenced him to say, "this is the Movement that will mean more to the Negro of this country, and, for that matter, of any other country, than any movement of this century."[7]

The enthusiasm of MOWM members in other cities was notable but a bit more tempered. With a few exceptions, MOWM was not particularly strong in the South. Senora Lawson ran a very active branch Norfolk, Virginia, that was at the forefront of planning MOWM's Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action campaign. There was, of course, a branch in the BSCP hotbed of Jacksonville, and one in Montgomery spearheaded by a young but no less indefatigable E.D. Nixon.[8] Still, this does not belie that fact that the even though the South was the location of Randolph's inspiration for MOWM and that BSCP members supported the idea of marching, MOWM's most active branches were concentrated in the industrial midwest.

The most obvious explanation for MOWM's uneven geographic dispersion is the well-known prevalence of racial violence that seemed to be synonymous with the Deep South. Margaret McLaurin, wife of Benjamin, privately and confidentially wrote Randolph asking him to keep her husband out of the region. "Please do not

send Mac into any part of Alabama now," she wrote, "the tension is just too great and his life is not worth a nickel."[9]

The South was an unlikely place for the birth of an organization relying on militant rhetoric, dramatic protest, and temporarily seizing control of public space. Randolph generated interest because of his stature as a leader of the BSCP, a union that had locals in railroad towns throughout Dixie.[10] Randolph's idea to march on Washington was well received in Atlanta, Savannah, Jacksonville, Tampa, and Richmond. His speeches struck a familiar chord because they emphasized cooperative self-reliance and racial solidarity. Randolph was certainly not the first to espouse the message, but his conclusion that "The future of the Negro depends entirely upon his own action, and the individual cannot act alone" resonated with audiences who believed that this was a "clarion call" for mass protest politics to address issues of racial inequality.[11] MOWM was certainly Randolph's "brainchild," but it was grassroots activists who energized the organization by using it to tackle issues in their own communities.[12]

Benjamin McLauren shared the podium with Randolph on this trip and was present when the idea to march was first made public in Savannah. While spirits were high at the event, McLaurin reminisced that Randolph's proposal "scared some of them to death…including myself."[13] Still, the moment was ripe for change and "the plan caught on like fire" among a people who were certain that the war presented a crisis for a system of segregation and inequality that they bitterly called Jim Crow.[14] The impact of de-colonization and a shifting global order was not lost on St. Louis MOWM activist and social worker Elizabeth Grant or national NAACP

head Walter White. Like many of her generation, Grant thought that "older forms of social control have lost been almost entirely…and society is in a state of flux, if not revolution. The common man and the underprivileged are struggling for economic, political, and social emancipation." Global instability, according to Grant, drove an upsurge in "class conflict, minority problems, nationalistic movements…and other expressions of social unrest."[15] Walter White shared Grant's perspective. In *A Rising Wind*, White reported, "White nations and peoples had vigorously proclaimed to the world that this war is being fought for freedom, and colored people were taking them at face value."[16] Throughout the United States, African Americans interpreted the rhetoric of freedom and equality as signposts directing them towards achieving racial equality while the nation was at war and politics were in flux.

Randolph encapsulated the temper of the times when he reflected, "The Negro masses awakened in 1941."[17] This opinion is verified by historian Robert A. Hill, who wrote, "African Americans made two important discoveries in World War II, namely, that the system of white supremacy was not impregnable and that mass militancy, such as the March on Washington Movement…could effectively challenge the system and produce results."[18] Hill is backed up by another historian, Robin D.G. Kelley, who characterizes the general mood of Black America during MOWM's zenith as holding a "sense of hope and pessimism, support and detachment, that dominated a good deal of daily conversation."[19] According to an issue of *The Black Worker*, 1941 was when African Americans were "seething with interest and activity" because of the hoopla that MOWM generated.[20] This periodical credited MOWM

with successfully channeling "a wave of bitter resentment, disillusionment and desperation" caused by "lack of jobs and purchasing power" that created "dead economic areas" and directing it towards constructive protest politics.[21]

Bayard Rustin offered a slightly different opinion. In reflections thirty years after MOWM's heyday, Rustin remarked that the apex of support for MOWM came after the march was cancelled. "Once the FEPC order was issued," Rustin said, "the real activity began."[22] The purpose of all this protest was unchanged from Randolph's original threat to "stun the government, shock business and astonish organized labor."[23] This was true in St. Louis, where members of local civic and labor organizations including the NAACP and BSCP answered Randolph's call to "stage marches on their city." African Americans coalesced under the banner of the March on Washington Movement at a moment of uncertainty when, according to T.D. McNeal, "the totalitarianism of Hitler and Mussolini and the imperialism of Japan has brought about a world crisis utterly without precedent."[24]

On the domestic front, Robert C. Weaver, a scholar and federal official in the Office of Production Management, detected a crisis in race relations owing to "disillusionment of Negroes in New York and elsewhere" that spawned because "the Negro was only on the sidelines of American industrial life. He seemed to be losing ground daily."[25] Weaver's study the African American workforce revealed that in April 1940 White unemployment was at 17.7 percent, while 22 percent of African Americans were in the same predicament. Six months later, a busy defense industry caused White unemployment to drop to 13 percent but the percentage of unemployed African Americans only changed by a fraction of a percent.[26]

It was obvious that African Americans were going to be among the last hired, if they were integrated into the defense workforce at all. In an essay several years later, James Baldwin described the emotional response to the frustrating racial economy that Weaver's statistics detailed. A young man in Harlem at the time, Baldwin reflected on the war years with little nostalgia. "The treatment accorded the Negro during the Second World War," Baldwin wrote, "marks for me, a turning point in the Negro's relation to America. To put it briefly, and somewhat too simply, a certain hope died, a certain respect for white Americans faded."[27]

MOWM's Executive Secretary E. Pauline Myers framed the organization's foray into non-violent civil disobedience as one of these turning points. Like Baldwin, Myers saw the war years as a time of widespread change in the consciousness of African Americans. In her advocacy for a direct action campaign, Myers argued, "The old method of conferences, round table discussions, pink tea parties, luncheons and Black Cabinets has been exploded. The patience of Negro America is sorely tired." Myers continued, "The Negro has experimented for seventy-eight years with the education formula showing the white man why he should be free. He is not asking for a hand out. The Negro American has come to maturity and he wants to be free to walk as a man…He is tired of being the white man's burden."[28]

The *Pittsburgh Courier's* wildly popular Double V campaign evidenced the fact that during the war, "racial solidarity among the American Negroes became heightened."[29] "The need to confront fascism abroad," writes Philip A. Klinker and Rogers M. Smith, "meant needing to face up to Jim Crow at Home."[30] The Second

World War presented a moment when international affairs combined with the tone of home front rhetoric to make fertile ground for the NAACP to argue that racial inequality and segregation was "the acid test of democracy" and Caroline Singer of the Harlem NACW to conclude that "anti-Negroism is based upon the concept of a master race…that is irreconcilable with democracy."[31] On a more militant note, the *Black Worker* characterized Double V's thrust as a movement to "Let us tear the mask of hypocrisy from America's Democracy!"[32] Randolph characterized the moment as a time when "Negroes are fighting on two fronts. This is as it should be. They are fighting for democracy in Europe. They are fighting for democracy in America. They are trying to stop Hitler over there, and they are determined to stop Hitlerism over here."[33] This zeitgeist of change inspired African Americans to form their own unites of MOWM that fought localized battles but envisioned their impact within the context of a broader national struggle. The fervor and ferment of Black protest during the war caused the *Chicago Defender* to proclaim, "These are Marching days, America."[34]

Planning to March on Washington

Even though the spotlight fell on Randolph, Frank Crosswaith, Lester Granger, Roy Wilkins, and Walter White collaborated extensively with him in planning the demonstration.[35] Randolph was also far removed from coordinating logistics and rallying support for the protest in Washington, DC. The onus of organizing in the city of the march fell on Thurman Dodson, a MOWM member affiliated with the organization for its entire lifespan. Dodson drafted a block plan

that harnessed local social and political capitol to generate supporters for the highly anticipated event. In his mind, each block captain would recruit ten or more friends and acquaintances, swelling numbers to over 5,000 indigenous supporters of the demonstration.

Even though Randolph had little to do with planning the event, he insisted that "no disorder will be tolerated" because it would reflect poorly on the image of Black people and, more presciently, could lead to a racial conflagration.[36] Randolph, with support from members of the original March on Washington committee, also reserved the right to appoint inspectors, or "march deputies," to approve of all signs and banners as well as ensure that nobody had "liquor on their breath."[37] The need to control a mass demonstration was perceived by others in addition to Randolph. The original MOW committee, in fact, recommended that the organization devise a method to control "all slogans, banners, statement of purpose, selection of battalion chiefs, deputy inspectors at the point of assembly."[38] The committee perceived a need to manage the demonstration's public face so that the group would appear orderly, unified, and within the boundaries of respectability for a public political protest.[39]

Eardlie John, a MOWM New York member, had faith that his organization would eventually follow through with its threat to march on the Capitol. In 1942, John wrote Randolph raising hypothetical questions and offering solutions to potential logistical issues - most of which were associated with widespread segregation in the Capitol. John pointed out that unequal access to resources meant that problems could be expected in transportation, lodging, food services, and basic

sanitation. He raised bona fide issues that inhibited a massive demonstration by a minority group under apartheid during a period of national crisis that restricted opportunities for travel. Could African Americans expect white proprietors to allow them use of sanitary facilities? Should African American residents be expected to open their homes to strangers who could not find their own lodging in the limited and already overbooked hotels that accepted Black patronage? John went so far as to calculate that the already crowded rails could only handle 20,000 additional passengers over a three day period – a number far too small for MOWM to save face when it called for 100,000 demonstrators. These problems aside, Eardlie John's "absolute faith in the rank and file" and vehement disdain for racial inequality led him to all but demand that an actual march be staged. In John's words, failure to sponsor the event that MOWM named itself for would cause the organization to be seen as another group of "docile, begging, cringing, handkerchief-head uncle Toms of yesterday" unworthy of emotional or financial commitment from African Americans.[40]

Crisis Control: Roosevelt Administration Responds to the March

The Roosevelt Administration was aware of MOWM's threatened protest from the beginning of 1941 but waited until June of that year to address the organization's demands. Time in the interim was spent monitoring MOWM's activity and gauging the general morale of African Americans throughout the country. From the beginning, White House officials hoped that establishing an investigative body would accomplish the complimentary goals of boosting defense

production, placating Black protest organizations, and keeping African Americans enthusiastic for the impending war.[41] The Roosevelt Administration tried to stay "just a step ahead of radical organizations" like MOWM by bringing them in "cooperative coordination with the Government's defense program."[42] In the words of historian John Egerton, "Racial segregation hindered the American effort to mobilize for war," to such an extent that federal officials could not be unaware of it.[43]

The threatened march seized a moment when the combination of an artificial scarcity of laborers, changing intellectual currents, and important foreign policy implications joined the ever-present struggle for Black liberation. This confluence of events forced Roosevelt to align the White House, at least partially, on the side of African Americans. Some argued that Roosevelt's support was an empty check that had little "teeth" for enforcement, but many commentators saw reason to cheer Roosevelt's "almost Lincolnian" order as equivalent to "a Bill of Economic Rights for Negroes."[44] MOWM's challenge to Roosevelt, described one team of historians as an "aggressive use of executive power," was particularly gutsy, especially considering the equation of a grassroots protest organization challenging a popular president while the nation was on the brink or war.[45]

However one appraises the effectiveness of E.O. 8802, New Dealer Joseph Rauh's opinion on Roosevelt's motivations is incisive. Rauh, and lawyer and author of E.O. 8802, believed that Roosevelt issued the order out of "pragmatic concerns…for social stability, rather than concern for black workers."[46] In June 1941, Rauh was working for Wayne Coy in the Lend-Lease program. Rauh

remembered that Coy frantically called, ordering him to "Get your ass over here, we got a problem…Some guy named Randolph is going to march on Washington unless we put out a fair employment practices order." Over the next eighteen hours, Rauh tirelessly composed draft after draft of the law that stopped the march. Even though Rauh did not know much about Randolph prior to this assignment, he understood that the threat of a march "had scared the government half to death."[47]

Randolph had to consider numerous variables should he proceed to stage the demonstration, the least of which was unpredictable White reaction to a throng of African Americans exercising First Amendment rights. There was uncertainty about whether or not a sufficient amount of attendees would bother to coalesce on the appointed day, and if they did arrive, there was no guarantee that their presence could actually reap concessions. There were also questions about precisely when demands would be fulfilled and the extent of redress that protest of this nature could secure. With questions such as these in mind, the *St. Louis Argus* zealously supported the call to march, but the newspaper cheered E.O. 8802 as a "logical and sensible…armistice."[48]

Randolph knew that the task of assembling such a gaudy number of protestors in the Capitol for a single day of protest was far-fetched, or, in his words, "Herculean." Writing in the Trotskyist *Fourth International* just before the march was cancelled, Albert Parker alleged, "there is no evidence that the masses, even on the eastern seaboard, have yet been reached and aroused by the organizers of the march. Most workers haven't even heard about it."[49] Although some on the Left downplayed MOWM's significance to America's Black proletariat, the federal

government treated the organization as a legitimate threat. According to Walter White, "at least three sources in Washington" indicated "that this proposed march is disturbing the administration more than anything that has happened among Negros in recent months." The pressure brought on by the upstart March on Washington Committee was such that White reported, "We suspect that an effort will be made shortly to persuade the leaders of this movement to call it off."[50]

The sheer difficulty of making the protest happen and the possibility that the event might not lead to greater rewards strongly influenced Randolph's choice to cancel the march even though many of MOWM's demands were unaddressed by the executive order. E.O. 8802 only placated the first of six demands presented to Roosevelt. Randolph saw the prohibition as cash in hand, but he left important facets of MOWM's program on the table when cancelling the march. Among these was the prohibition of discrimination in industrial training courses, the tearing down of segregation in all aspects of the civilian federal government and armed forces, and modifying the National Labor Relations Act so that unions could not exclude African Americans by practice or by constitution. There was also discussion of a prototype of selective service requiring employers to hire workers in order of their draft registration number. If passed, this would have challenged the ability of individual employers to practice discrimination in hiring.[51] By calling off the march with only one major issue addressed, MOWM branches like that of St. Louis had a lot left to keep fighting for.

Randolph probably inflated the numbers of demonstrators that he expected, and this certainly contributed to his decision to call off the march in exchange for a

law that was limited in scope and power.[52] It is possible that Roosevelt, like the *Chicago Defender*, believed that “It would not be necessary to mobilize 10,000” because a fifth of that number would get the point across. Randolph’s projection of somewhere between 10,000 and 100,000 marchers is even more audacious considering that other Roosevelt-era protests against Scottsboro, lynching, and the poll tax never achieved five-figure numbers.[53] The *Defender* hedged bets as the date for the protest drew near. Even with smaller than projected attendance, the *Defender* argued, “If the March on Washington does nothing else, it will convince white America that the American black man has decided henceforth and forever to abandon the timid role of Uncle-Tomism in his struggle for social justice.”[54]

The Depression-Era Bonus Marches created a precedent for assembling in the Capitol to pressure the government into action, but Randolph was the first to wrap the demonstration into a single day. He tapped a wellspring of protest schooled in Depression-era activism that saw “more blacks than ever,” engaging in mass action that seized public space in order to demand racial equality.[55] Unlike today when assembling in the Capitol is a political cliché, or as Bayard Rustin’s biographer put it, a “public spectacle, weekend entertainment posing as politics,” the idea of marching on the Capitol in the 1940s was still fresh, novel, and with little precedent.[56] According to Benjamin Quarles, Randolph was “a pioneer in the use of mass-protest,” even though the march that solidified his place in the pantheon of African American leaders never took place.[57] This pioneer of protest, Beth Bates points out, found “a new method for lobbying the federal government” through mass-based demonstrations.[58] This fact was not lost on Randolph when he called off

the march as a concession to Roosevelt for the President's support of E.O. 8802.[59] It was widely recognized that "the success of such a parade will be judged by the numbers," and that failure to generate sufficient attendance would be a crushing blow for racial activism.[60]

In calling off the march, Randolph expressed "appreciation and gratitude" to Roosevelt for his "statesmanlike" handling of the issue even though all were aware that MOWM's demands were only partially met. African American media outlets like the *St. Louis Argus* recognized that "this act of the President does not meet the vital and serious issue of discrimination…in various departments of the federal government." Though incomplete, Randolph interpreted E.O. 8802 as a step towards the larger mission of eradicating racism in federal hiring practices. Randolph hoped that a second edict would buttress E.O. 8802, fully prohibiting all racial qualifiers through every level of federal employment including the armed forces. Randolph closed his explanation for canceling the march with a call that was well received in St. Louis when he asked the organization's local branches to "remain in tact in order to watch and check how industries are observing the executive order."[61] Indeed, as written by observers of the era, "even with the executive order, actual changes were slow, and the level of jobs offered to African Americans varied greatly."[62]

Reactions from federal officials ranged from wholesale opposition to MOWM's program to sympathy from critics who supported the organization's goals but were wary of protest politics. Somewhat simplistically, but certainly accurately, a 1970s retrospective on Randolph's life remarked that "Influential people" tried to

dissuade him from following through with the protest but "he remained strong and steadfast."[63] Eleanor Roosevelt was the most prominent of these "influential people." The First Lady's progressive credentials were unquestionable, but she was ultimately a figure who represented the political establishment's interest.[64] Eleanor Roosevelt warned Randolph that following through with the demonstration could precipitate a reactionary rollback of unspecified civil rights gains that she attributed to her husband's administration.[65] In this instance, the President's "ambassador to black America," clearly mirrored her husband's.[66] For his part, Franklin Roosevelt was strongly opposed to the march, mostly on grounds that it threatened national security and the stability of his political party. In other words, Roosevelt was committed to doing as little as possible to have the event canceled because the threatened protest had the potential to incite a race riot in segregated Washington, D.C., provoke Dixiecrat outrage upsetting his party's delicate balance, and be used as Axis propaganda. Another way of understanding Eleanor Roosevelt's position on MOWM can be seen through the opinions of Fiorello LaGuardia. Like the First Lady, New York's mayor stood "in opposition to the movement," and he agreed with Eleanor Roosevelt "that the President should take some executive action."[67]

Walter White ensured that the Roosevelt Administration was in tune with "the seriousness of the situation…particularly in the industrial phases of the defense program" through private correspondence and public awareness campaigns.[68] White was no stranger to the Roosevelt administration, and he used his familiarity to urge the President to support legislation in January 1941 that anticipated the FEPC.[69] Though a Southern-dominated Senate was unlikely to approve of anything

that checked racial discrimination, Senate Resolution 75 proposed assigning eight senators to investigate "the participation of Negro citizens in all industrial and other phases of the national-defense program."[70] Other than using senators instead of civilians, Senate Resolution 75 established a precedent for number of investigators in FEPC (8) and anticipated the agency's scope as primarily an investigative body that relied on moral suasion.[71]

It is debatable whether White led a campaign priming the Roosevelt Administration to act on racial discrimination or the President manipulated White and Randolph, and by extension African Americans, into thinking that they actually shaped public policy. The terse tone of a one-sentence memo from Aubrey Williams to Eleanor Roosevelt at the President's retreat in Campobello, Maine, places the locus of energy driving E.O. 8802 on MOWM. The entire text of Williams' telegram is "executive order concerning the Randolph situation was signed today," which indicates that the White House saw the threatened protest as the reason for presidential intervention in anti-discrimination employment law.[72] Still, it is unlikely but plausible that Randolph pressured the Oval Office so much that it had to respond affirmatively, and that it did so through consulting with White instead of Randolph.

Locating primary agency for the creation of E.O. 8802 is further complicated when considering that MOWM's threat to protest corresponded with NAACP's wartime campaign to educate the public and the President about the impact of racial discrimination on African American morale.[73] The combination of pressure from Randolph and White, two of the nation's two most recognizable African American

leaders, caused Aubrey Williams and Wayne Coy to invite "a group of us" to confer in the Capitol to discuss "the very serious situation with respect to employment of Negroes…for the national defense program."[74] Documents do not indicate if Randolph was aware that federal officials were already crafting Executive Order 8802, but it is certain that Randolph knew "it [E.O. 8802] never happened until the March on Washington movement was launched." As the end product of a threat to march on Washington, Randolph saw the "FEPC [as] the creature of the struggle of the Negro masses."[75] Regardless of what he thought could be accomplished by staging a demonstration, Randolph prepared to go into any meeting with Roosevelt demanding "an Executive Order at the time of the Conference." This was imperative because, in his opinion, "the Solid South" could be counted upon to block similar legislation even if the President proposed it.[76]

Delineating singular spheres of power that African American leaders had within the Roosevelt administration is difficult, if not impossible, because their programs and personalities complimented each other so well. Randolph's mass pressure forced public discourse about racial inequality during the fight against Fascism while Walter White's long association with the Roosevelts made him an obvious bargaining partner with the President. Missing from most discussions of E.O. 8802's passage is Mary McLeod Bethune, who was publicly absent during the negotiations. Still, as evidenced by her appearance at the podium of a MOWM rally in New York, Bethune at least mildly supported Randolph's agenda.[77] Bethune's leadership style was that of an organization builder and institution maintainer who,

as put Bethune scholars Audrey Thomas McCluskey and Elaine M. Smith, had a penchant for "fierce and opportunistic patristic partisanship."[78]

Mary McLeod Bethune was a notable exception in the Roosevelt Administration because she publicly supported MOWM since its early days, speaking at its rallies and lending her powerful image to the organization's reputation. Bethune did not indiscriminately seek publicity with every fly-by-night African American protest organization, and her presence at MOWM's biggest events gave the organization immediate credibility. Mindful of her insider status with the Roosevelt administration as head of the NYA and her close friendship with the First Lady, Bethune functioned as an unaffiliated mediator between MOWM and the federal government when she wrote Roosevelt praising E.O. 8802 as "a refreshing shower in a thirsty land."[79] Randolph recognized Bethune's power and made sure to stay in her good graces. In one instance, he wrote Bethune thanking her for her support and to assure that "the meetings which we are holding are not in any way intended to hinder the war."[80]

It seems reasonable that as the highest paid African American in federal government during the Roosevelt years, Bethune believed in top-down social change facilitated through the political system's established channels.[81]
Bethune was not present at the meeting where male leadership got together and discussed ways to prevent the march, but Roosevelt clearly respected her opinion. In fact, Bethune's recommendation for the first FEPC appointees strongly influenced the agency. Despite Randolph's wishes, it was unlikely that more than one African American would be appointed to this new federal agency. Randolph also could not

convince Roosevelt to nominate his first choice for this symbolically important position, Milton P. Webster.[82] For all of the publicity Randolph commanded, the Roosevelt administration followed Mary McLeod Bethune's recommendation and named Chicago alderman, attorney, and Urban League official Earl Dickerson the first African American to serve on the FEPC.[83] Not surprisingly, Randolph and other MOWM members were "unalterably opposed" to Dickerson's appointment because he and other Urban League officials "openly knocked the march."[84] Local MOWM members like T.D. McNeal joined the chorus of critics, calling Dickerson "a weakling" who could not be relied upon to stand up to White members of the commission that was already having its commitment to racial equality questioned.[85]

The complicated interaction of mass pressure politics, political insider maneuvering, and top-down federal manipulation make designating agency in the struggle for E.O. 8802 difficult. There is possibility for historical revisionism in the fact that Aubrey Williams and Wayne Coy invited Walter White and "a group of us" to Washington over three months before Randolph's threatened march. This could be interpreted as Washington insiders being involved in negotiating E.O. 8802 long before Randolph arrived in the Oval Office for the conference with Roosevelt in which the march was called off.[86] Conclusive evidence is lacking but it is not inconceivable that White, not Randolph, had the upper hand on President Roosevelt. It is also possibly, though less likely, that White practiced Machiavellian politics in which Randolph and incalculable African Americans were convinced that their protests were the driving force behind E.O. 8802 when, in fact, it could have been written long in advance. The fact that over three months before E.O. 8802 was

officially drafted, White gave Roosevelt a list of African Americans who should meet with him in the Capitol could be interpreted in a number of ways, especially since Randolph's name heads that list. Even though evidence is inconclusive, it is at least possible that the historic meeting between African American leaders and members of the Roosevelt administration was scripted – and everyone but Randolph knew it.[87] Unlikely though it may seem, if this were the case, White was vindicated as an African American leader with bona fide political power within the Roosevelt administration – a drastic change from when Stephen Early called him "one of the worst and most continuous of trouble makers."[88]

All accounts of the June 18, 1941 event recognize the presence of Walter White and Randolph in Roosevelt's office that afternoon, but reports from the Black media and the White House visitor's log expand the list to include Frank Crosswaith, and Layle Lane as present at the meeting "to open the employment rolls of an already booming war industry to Negro workers."[89] Other sources also name Rev. William Lloyd Imes of the St. James Presbyterian Church, Lester Granger of the Urban League, Richard Parrish of the Association of Negro College Students of New York, Rayford Logan of nearby Howard University, J. Finley Wilson of the Elks, Adam Clayton Powell, and New York union men Noah Walters and E.E. Williams as present at the White House that day.[90] These men may have accompanied Randolph, White, and Lane to the White House or to the Capitol, but they certainly did not attend the closed-door meeting. A speech from Randolph provides yet a third account of those attending. This list includes himself, Stimson, Knox, Knudson, Hillman, LaGuardia, Anna Rosenberg, Aubrey Williams, Lane, White, and President Roosevelt.[91]

Whoever was there, all accounts corroborate that they were joined by Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Secretary of Navy Frank Knox, William Knudson and Sidney Hillman of the Office of Production Management, Aubrey Williams from the National Youth Administration, and Anna Rosenberg from the Social Security Board – all of whom supported Roosevelt in urging Randolph to cancel the march.[92] In a telephone discussion with Randolph, Williams even went so far as to advise Randolph to cancel the march until he met with the President. Randolph, possibly unaware of efforts within the federal government to thwart MOWM's protest, wrote President Roosevelt two days later, defying Aubrey Williams' "suggestion that I stop…mobilization for the march, pending conference with you." It seems that Randolph thought that federal officials stood in his way but that the President could be convinced of his cause.[93]

Strangely, there is no verbatim transcript of this historic meeting in any of the archival holdings consulted for this project. Unfortunately, historians have long relied on reminiscences from Randolph and White to piece a narrative of the proceedings together.[94] The problematic result is that historians are left with accounts of this event that are so melodramatic as to almost be unbelievable. This historical product is a useful but ultimately unverifiable myth that, if nothing else, correctly portrays E.O. 8802 as wrested from the hands of a reluctant Roosevelt. It speaks to the fear that federal officials had of the consequences, both in terms of public image and the potential for violence, that were worst possible outcomes of the march. The lack of corresponding documentary evidence from the Roosevelt Administration leaves open the possibility of speculation that the event was staged

to depict the ritual of an oppressed minority appealing to the executive branch to redress an injustice that clearly hampered the country's ability to prepare for and execute a war.

The only White House record of a meeting between Randolph and Roosevelt during the time frame of Randolph's proposed march is for June 18, 1941. While there is discrepancy about who was present, it is reasonably certain that the historic forty-five minute meeting at which the executive order was hashed out was preceded by an extended discussion between LaGuardia and Roosevelt in the President's office earlier that day. There is no documentary evidence of what they convened about, but Randolph's ability to stage the threatened rally is a likely topic. Earlier that month the President's Secretary Stephen Early sought Wayne Coy, Office of Emergency Management, for help getting LaGuardia "to exercise his persuasive powers to stop it (the proposed March)."[95] Early identified LaGuardia because he has "great influence with New York Negroes" and could "convince them that there is a better means of presenting their case…than the proposed march on Washington."[96] With only two weeks to go before the scheduled protest, LaGuardia was quickly "at work in an effort to prevent the march."[97]

From the standpoint of a Roosevelt Administration that wanted to get the march cancelled with as few consolations as possible so that Southern Democrats would not be alienated, involving LaGuardia was brilliant.[98] It was LaGuardia, for instance, who recommended that Roosevelt, Stimson, Knox, Knudson, and Hillman meet with White and Randolph "to thresh it out right then and there" and advised that only affirmative action from the President could get the march cancelled.[99]

Although Wayne Coy's assessment that "I may be overly optimistic" about the chances of placating MOWM with an investigating committee, he was convinced that "if we could give assurances that this resolution could be passed and the committee set up, that we might be able to prevent the march on Washington scheduled for July 1."[100] As someone who "kept closely in touch with the negro problem since…they became troublesome in connection with the Army and Selective Service," Coy believed that he could get the march cancelled with minimal concessions. Coy was convinced that an OPM circular distributed amongst defense contractors and a letter from the President to the NAACP for distribution at their annual convention would do "a good deal to eliminate the urgency behind the proposed march."[101] With this in mind, Coy advised Roosevelt, "the Barbour Resolution (S.R. 75) is the only thing which they could hope to gain."[102] If MOWM's demonstration occurred, Coy's correspondence with other high-ranking officials would only be slightly relevant idle talk among bureaucrats and the power elite. This is, of course, not the case, because the Barbour Resolution (Sen. Res. 75) was used a model for E.O. 8802. The only significant difference between this failed legislation and E.O. 8802 was that civilian appointees, not senators, served as investigators.[103]

LaGuardia succeeded at his task and he left behind the most convincing evidence that E.O. 8802 was hashed out weeks before Randolph and White's official meeting with Roosevelt and his officials. LaGuardia was one party of a meeting among White House insiders who met to find a way to placate MOWM without upsetting the status quo. The remaining roster for this meeting also included Secretary of the Navy Knox, Secretary Stimson, Mr. Hillman, Mr. Knudson, Aubrey

Williams, and Anna Rosenberg. As a whole, they believed that gesturing towards integrating the armed forces was impractical because "little, if anything could be done…to change existing conditions." The committee recommended that Roosevelt issue an Executive Order attaching a "no discrimination clause" is included "in all future contracts or extensions, renewals, or modifications of existing contracts." They advised the President that a "Grievance Committee" be established that had investigative resources and remedial resources at its disposal.[104] Roosevelt's advisors on the issue urged him to eschew modifying the military's racial policy but encouraged him to exert federal influence in private industry.

Predictably, representatives from the military opposed the platitudes that became E.O. 8802 with the argument that the law was unenforceable. The War Department shaped the content of E.O. 8802 as much as MOWM forced the law's conception. Under Secretary of War Robert Patterson and Under Secretary of Navy James Forrestal, "While…in sympathy with the policy," opposed it on grounds that it was unenforceable in the South, that labor unions sometimes presented as much of a barrier to employment as management, and that "It would be most unwise to cancel contracts for munitions urgently needed because of a breach of this clause." Thus, the War Department influenced E.O. 8802 and FEPC by advising the President that "Any board set up to hear grievances should not have the power to direct cancellation of any defense contract."[105] Their position was crucial in the conception of an executive order that some critics said was "toothless" and that blatantly avoided meddling in the military's notorious racial policies.[106] Nevertheless, the FEPC's lifespan correlated with rises in the number of African

Americans employed with defense contractors. More impressively, the war years also witnessed the number of African American civil servants triple.[107] While one may write this off as chronological coincidence, it is likely that FEPC's presence was a factor in this increase.

Aside from the President, opposition came from other New Dealers.[108] In 1942, for instance, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes denied MOWM's application to use grounds surrounding the Lincoln Memorial for a protest.[109] Ickes' decision made it illegal for MOWM to assemble anywhere near the National Mall. His lack of support was undoubtedly a factor in Randolph's decision to cancel yet another MOWM rally in the Capitol the following year, and partially explains why the organization was weak in the city where it mattered most. Randolph was surprised by his inability to secure a permit for his organization to use public lands. As noted by the African American press, only three years earlier Ickes allowed contralto Marian Anderson to sing on the Lincoln Memorial's steps when the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to let her use their concert hall.[110] Ickes' divergent responses to a symbolically important African American concert and a proposed mass protest during sensitive war years illustrate how officials tied to Roosevelt were often in congruence with the President's wishes.

Randolph and White had a history of working as a team in high-level talks before their collaborations with MOWM. They previous year, they, along with T. Arnold Hill, met with Roosevelt to explore greater opportunities for African Americans in national defense. This ultimately unfruitful discussion resulted in a promise from Roosevelt to investigate the problem.[111] Worse, in the tandem's eyes,

was that the White House bungled media relations about the event, sparking outrage from NAACP, Randolph, and the African American press.[112] White and Randolph advocated complete integration of the U.S. military without limitations. They called for more African American officers and specialized personnel, as well as greater representation of African American women as nurses and Red Cross employees.[113] Patterson claimed that this was "an experiment worth trying and one which might be made a success," but Knox argued that close living quarters aboard naval vessels rendered integrating African Americans impractical. Roosevelt prodded Knox along and convinced him "to look into the possibilities." White and Randolph's case of equal opportunity and a more efficient fighting force failed to win Knox over, but he was open to Roosevelt's suggestion that African American bands be used as "an opening...since it would accustom white sailors to the presence of Negroes on ships."[114] The 1940 discussions about integrating America's fighting forces created a climate of distrust between African American leaders and the federal government that shaped MOWM's program the following year. Without popular support and the threat of disruptive political action, they went into hardball negotiations armed with little than moral capital and they walked away from the fiasco with only the experience gained in dealing with the Roosevelt administration.

Regardless of how much federal officials meddled in authoring E.O 8802, it seems that Randolph extracted the greatest possible yield from the threatened march. The confluence of a wartime crisis in international relations, Roosevelt's political need to solidify his standing among Black voters, the possibility of racial violence in the Capitol's streets, and the likelihood that at least one side of the

struggle was aware that the march could be cancelled by creating a small, understaffed federal agency all contributed to MOWM's meteoric rise and success. As pointed out by Benjamin Quarles, another factor behind MOWM's rapid ascent into the constellation of Black protest organizations was that MOWM and Randolph tapped into a century-long tradition of African American protest that utilized strong rhetoric and the threat of disrupting public life to compensate for operating out of a politically weak power base.[115] In the context of relatively weak traditional political power, MOWM was in the vanguard of a wartime trend in which the number of African Americans in defense industries rose from 8.4 percent to 12.5 percent. Randolph and others recognized that E.O. 8802 and FEPC were far from adequate implements to annihilate racial inequality, but it was understood that this was the most Roosevelt was prepared to offer.[116]

The meeting on June 18, 1941, established that neither Roosevelt nor military leadership was ready to capitulate on the issue of integrating the armed forces. Even though Randolph frequently lashed out publicly against the hypocrisy of segregating the military, he knew that the issue was unlikely to make any progress because it was so strongly opposed by the military's top brass.[117] Evidence that Roosevelt's concessions in 1941 were the limit of what he thought he could give is the fact that he rejected subsequent requests for another meeting by individuals who were involved in MOWM. In September 1942, Randolph, Walter White, Channing Tobias, and J. Finley Wilson failed to get an audience at the White House. Their snubbing was probably due to the fact that the President saw nothing else that he could offer or they could gain by a meeting.[118] Their failure to even get the

President to sit with them drove a weekly *Defender* columnist to write, "The Bukra in the big house have decided the darklings were bluffing all along about that March-on-Washington."[119] In just over a year, MOWM's political capitol plummeted to the point where the organization was unable to solicit a sympathetic ear from federal officials. Additional research is needed to more firmly establish why Roosevelt chose to not meet with a small crowd of men whom he was all familiar with, but it is reasonable to surmise that Roosevelt believed an unproductive meeting was worse than no meeting at all. Rather than risk being seen as unresponsive to demands from national African American leaders, he elected to appear unaware.

Dissent Within the Ranks

The FBI reported that "The Left attacked Randolph" when MOWM went on record affirming its all-Black membership policy.[120] *The Daily Worker* led the attack criticizing MOWM as a group of "Negro Social Democrats and reformists" who had reasonable complaints but espoused misguided and poorly directed programs. Instead of working towards a genuine worker's state, MOWM was criticized for unwisely fighting to integrate Black Americans into "the bidding of the very wealthy jimcrow interests…responsible for the whole system of national oppression."[121] The campaign continued for over a year with Black Communist James Ford acting as the most vocal critic of MOWM and Randolph's anti-communism, which alleged that "the Communist Party seeks only to rule or ruin a movement…Communists constitute a pestilence, menace, and nuisance to the Negro people."[122] Albert Parker

was another African American critic from the Left. Like Ford, he used words as weapons, authoring a pamphlet-length critical assessment of MOWM.[123] It is worth noting that even though Randolph's vehement anti-communism drew ire from some of the Left, it satisfied the FBI and convinced the agency to desist its investigation of the minutia in Randolph's daily life because "he has been outspoken in his anti-Communist opinions."[124]

The NNC was strongly opposed to Randolph's decision to call off the march and it was the most vocal organizational voice of dissent to Randolph's top-down leadership in MOWM's formative days.[125] NNC's oppositional stance towards Randolph is understandable considering that he recently left the organization, citing too strong a Communist influence for him to remain its leader. Randolph burned his bridges on the way out, criticizing the NNC as "not a true Negro Congress."[126] The NNC condemned E.O. 8802 as "weasel words" amounting to a "meaningless gesture that will not result in getting a single skilled Negro worker a job…in Jim Crow defense industries" and denounced Roosevelt's light handling of industrialists who violated the order as "polite phrases which fool nobody."[127] NNC leadership was intrigued with the idea of marching on the capitol, but it did not want Randolph credited for leading the demonstration.[128] NNC's attempt to upstage Randolph and MOWM was their retaliation towards him for making it well known among readers of the Black press that Communists were not welcome in his new organization, denouncing them as "a definite menace, pestilence and nuisance," who "will be promptly marched out" of any MOWM branch that they tried to join.[129]

The pamphlet that perhaps best expresses the critical support that African American radicals had for MOWM is Henry Pelham's "On to Washington for Negro Rights." Published by the Workers Party, Pelham's writing is peppered with quotes from Marx and demands an inter-racial workers struggle. Pelham argued that Black and White Americans should support the demonstration but cautiously "watch A. Philip Randolph" and make sure that he does not steer the organization into Democratic partisan loyalty. Pelham was also afraid that demonstrating in the Capitol could be interpreted by some as "loyalty of Negroes…anxious to die for Jim-Crow democracy." This blind loyalty was not to be confused with commitment to "express our love and admiration for the New Deal" or to "want to go to war to pull Britain's chestnuts out of the fire."[130]

Fissures developed within MOWM because some members, particularly the youth division, took exception to Randolph unilaterally canceling the march.[131] Everett Thomas, Hope Williams, and Richard Parrish were all members of the NAACP and MOWM. They represented a faction of young activists who were disappointed because "The March heightened the ambitions and pent-up emotions of the Negro masses as never before." Their frustration is understandable. After all, people like Thomas, William, and Parrish dedicated time to generate enthusiasm for an event that was suddenly indefinitely postponed. They took issue with Randolph and the national committee for not "consulting the Negro masses through their local committees as to whether or not the March should have been postponed."[132] Randolph, a member of the NAACP Youth Committee, responded to their criticism with an attack of his own.[133] He accused them of being more committed to

theoretical and academic questions about protest than of facilitating an effective demonstration.[134] Bayard Rustin and Richard Parrish, both of whom worked closely with Randolph, were vocal in their opinion that the march should have been postponed for ninety days instead of being called of. According to some historical accounts, they "accused Randolph of selling out to Roosevelt."[135] It is worth mentioning that even though Rustin disagreed with Randolph on this matter, MOWM marked the beginning of a productive working relationship between the two that lasted three decades. According to his biographer, Rustin even called his activism during the Second World War, "one of the most important things I ever did."[136]

Youth and radicals were not Randolph's only critics. Prominent NAACP members including Charles Hamilton Houston and Roy Wilkins were staunchly opposed to racial qualifiers in MOWM's membership policy.[137] As Jerry Gershenhorn demonstrated, many Black media outlets turned on MOWM after Randolph cancelled the march.[138] When not publishing outright criticism of the organization, they simply kept the organization out of headlines. Through most of 1942, information about MOWM was difficult to find in many of the most widely circulated African American newspapers. Their silence was shaken by the 1943 riots in Detroit and Harlem. That same summer, Chicago hosted MOWM's "We Are Americans, Too," conference, at which the idea of a massive civil disobedience campaign attacking racial segregation and inequality was introduced. One study of African American newspapers demonstrated that major print media sources in Norfolk and Pittsburgh attacked Randolph's plan as unwise, untimely, and not worth

the risk of instigating a wave of racial violence.[139] Even George McCray, the *Defender's* labor columnist, jumped on the swelling bandwagon. He ridiculed Randolph and Webster as embittered aging men who "find joy in just plain mischief making" by advocating potentially destructive protest tactics.[140] In a less antagonistic but still unfavorable review of MOWM's Chicago rally in 1942, McCray identified two flaws with the organization– it overemphasized racial problems in America at the cost of not condemning the Axis menace and it downplayed the presence of sympathetic liberal Whites when discussions of "crackerism" came up.[141] Even when MOWM shifted its attention towards sponsoring smaller local protests, some writers criticized the organization's core belief that public protest could check wartime racism as a program that "would invite disaster."[142]

Albert Parker, George McCray, and Henry Pelham were minority voices of dissent. Indeed, most African American columnists and writers supported MOWM, especially in its early years. *Washington Tribune* columnist M. Beaunorus Tolson, for instance, wanted to throw "moral sissies and black judases...Sambos and Aunt Hagars" into the Potomac River for not supporting MOWM.[143] With less partisan rhetoric, historian Melinda Chateauvert concluded that "to African Americans, the Executive Order symbolized the President's willingness to act on issues of racial justice." Her opinion echoes Louis Ruchames, who argued that E.O. 8802 gave African Americans "cause to believe in democracy in America."[144]

Randolph simply could find no way to please or appease everybody. He knew that "many of [his] followers were disappointed at the postponement" and he understood that they worked hard to drum up support for the demonstration.[145]

As a racial leader with strong grassroots connections, Randolph was in tune with his ideological impulses among politically engaged African Americans. He addressed their concerns though a series of essays in the *Chicago Defender* called "A Reply to My Critics." Although columnists from the *Defender* sometimes challenged Randolph, the paper was generally supportive. In fact, the six-part "Reply To My Critics" series was proposed by the *Defender* in response to an assault by the *Courier* calling Randolph's proposal for massive civil disobedience "suicidal."[146] Randolph's "Reply To My Critics" essays ridiculed the *Courier* and its supporters as "petty black bourgeoisie" who failed to recognize the significance of mass meetings as vehicles of raising consciousness that ultimately inspired action. Randolph used his soapbox to defend his philosophy of self-help, mass mobilization, and non-partisan political pressure exerted through public demonstrations. He emphasized intangible but important accomplishments. Instead of crediting his organization's role in creating the much-maligned FEPC, Randolph fell back on the immeasurable but no less important argument that MOWM fostered a profound existential change in many African Americans who were inspired by his organization's call to "shake up Official Washington."[147] Randolph explained that MOWM empowered "the voiceless and helpless" by forming them into a collective body. To him, the presence of "the forgotten black man" who came to "meeting after meeting" to tell "an earnest and eager crowd about jobs he sought but never got…how he had gone to the gates of defense plants only to be kept out while white workers walked in" represented an important shift in the values of Black communities. By drawing attention away from an FEPC that Randolph's critics thought was useless, he redirected the spotlight

onto how MOWM created a place where "little men can tell their story their own way."[148]

1942: Institutionalizing the Movement

MOWM's self-proclaimed "monster mass meeting" at the Madison Square Garden on June 16, 1942 was the first in a series of three major rallies that also took place in Chicago and St. Louis.[149] Attended by a cumulative total of over 30,000 people, some saw these rallies as creating a united community of energetic African American activists while others interpreted the rallies as a way to blow off steam and satisfy activists with theatrical protest.[150] To Benjamin McLaurin, an officer in both MOWM and BSCP, these rallies were "a warning and lesson to white America that Negroes are not going to take a licking from Jim Crow lying down."[151] Though well-attended enough to make it "the first public expression of approval" for MOWM's program, the event was somewhat of a let down because the number of speakers on the program made the event last close over five hours - leaving Randolph's keynote without sufficient time to address the crowd.[152]

As coordinator of the Madison Square Garden Rally, Hedgeman slotted Randolph to take the stage no later than 10:30. Randolph's keynote was scheduled to come immediately after Dick Campbell's playlet starring Lorenzo Tucker, "Watchword is Forward."[153] Tucker's appearance that evening did not garner many headlines even though New York MOWM leader Lawrence Ervin congratulated him for playing a lead role "carried out to perfection the main objective of that Mass meeting." Tucker's performance and Randolph's silence took a back seat in accounts

of the event to Adam Clayton Powell's long-winded oration in which he announced his candidacy for a hotly contested Congressional seat.[154] The *Chicago Defender* noted that the event was "kept as completely Negro in makeup as possible," with no White speakers on the program and few in the audience.[155] Even without a stirring oration from Randolph, the Madison Square Garden rally introduced a new African American legislator and demonstrated that there was still zeal for mass protest politics.

Randolph thought that the high attendance at rallies in Harlem and Chicago indicated that MOWM was "ready to consider the next step in terms of policy."[156] Even though the NAACP warned Randolph that it could not be counted on to back "another permanent dues-paying, duplicating organization," Randolph was confident that enough people were enthusiastic about MOWM to give the upstart organization a chance.[157] The question of whether or not MOWM could maintain an independent personality from the NAACP remained to be seen.[158]

It had been over a year since the initial march was called off and the national organization accomplished little since it first made headlines. Randolph called a policy convention in Detroit to take place in September 1942. The first order of business was "to draft a constitution and by-laws" establishing an institutional bureaucracy.[159] The event was intentionally kept small so that the most dedicated members from MOWM's two dozen local chapters cold draft and adopt an organizational constitution.[160] The conference was not designed to host large crowds or send delegates home amped for agitating. Its function was to create an organizational framework and define MOWM's goals and tactics. The delegates

adopted a broad program outlined by more than thirty resolutions which included an affirmation of the organization's opposition to accepting "donations from any people except Negroes," a repudiation of communism, and an agreement of all locals to act together and coordinate a national protest at the behest of A. Philip Randolph.[161] The end result of the conference, according to a small column in the *Defender*, was a the creation of "a program of action…for progressive steps in the fight to break down jim-crowism in the government, armed forces, and industry."[162] St. Louis MOWM members T.D. McNeal, David Grant, Thelma Grant, Harold Ross, Joseph McLemore, Jordan Chambers, and Boyd Wilson made sure that the Gateway City was well-represented in Detroit to shape the fledgling organization's policy and guide its institutionalization.[163] Local activists such as those listed above were MOWM's lifeblood from then on. While Randolph could be criticized for heavy-handed leadership when the march was cancelled in 1941, the organization was subsequently driven by the demands and energy of its individual chapters.

The Detroit conference was a turning point in MOWM's relationship with NAACP's national office. Though entrenched in the ranks of Black protest for over three decades, the elder organization handled MOWM cautiously while it made the transition from "a coalition of agencies cooperating during the war emergency" into a permanent and potentially rival member-supported organization. NAACP's board of directors believed that MOWM's existence threatened to undercut its own membership base. NAACP saw its organizational identity at stake, as much of MOWM's eight-point program "duplicates existing organizations." Detroit marked, therefore, the decisive moment when NAACP withdrew its financial and

organizational support, such as assigning paid staff to assist MOWM's campaigns.[164] NAACP kept this "growing breech" out of the public eye but careful observers noticed the change.[165] Prior to MOWM's institutionalization, Walter White and A. Philip Randolph appeared together often. After the Detroit conference, the most common interaction between national figures was occasional correspondence between offices. NAACP distanced itself from MOWM so much that by the time of MOWM's 1943 "We Are Americans, Too" conference in Chicago, Roy Wilkins stopped in not as an invited speaker or as a distinguished visitor, but as a veritable spy who was gauging MOWM's ability to present a long-term threat to NAACP.[166]

CHAPTER 3

1943: "WE ARE AMERICANS, TOO" AND THE FORMULATION OF NON-VIOLENT GOODWILL DIRECT ACTION

"If present conditions continue, we will have to march on Washington whether we like it or not."

– T.D. McNeal, 1943[1]

By mid-war, many African-American newspapers turned on MOWM and distanced themselves from Randolph.[2] Even *Defender* columnist Charlie Cherokee, a longtime MOWM booster, called the organization "fat and flabby" after the network of organizational support fled MOWM.[3] MOWM's push for institutionalization alienated groups like the NAACP, but there was additional rumbling from unnamed sources that MOWM's highly publicized all-Black membership policy was unacceptable to many of the organization's members.[4] The latter criticism is questionable in light of the fact that MOWM's membership voted overwhelmingly for a racially exclusive policy the previous year, but it is worth noting that only a portion of its members made the trek to what one resident called "the northernmost southern city" to serve as delegates.[5] An attitude of racial militancy was in the air, prompting one Motor City member to complain, "In plain unvarnished language a large group of these stiff shirts and so called Negro aristocracy are afraid to develop a movement…solely controlled by and for Negroes."[6] Given the tendency for disparity between national office policy and local practice that played out several times in St. Louis MOWM's history, it is very likely that softer racial rhetoric and

more lenient adherence to organizational policy occurred in a number of the organization's twenty-six branches.

Randolph articulated MOWM's racial membership policy with a blend of anti-Communism and guarded Black nationalism. He used the rhetoric of "self-reliance" to argue that exclusively Black organizations were needed to confront the "slave psychology and inferiority complex in Negroes" that he said pushed him out of the National Negro Congress.[7] Organizations like the FOR, which were still friendly towards MOWM, criticized its decision to restrict membership to African Americans. Bayard Rustin, then a young admirer of Randolph, warned the elder activist against trending towards a dangerous and unsustainable "black nationalism" that reflected "the average Negro's [loss of] faith in middle-class whites" and disillusion with gradual reform programs.[8] Langston Hughes, a dues-paying MOWM member himself, provided a different brand of criticism. Even though he financially and morally supported the fledgling organization, his *Chicago Defender* column enumerated "two things against it…they do not admit white people, and their leader, A. Philip Randolph, is always attacking Russia."[9] Charles Hamilton Houston privately criticized MOWM on similar grounds. He wrote Randolph "to record the fact I oppose the exclusion of all white people" from MOWM's membership and operations. Houston appreciated that MOWM had to avoid being labeled as a Communist front but he pointed out "that there are Negro Communists" who will not be thwarted by adopting controversial racial criteria.[10] It should be pointed out that there was sometimes discrepancy between MOWM's national policy and it's local implementation. In one particularly poignant instance, BSCP official and

MOWM officer Bennie Smith reported that Detroit MOWM believed that "not a great deal can be done in a movement of this nature without white people's participation" and thus accepted "two white people, man and woman" as members.[11]

"We Are Americans, Too"

The following year was a busy season for conferences. In June, the NAACP held an "Emergency Conference on the Status of the Negro in the War." That same summer, MOWM chose Chicago as a host for its national conference, "We Are Americans, Too."[12] Advertisements for the event, its program, and the resolutions passed emphasized claims to full citizenship as it was understood within the context of race and national identity at that time.[13] Even the title of the conference, "We Are Americans, Too," was a radical act in a country where the term "American" was long synonymous with "white."[14] Randolph wanted to use the conference to discuss methods of fighting segregation in the military, outline MOWM's protest tactics, and conduct business pertinent to the organization's national affairs. To some extent, all of this occurred, but delegates spent a considerable amount of time debating the role of Whites in the organization and learning about non-violent to direct action.[15] The presence of delegates and the type of discussions they fomented affirmed that the previous year's policy conference in Detroit was significant and that the organization intended to join the ranks of permanent African American protest organizations. African American reporters covered the proceedings thoroughly, but they paid less attention to the fact that this marked a decisive and final rupture in

MOWM's tenuous coalition with NAACP's national office and National Urban League.[16]

Randolph described non-violent civil disobedience as a "revolutionary…methodology and technique" of theatrical protest that capitalized on being "unusual, extraordinary, dramatic, and drastic." This remarkable measure was necessary because other programs proved unsuccessful in the push to shape public opinion and transform perceptions of race.[17] Because "the unusual attracts" and size matters, Randolph repeatedly called for "huge demonstrations because the world is used to big dramatic affairs."[18] To this end, Bayard Rustin and J. Holmes Smith from the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a secular pacifist organization, were invited to give lengthy presentations outlining the philosophy and practice of non-violent direct action.[19] Their performance that evening satisfied the audience, and all 104 credentialed delegates supported MOWM's foray into this protest methodology.[20]

MOWM's advocacy of widespread non-violent civil disobedience had little precedent in African American history and, according to historian Gerald Gill, probably did not resonate strongly with a generation of African Americans living "in an era of continued white violence directed against blacks."[21] Unlike Gandhi's battle to overthrow a colonizer, MOWM saw itself as essentially reformist. Rather than overthrow the existing order, MOWM wanted to "maintain American civil government because wherever it ceases to function; mob law reigns and Negroes become victims."[22] Thus, MOWM's case for "a broad national program based on non-violent civil disobedience and non-cooperation" was modeled on Gandhi's

struggle, but the rationale was expressed in more familiar rhetoric "that a citizen is morally obligated to disobey an unjust law."[23] In short, MOWM hoped that civil disobedience could force the government to uphold existing laws. Historian Melinda Chateauvert characterized this moment as "the first national nonviolent action to demand an end to job discrimination and race segregation."[24] This dissertation agrees with *Marching Together*, and recognizes that MOWM was not wholly committed to non-violence at its inception. Instead, MOWM's dedication to this protest tactic was part of a historical trajectory that my own archival research dates back to at least January 1943.[25]

Even though an estimated 2,000 people attended the "We Are Americans, Too" conference, Milton Webster privately called it "the biggest piece of bunk that has ever happened around here."[26] Webster complained that "too many bossy dames around here" hindered preparations for the event, a comment historian Cynthia Taylor used as evidence that there was "considerable friction" along gendered fault lines in African American organizations.[27] Longtime BSCP Women's Auxiliary officer Rosina Tucker testified about the seminal role played by African American women in mixed-gender institutions. With over three decades of experience working alongside the BSCP and supporting Randolph's various civil rights campaigns, Tucker told a *Washington Post* reporter that "Very few men can do much without women."[28] With a reputation as an abrasive personality, Webster is not the most credible critic of fissures in Chicago MOWM, but he was not alone in complaining about the event. Roy Wilkins expressed concern that "We Are Americans, Too" was sloppily organized, with sessions running over time after

starting late and panels that did not address topics that the program announced.[29] Wilkins was also disturbed by the breadth of resolutions, which he thought made the organization lose focus, and by the high number of porters in attendance – which he interpreted to suggest that loyalty to Randolph was what drove MOWM.[30] As someone who attended the conference to check up on a rival institution, Wilkins must have rested a little easier when he learned from an anonymous informant that MOWM's disorganization undercut its own bottom line. At the convention "everybody was handling money…everybody was selling programs" and some unscrupulous individuals "got away" with sizable portions of the revenue.[31]

Seventeen resolutions were passed at "We Are Americans, Too." These included the usual declarations of patriotic support for the war effort coupled with disapproval of the segregated military, but there were also resolutions urging President Roosevelt "to call upon Prime Minister Churchill to give independence and freedom to the Indian peoples" and "grant suffrage throughout the British West Indies" as well as condemnations of anti-Catholicism and anti-Semitism for being "undemocratic, unsound and a dangerous form of religious bigotry."[32] While certainly productive, the We Are Americans, Too conference was not the caliber of event that Horace Cayton and others thought necessary to salvage MOWM's reputation for not following through on "hokus pokus about marching."[33]

Critical patriotism was the core of MOWM's politics and rhetoric, a position that informed the decision to have the conference's closing ceremonies occur on the Forth of July. That 2,000 individuals attended is attributable to the wartime fervor for activism in Chicago and to the fact that local activist and MOWM member Ethyl

Payne was paid $500 to organize the event.[34] Webster's opinion aside, Payne was an excellent choice for the job because she had a deep network of contacts that included other well-connected African American women like Neva Ryan and Irene Gaines, as well as porters like Charles Wesley Burton and a score of African American ministers.[35] Despite her network of socially and politically engaged residents of the Black metropolis, Webster took issue with Payne for being "all hopped up" for the program but "she has not the slightest idea of how to go about getting the money" to make the event happen.[36] A balanced depiction of Payne's prowess as an organizer based on sources consulted for this study places her in a role comparable to Randolph because she had little appreciation for financing a struggle but she was deeply respected by the people who mattered and she could get individuals to lend their bodies or talents to her programs.[37]

MOWM's strong following in the upper Midwest and the relative ease of rail access to Detroit and Chicago are major reasons why the organization chose those cities for two of its most important national conferences. The decision also indicates that the organization tried increase its visibility in places that had a politically active African American community and an array of large employers with whom battles could be fought to gain greater job opportunities. St. Louis was one of the best represented locals at both conferences. Representatives from the Gateway City brought a dozen activists to the 1943 national convention – a number rivaled only by New York and Chicago MOWM, who each brought twenty delegates.[38] As with any event requiring travel, attendees enjoyed time with friends and colleagues converging from across the country but, as one reporter noted, "the assembled

delegates and their leaders are not here in a holiday mood…they are here on cold business," with demands full recognition as citizens dominating every speech and peppering private conversations throughout the four-day convention.[39]

The Metropolitan Community Church, a Southside religious institution, hosted "We Are Americans, Too."[40] This marked the first time that MOWM used sacred space for a major event. The choice was fitting because church was an appropriate place "to ponder and discuss the use of Non-Violent Civil Disobedience as a technique for liberation."[41] Subcommittees addressed employment, lynching, and applications of non-violent direct action while nationally recognizable figures led discussions.[42] A list of speakers reads like a who's who of African American protest in the Roosevelt era that included hometown activist hero Charles Wesley Burton, T.D. McNeal of St. Louis, Senora Lawson of Richmond, and New Yorkers Lawrence Reddick and Lawrence Ervin.[43] Randolph invited E. Stanley Jones, a White missionary, to expound on non-violent civil disobedience. His presence prompted discussion of forming a place for White MOWM supporters called Friends of March on Washington Movement.[44]

Discussing Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action was a major focus of the Chicago conference because MOWM's national office wanted it to be a distinguishing feature that stood out from other groups like the NAACP, NUL, and NNC.[45] About six months before the conference, Pauline Myers issued a press release describing the new protest tactic with the hope that it could shift attention away from a march that never happened. This was part of an effort to emphasize MOWM's new mission of constructing a politically charged block of African American activists ready to take

over public space and challenge racial discrimination. MOWM's foray into non-violent civil disobedience also reflected the organization's recognition that White liberals could be incorporated into a battle that, in part, intended to alter White public opinion about race relations. Myers hoped that Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action was a vehicle through which these goals could be realized.

In the early 1940s, Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action sounded to some like a foreign ideology, and its roots in India certainly reinforced this perception. Along with Quaker missionary E. Stanley Jones and James Farmer, Myers tried to reinterpret the locus of Black responses to racial inequality and segregation since Reconstruction within the context of non-violent protest.[46] For instance, Myers argued that the Great Migration was a perfect example of what MOWM was trying to accomplish –namely, the concerted action of thousands of African Americans across the country taking steps to dramatize racial problems in the United States.[47] Ultimately, conferees in Chicago hoped that the idea of applying nonviolent protest could energize African Americans for a march that, once again in 1943, was seen as necessary and imminent in the "protest against the rising tide of anti-Negro pressure in the Country and for the abolition of Jim Crow."[48]

In a speech at a 1942 MOWM rally, Randolph told the audience a message that remained constant throughout MOWM's existence, "Negroes made the blunder of closing ranks and forgetting their grievances in the last war."[49] A young radical who took issue with Du Bois' position during the First World War, Randolph wanted to make sure that MOWM carried the torch of protest through the present conflict. Pauline Myers saw critical patriotism during wartime in a similar light. "If America

is sincere about the freedom of the world," Myers argued, "she must grant that freedom at home." For Myers, and undoubtedly for many of MOWM's members, the "hour of crisis" was conducive to progressive change in America's racial landscape. America's increasing importance in international affairs saw "the eyes of India and China" gazing towards the United States to see if the country's standing as moral leader of the free world was merited. Myers believed that observers would notice thirteen million African Americans with "patience" growing "sorely tired" about "being the white man's burden," and she hoped that White Americans would share her opinion that racial discrimination was the seminal problem in American society. As the war raged on, MOWM's operations recognized that sympathetic but silent White Americans were useful additions to the chorus of change. Under Myers' lead, the organization shifted some of its resources towards a campaign to "shape public opinion by letting the world know that the Negro is outraged by the hypocrisy" of American egalitarian ideals curtailed by the practice of Herrenvolk democracy.[50] African-American leftist James Rorty hoped "white liberalism" would have "enough vitality" to recognize the justice of equal citizenship and respond favorably to programs led by MOWM and similar organizations.[51]

MOWM proposed a national one-week boycott of "schools and institutions that have jim crow laws and patterns" to expedite the transformation of White opinions about race.[52] Though this week of boycotts never attained the scale that Randolph and Myers dreamed of, it did inspire some local activists to take action. In St. Louis, MOWM's protracted protests extended well beyond a weeklong time span. During the course of the war, African Americans in that city were ideal practitioners

of the discipline, dignity, and non-confrontational manners that MOWM's national office knew was needed for effective dramatic protest. Still, local activism was not widespread enough for MOWM to achieve its aim to "harness the flow of rising resentment and indignation of the part of Negro Americans" and transform it "into a deep spiritual force for constructive social action." Indeed, structural racism and racial discrimination would take more generations of struggle to dismantle. Still, MOWM's national office, largely through the "We Are Americans, Too" conference brought the discourse of organized non-violent civil disobedience into broader conversation among Black American activists. Sometimes, as it did in St. Louis, discussions led to practice – which in turn led to progress.[53]

Resolutions formulated in Chicago regarding finances had a lasting impact the national office. Using logic that "there is no instance of any people…winning freedom who did not have the will to pay for it in treasure, blood, and tears, and since who pays the fiddler practically always calls the time," the resolutions committee adopted a policy of economic self-reliance. MOWM went "on record as opposed to soliciting or accepting any donations from any people except Negroes." This was seen as necessary because outside financial contributions would "weaken the Negro to depend upon some other race to pay for his own rights."[54] Explicitly rejecting money coming from predominantly White sources was a good way to insulate MOWM from charges of Communist meddling. It also fit within a traditional ideological impulse that emphasized African American self-help.[55] In the end, however, it proved economically unviable. Within a year, the national office was nearly bankrupt and it had to terminate Pauline Myers' position, in part, because

MOWM could not afford to pay her. MOWM was accustomed to running on a shoestring, and finances must have been in complete shambles when the organization folded. In late 1942, Randolph confessed to St. Louis MOWM chairman T.D. McNeal, "the National March on Washington Movement hasn't got a quarter."[56] The reality of a relatively flat economic structure among African Americans in the mid-twentieth century meant that there was not much available philanthropy to sustain yet another Black protest and racial uplift group. Membership dollars were NAACP's lifeblood, but there was simply not enough money to support numerous national organizations that, as Wilkins pointed out, overlapped in their objectives.

Restricting the organization's funding to Black coffers may have doomed MOWM's own pocketbook, but the resolution to organize local marches on centers of government and defense production was a boon in cities like St. Louis, Chicago, and Detroit. Still, it was not enough to captivate the attention of America's larger Black media outlets. This was disastrous for an organization relying on the media to publicize what amounted to dramatic street theatre. Without marching on the Capitol, a place Randolph called "the head…and nerve center of the world," protests simply could not generate enough publicity to give them credibility.[57] Although St. Louis, Chicago, Richmond, Detroit, and New York had active local leadership who maintained interest in the organization, most MOWM branches were unable to generate excitement for relatively small demonstrations that did not live up to Randolph's promise of "a national disciplined and non-violent march of Negroes to demand action of our national government."[58]

Randolph justified cancelling the original March on Washington in 1941 with the argument that the organization got what it demanded. Promises that MOWM had not "abandoned the March itself" were lost on most listeners even though Randolph made a genuine effort to explain himself and his organization through a syndicated essay.[59] A top-down demand by MOWM delegates for African Americans to participate in local demonstrations simply did not inspire the grassroots ferment that was necessary to revive the organization's stature. As David Coolidge of *Labor Action* noted, "We Are Americans, Too" focused on expounding on non-violent protest techniques and recommending what critics such as himself saw as an unrealistic program.[60] Randolph's recalcitrance towards following through with the march frustrated MOWM members such as David Grant and T.D. McNeal, both of who strongly urged the organization to follow through with its namesake march. Their experience heading St. Louis MOWM is an example of committed local leaders taking action and acting as a vanguard ahead of MOWM's national office.[61]

Randolph brought MOWM back to Chicago's Metropolitan Community Church once more in 1944. This time, the occasion was a "National Non-Partisan Political Conference for Negroes" that was attended by a small number of representatives from African American religious, labor, fraternal, educational, and political institutions. Sponsored by MOWM, the conference sought to "mobilize the maximum political power of the Negro people" so that African American voters could make an impact in the highly contested election between Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie.[62] As was usual at most MOWM events, all of the speakers were African American. Ideology was certainly a factor behind Randolph's suggestion to

have the program reflect the intended audience's racial composition, but the absence of White speakers also reflected the fact that Randolph failed to get President Roosevelt, George Wallace, John Dewey, or Wendell Willkie to attend.[63] St. Louis MOWM stalwarts David Grant and T.D. McNeal were on the program, along with Thurman Dodson, Layle Lane, and Anna Arnold Hedgeman.[64]

A year prior, Randolph dedicated the sixth and final installment of his "Reply to my Critics" column in the *Defender* to advocating a national block of unaffiliated African American voters. Mincing no words in this essay, he outlined problems with the American party system as one in which "Negroes as Democrats are not very strong. Negroes as Republicans are not so strong. Negroes as Socialists or Communists are helpless."[65] Randolph criticized the two-party system because, in his opinion, "there is no fundamental difference between Democrats and Republicans, they are like two peas in a pod, two souls in a single thought-tweedledee and tweedledum."[66] After observing machine politics, he believed that neither party would "put bait on a hook for fish is has already caught."[67]

Carrying the Double Burden: Women's Work in MOWM

Just as grassroots activists made MOWM relevant in their communities, woman workers in MOWM's national office kept the organization alive by handling correspondence, writing press releases, and implementing policy. Women such as E. Pauline Myers, Anna Arnold Hedgeman, and Eugenie Settles worked directly under Randolph – and none of them lasted much longer than a year. High turnover was attributable to economic distress, job dissatisfaction, and Randolph's

notoriously poor managerial skills. Disorganization and an inability to pay the bills created a revolving door of MOWM secretaries that plagued the organization.[68] Unlike the BSCP, which had a talented and dedicated second tier of leaders to handle administrative affairs, Randolph's tendency to have "little interest in administrative work or grasp of its content" impaired MOWM's national operations beyond the point where MOWM's small staff could compensate.[69] Even the indefatigable Anna Arnold Hedgeman tired somewhat quickly from her stint with another organization headed by Randolph, the Committee for a Permanent FEPC.[70] From the beginning of her employment with MOWM's national office in December 1942, E. Pauline Myers openly discussed being "swamped with work." At the onset of her employment, Myers was responsible for locating and establishing a permanent national office, planning and facilitating mass meetings, lobbying for fair employment enforcement, fundraising, and coordinating affairs of New York's MOWM branch.[71] Myers' tenure lasted less than a calendar year, surely not enough time for her to accomplish the mission of consolidating "five million Negroes into one great mass of pressure for freedom and democracy."[72]

Randolph's disinterest with managing an office and his inability to follow through with implementation of innovative ideas is illustrated by the experience of New York MOWM. At Randolph's behest, the chapter responded to Odell Waller's execution with a silent parade that connected his experience to the twin evils of poll taxes and systematic racial violence.[73] Randolph came up with the idea and appointed Pauli Murray in charge of the program. Against Murray's advise, he took off to an NAACP convention in Los Angeles that removed him from planning or

attending the July 25, 1942 demonstration. His absence was pronounced because it came on the heels of a meeting attended by over 200 the previous month and it was MOWM's first public event in New York since a rally at Madison Square Garden.[74]

Randolph's absence that day was disastrous. While certainly capable orators and respected members of the community, Anna Hedgeman and Lawrence Ervin could not generate the audience or publicity that Randolph could. Murray and Ashley Totten all but begged him to appear, with Murray reporting that "thousands in New York" were "disappointed" with his absence. Likewise, Totten warned that the demonstration faced "collapse unless assured you will speak."[75] In a big city with a long history of African American protest, it takes the presence of a giant to get noticed – and without Randolph around, the memorial parade of 500 in Odell Waller's honor fell on deaf ears.[76] Modest attendance figures in a city renowned for large turnouts at public protests are attributable more to Randolph's inability to follow through with programs than to Murray's lack of organizing expertise.

Organizing the silent parade required all of Murray's deep resources that were built in 1940 when she coordinated an inter-racial effort by the Worker's Defense League to recognize National Sharecroppers Week.[77] With little support from the national office, Murray spent much of her time giving speeches in the streets to raise awareness about the parade.[78] Pulling off this latest event meant that Murray had to utilize a network of African American woman activists centered on the YWCA.[79] This band of sisters included social studies teacher and union leader Layle Lane, NACW member and director of the Brooklyn YWCA Anna Arnold Hedgeman, ILGWU organizer Maida Springer, and a soon to be published novelist by

the name of Ann Petry.[80] If not for her extensive connections in Harlem's Black left that networked through the YWCA, it is likely that MOWM would not have been able to respond at all to Waller's execution. This network of leftist and radical African American women pre-existed and outlasted MOWM.[81] Most notably, Springer worked as chief campaign strategist in Murray's successful bid for a seat in Brooklyn City Council in 1949.[82] In MOWM, as in the NAACP, "women were indispensible but underappreciated."[83]

Myers' final campaign for MOWM was in Washington, D.C. Benjamin McLauren visited that city's branch several months prior, reorganizing its officer corps around Thurman Dodson, Lillian Speight, Judge Houston, and Jeanetta Welch. Even with revamped leadership, McLauren disparaged the branch as "everything but organized," and explained to Randolph that "I am not at all pleased" with the paucity of protest that members of this geographically important branch generated.[84] Indeed, rebuilding DC MOWM would be a difficult job for Myers. The first two weeks saw little progress and she complained of having "practically no cooperation" from local activists who remained disillusioned with MOWM for cancelling the initial march. MOWM's most faithful member in the city, Thurman Dodson, was a committed but ineffective activist who failed to get Capitol residents to coalesce under MOWM's banner. In Myers' eyes, Dodson's integrity was unquestionable, but he "lacks the ingenuity and initiative to get the real job done." Her visit to the Capitol revealed that under Dodson's leadership "that there are exactly no members in the Washington unit…not one single individual." Faced with the task of literally building something out of nothing, Myers suggested that MOWM

either cut its losses in the Capitol and focus on sustaining momentum in more receptive locales or invest in "a tremendous educational campaign [and] membership crusade." To accomplish the latter of these ends, she met with Porters, ministers, and governing bodies of civic organizations. The crux of Myers' problem was that she appealed to leaders of other organizations to convince them to lend their credibility to her organization even though it had little political or social capitol in the area. Myers was disturbed by a pattern that developed in which important individuals seemed interested in MOWM's plans but were reluctant to align themselves with a floundering protest organization that had little to offer in return.[85]

Only two weeks after her bleak analysis of MOWM's prospects in Washington, DC, Myers' assessment was much more favorable. In the interim, she secured temporary office space for DC MOWM from an accountant who donated the front of his office on a busy thoroughfare. Additional progress was seen in the endorsement gained by an alliance of Baptist and Methodist ministers, and by Ralph Matthews of the *Baltimore Afro-American* pledging his support as Publicity Chairman for the DC-area. Myers was most excited that "people from all walks of life including students, domestics, trade unionists, business men, church men and government workers are signing up for recruiting members." Myers convinced wary DC-residents of MOWM's merits through her busy speaking schedule, with up to three appointments daily. She was ecstatic that "Washington is really waking up" as "a brand new group of people…are enlisting in the campaign," making it possible that she could foresee "getting at least 5000 members by December 1."[86]

Myers' next correspondence reveals how shocked she was to receive notification from the Steering Committee regarding her imminent dismissal. Rather than linger as a lame duck for the next month, Myers opted to stay on duty for a week. She severed her ties to MOWM immediately after satisfying a commitment to speak with an upstart but enthusiastic MOWM chapter in Buffalo.[87] Myers' solid character as an individual who did not carry grudges into the public sphere is evident in her performance during that final official act. Even with her career in crisis, Myers delivered two speeches and apparently never let anyone in Buffalo know that the organization was in the midst of transition. Jesse Taylor, a member of Buffalo MOWM's Executive Board, enthusiastically wrote Randolph with news of MOWM's recent progress. Taylor called the Sunday mass meeting "the greatest affair of its kind ever held in Buffalo" and congratulated Myers for captivating the audience by perfectly articulating MOWM's platform over the course of a ninety-minute speech. Taylor's letter to Randolph ends on an ironic note, "we're looking forward to her early return to Buffalo." Taylor's impression of Myers indicates that she was an ideal spokesperson who effectively interpreted her organization's message to a captive audience. It also speaks to her character as an organizer, for she never made her career troubles public even though she was recently dismissed from duty in the middle of an unprecedented and promising campaign.[88]

Myers' year with MOWM was a time of organizational transition. Even if the organization had trouble covering her $200 monthly salary, her presence as full-time paid staff indicated that MOWM was making strides as a permanent organization. MOWM's national office furnished locals with advice on setting up

effective and visible branches. MOWM's literature included the expected dictation of organization hierarchy and rules for electing officers that one would expect from any bureaucracy but it also recommended each branch to have its own Executive Board subdivided into the following committees: Winfred Lynn Case, Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action, Non-Partisan Political Action, Western Hemispheric Conference of Free Negroes, National March on Washington, Finance, Membership, Program, Publicity, and Advisory Committee on FEPC.[89] There appears to be little follow up, and MOWM's local chapters tended to choose issues that hit closest to home.[90]

In New York, Myers had the MOWM branch "agog" with her proposal to borrow $2,000 from local people so that MOWM could underwrite a finance campaign expected to net $25,000. She was enthusiastic, but McLauren was skeptical of "the physical ability to carry through such a program."[91] McLauren's quiet feud resurfaced the following year, when he placed blame for the poor performance of the Capitol branch on her, commenting to Randolph that "only a miracle will make possible the success of the campaign." McLauren made the issue personal, privately writing Randolph, "I am more and more discouraged about the things I hear relating to our good friend Pauline."[92] A couple weeks later, MOWM's Steering Committee called for Myers' resignation effective January 1944.

Myers' year with the organization as a full-time paid staff member was fraught with conflict, especially with McLauren, who told Randolph that Myers was "a great failure" with so little credibility that she could not "even win the support of the people she must rely upon."[93] Anna Hedgeman briefly stepped in and

temporarily filled the position. Hedgeman impressed even the most critical of observers and got "nothing but praise" during her first few days at MOWM's office.[94] Myers quickly moved on to a more lucrative position as administrative assistant in the Fraternal Order of Negro Churches. She was ambivalent towards her new employer, whom she worked for "in abeyance because of my sincere loyalty to the March on Washington Movement."[95] Instead of authoring treatises on Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action and speaking to primarily African American audiences on MOWM's behalf, Myers' now found herself lobbying Congressmen for anti-discrimination policy.[96] As with many jobs in Myers' career, this one was short-lived, and within a couple of years she left to work as J. Finley Wilson's assistant. The pattern repeated again, and she was "dropped from Elkdom on the ground that I created too much jealousy on the part of the women of the order."[97] According to her old friend Pauli Murray, Myers then picked up work with what became the United Negro College Fund, a position that she held until the mid-1950s.[98]

Myers' short but busy tenure coincided with MOWM adopting non-violent direct action as its distinguishing feature. Without marching on Washington, MOWM had to do something to merit its existence, and she was primarily responsible for communicating the organization's message to the broadest possible audience. Championing this protest tactic and tackling single-issues like Winfred Lynn's challenge to conscription into the segregated military became the organization's *raison d'être*.[99] The work required during MOWM's transition took its toll on Myers, who missed the "We Are Americans, Too" conference due to a two-week hospitalization with high blood sugar requiring insulin.[100] Physical ailments

did not detract from her commitment to fighting America's racial status quo. She remained connected to issues of race, equality, and social justice for the rest of her career.

Myers' persistent employment in progressive organizations after separating from MOWM challenges Nancy and Dwight MacDonald's lackluster appraisal of the organization's office under her direction as "the most tremendous waste of time and energy" because it lacked central planning and did not generate a reliable publication to keep membership informed about the organization's happenings.[101] Largely because MOWM's paid staff was so small, Myers was integral to its daily operations. Ironically, her absence was most strongly felt by Randolph's close friend, "the capable and hardworking" Benjamin McLaurin, on whom the burden of doing Myers' work fell.[102] Presumably, McLaurin did not mind the extra work. Even though McLaurin had to pick up most of the slack in Myers' absence, his signature joined that of Aldrich Turner, Lawrence Ervin, and Layle Lane on a memorandum criticizing Myers for being "not as successful as had been hoped and expected."[103] Indeed, there were high hopes for this young organizer from Richmond, Virginia. This "courageous, efficient, and dynamic" activist with experience working on issues of peace and justice was brought on board to work on a severely limited budget for an organization with little capacity to develop sustainable revenue.[104] Finances were in such disarray towards the end of Myers' tenure that Randolph resorted to asking all twenty-two members of MOWM's Executive Committee for a loan to establish "a sound financial basis."[105] MOWM's financial disarray was due to more to poor implementation than lack of planning. MOWM's Executive Committee drew

up an elaborate fund raising scheme that tapped existing African American institutions for financial help. This included asking pastors to have an "after collection" during their Sunday services for MOWM. This plan also included identifying and soliciting donations from professional men and women, pursuing special gifts from targeted individuals, and directing appeals to politically active Elks lodges and unions.[106] In general, revenue from membership was a small part of MOWM's overall finances. Voluntary collections at MOWM events reinforced the organizational and personal donations that barely kept the national office financially solvent.[107]

A Lost Cause: Maintaining a Local Chapter in Washington DC

The disastrous experience of MOWM's branch in Washington, D.C., is a useful example for illuminating the problems of praxis that MOWM officials like Myers experienced when they compensated for poor local leadership and tried to organize chapters from the top-down. Thurman Dodson headed MOWM's symbolically important Washington, D.C. chapter. Dodson faced unfavorable circumstances that hamstrung his efforts to create a movement in the city that was supposed to host the march. Dodson also worked alone. Unlike in other locales, Washington's NAACP branch openly refuted MOWM, refusing to assist with any planning or logistics for the demonstration. As illustrated later in this dissertation, the organizational fault line in Washington was a stark contrast to cities like St. Louis, where the most enthusiastic activists maintained membership in NAACP and MOWM. Even though the march never happened, the issue was more than a moot point because the local

NAACP remained hostile during the next couple of years. NAACP DC's wrath towards MOWM flared up in response to MOWM's exclusively Black membership policy, and "refused to endorse the march." One of the loudest critics was Gertrude Stone, a White activist who was an officer in the local NAACP.[108] Animosity flowed both ways, with Dodson doubting the NAACP's "ultimate sincerity in any cause." Like George Schuyler in the satirical novel *Black No More*, he alleged that the NAACP was overly concerned with securing permanent funding for professional agitators than actually getting important legislation passed. Without citing much evidence, Dodson charged that "the NAACP has become infiltrated with outright Communists and fellow travelers," especially in the Capitol branch.[109] Whether for ideological or political reasons, MOWM's hard and fast adherence to its all-Black policy sometimes caused the organization to lose support of important allies in a crucial city to its success. The rupture between NAACP and MOWM in Washington, D.C., persisted through a change of the guard in local NAACP leadership and dogged MOWM's efforts to organize in that city.[110] Membership statistics best illustrate MOWM's inability to capture the imaginations and gain recruitments in the most symbolically important city that the fledgling organization tried to bring its operations. 1943 FBI reports place membership at DC MOWM at a paltry twenty. In comparison, this same source identified 2,500-7,000 members in Chicago and 4,000 in St. Louis.[111]

In summer of 1941, Ralph Bunche, Rayford Logan, Rosina Tucker, Mary Church Terrell, and Jeanetta Welch joined Dodson to help make the march occur. These clubwomen, members of the labor movement, and the Black intelligentsia coalesced less than two months before the July marching date to hash out a plan for

mobilizing African Americans in the D.C. metro area. This involved placing a "key person" in charge of each of the city's quadrants. In every quadrant, there were 10 block captains who, in turn, recruited 10 members. With simple math, this plan should bring at least 1,000 marchers from every quadrant, with the exception of the Northwest, which had all of its figures doubled.[112] Without an event occurring to gauge their success, it is impossible to definitively measure the impact of their efforts. It is possible, though not necessarily likely, that the Washington Committee on Negro Protest had the capacity to get somewhere between 5,000 and 15,000 residents out supporting the march.[113] This opinion is based on the fact that little to nothing seems to have happened in the following year and the city's MOWM branch was virtually non-existent by the time Pauline Myers' abortive 1943 attempt to revive it.

Even after the July 1941 demonstration was anti-climactically cancelled, Dodson had trouble finding a place to legally demonstrate. Bureaucratic roadblocks combined with a general lack of local enthusiasm, making it difficult for Randolph to call for another march on Washington during the ensuing war years. The opposition that Dodson and others faced to getting permits for demonstrations suggests that the federal government was opposed allowing MOWM to march in the capitol at any point in the organization's life. In November 1942, red tape prohibited Dodson from leading a picket outside of the Senate. Complying with regulations meant that demonstrators could not encroach a specific distance of the building. This meant that instead of a couple hundred picketers making a visually impressive demonstration, the picket line would need 500-1000 demonstrators who could

surround the necessary one-mile circumference of the United States' highest legislative body.[114]

MOWM had trouble acquiring appropriate permits even when events were far away from the National Mall. In 1942, Washington was supposed to join Chicago and New York as sites of major MOWM rallies. Inability to secure a baseball stadium used by the MLB franchise Washington Senators forced Randolph to reconsider, and the third major rally was, perhaps propitiously, relocated to St. Louis.[115] Decades later, in correspondence between Randolph and historian Herbert Garfinkle, MOWM's national leader attributed his organization's disappointing record in the Capitol to "the conservative climate of Washington, among both white and colored people."[116] Randolph glossed over racial divisions and bureaucratic aggression from government officials, but his reminiscences complete the explanation for why one of MOWM's weakest branches was in Washington. With greater support in this important strategic and symbolic city, MOWM and Randolph would have been insulated from the charge of being paper tigers.

If DC MOWM ever had support from the local community, it was during the summer of 1941 when the organization was fresh and its message new. 2,000 people came out for a reception at the Watergate Hotel celebrating MOWM's success with the passing of E.O. 8802.[117] Orators that evening included Jeanetta Welch from the AKA Sorority, Walter White from the NAACP, Mayor LaGuardia, and, of course, a keynote address by Randolph.[118] Press accounts that evening remarked that LaGuardia praised E.O. 8802 but did not consider it "a complete victory." Otherwise, this was an "ideal night and an ideal setting" for a celebration of what was arguably

an anti-racist capstone on the New Deal.[119] Attendance that evening suggests that MOWM's ironically weak Washington chapter was the result of grassroots disillusion with Randolph's leadership after the march that they enthusiastically supported was unilaterally cancelled.

Although MOWM never actually led a march on Washington and its branch in that city was ineffective, the organization had other chapters that coordinated locally-sensitive campaigns within the broad framework of Black-led struggles against racial inequality during the Second World War. In Chicago, this impulse gave MOWM a large membership base that was ultimately crippled by internal divisions that hindered effective organizing. Likewise, in Denver there was a small but active cadre of members who tried to attack employment discrimination in public utilities, while in New York, long a hub of Black protest in the United States, MOWM confronted issues ranging from police brutality and violence against African-American GIs to employment discrimination by insurance companies. Finally, in St. Louis, this translated into a vigilant attack against racial discrimination in the hiring practices of defense plants and a sit-in campaign at area restaurants.[120]

CHAPTER 4

WARTIME ST. LOUIS AND THE GENESIS OF MOWM IN THE GATEWAY CITY

"Winning Democracy for the Negro is Winning the War for Democracy."

- MOWM Slogan[1]

In June 1942, a group of NAACP members and clubwomen in St. Louis staged public demonstrations outside of manufacturing plants that filled defense contracts but openly violated E.O. 8802 by not offering equal employment opportunity. Calling themselves the "March on Washington Movement, St. Louis unit," this "little band of Spartans" was spearheaded T.D. McNeal, David and Thelma Grant, Nita Blackwell, Ruth and Henry Wheeler, Pearl Maddux, and Leyton Weston.[2] Over the course of three years, St. Louis MOWM's pickets and protests reliably brought out 150-500 demonstrators. The diligence of activists and community support for MOWM campaigns propelled the upstart organization, in the words of historian Clarence Lang, to "the center of black St. Louis militancy during the war." Their presence gave authority to McNeal and Grant, who functioned as ambassadors to St. Louis' economic and political power structures.[3] African Americans in St. Louis who agitated through MOWM were certainly not among what George Schuyler identified as the "many embittered, bewildered black folk" passively waiting for ephemeral leaders to galvanize movements with proclamations and platitudes.[4] St. Louis'

African American newspapers cheered St. Louis MOWM for "its ability to hold the continued interest of a cross-section of the local citizenry," and for its ability to transform this interest into action.[5] United by their opposition to racism and their commitment to "faith…in a working democracy," members of St. Louis MOWM challenged just about every element of racism in their city – and sometimes they won.[6] Their efforts to "crack" St. Louis, a city some alleged "by comparison with other cities is the seat of undemocratic and reactionary labor policies," hastened the economic integration of over 10,000 African Americans into defense industries and eventually contributed to the desegregation of public consumer spaces.[7]

MOWM dove into a strong current of protest in St. Louis that, in an easy tautology, indicated the presence of problematic racial conditions. With two strong African American newspapers and an active NAACP, MOWM was hardly the first "militant" African American protest organization on the scene.[8] Even before MOWM's arrival, St. Louis was "the main center of black protest in Missouri."[9] In 1942, the year that the St. Louis MOWM branch was chartered, the local NAACP drafted and distributed a "Creed of the American Negro" that African American newspapers in the area reprinted. Opening with a salvo that "I am an American citizen. My countrymen call me Negro. But no matter what I am called, the fact remains that I am a citizen of the United States of America, native born." Arguing that African Americans had a history of loyalty to the United States proven by sacrifice on battlefields dating back to Revolutionary War hero Crispus Attucks, the "Creed of the American Negro" outlined racially inequitable issues culminating with "nine millions of me to be denied the right to vote for the very sheriff who may stand

between me and the mob that would lynch me." The NAACP publicized an image of a racial landscape in which segregated "slum ghettos" and marginalization from the "employment feast" proceeded unabated by "fruitless investigations." Race in America, according to the St. Louis NAACP, was the ultimate "test of democracy… [the] test of my country's integrity of soul, her honesty of purpose" and a general litmus of the nation's legitimacy as the leader of the free world.[10]

Rhetoric emanating from St. Louis' NAACP and MOWM chapters was unquestionably patriotic. Members of these organizations believed that their critique of current affairs was part of an effort to bring the United States closer to their understanding of American ideals and equality of citizenship.[11] Their analysis was consistent with a wartime trend in which African American protest rhetoric juxtaposed the loyalty of Black citizens against unabated racial discrimination to argue for immediate dismantling of the structures and unequal power relations characterizing White supremacy.[12] Many African Americans of that era adhered to an expansive definition of "democracy" that was synonymous with racial egalitarianism. Emphasizing lofty ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence allowed them to make racial equality an American ideal that equated democracy with human rights. For example, MOWM member Lawrence Ervin defined democracy as a political system that valued "the long-term interest of the welfare, and happiness of all the people…it respects the personality of every individual; it seeks to develop in him a sense of belongingness…It encourages and directs him to respect himself and to make the best of his natural gifts, to develop his own unique personality."[13]

MOWM's local activity flourished where BSCP organizers were schooled in longstanding battles against racism.[14] Fighting for civil rights and confronting issues beyond traditional labor struggles was deeply rooted in BSCP practice because men and women who were affiliated with the union saw it as "not a Labor Union but a way of life."[15] In Chicago and St. Louis, for instance, BSCP organizers Charles Wesley Burton and T.D. McNeal were integral towards galvanizing their communities and transforming ferment into political activism.[16] As with most of the union's chapters, BSCP members in St. Louis were pillars of the local community who believed in racial uplift and supported mutual benefit programs.[17] Small deeds solidified solidarity among union members and ultimately created greater support for the union throughout the city's African American community. On holidays, the union made it a habit to visit families of infirm members with gift baskets, and occasionally, cash to help through difficult times.[18] T.D. McNeal, E.J. Bradley, and Leyton Weston brought these kind of values to activism that they hoped would bring "St. Louis a little nearer to the democratic ideal by the time our boys come back from the wars where they are placing their very lives on an altar of sacrifice in the name of democracy."[19]

Through the efforts of devoted local activists, MOWM captured enough headlines in the early 1940s to be mentioned alongside the NAACP and NUL as leading organizations fighting racism.[20] Though overlooked by many historians, MOWM's reputation as an uncompromising defender of African American political and economic rights was largely attributable to the ability of its local chapters to address issues pertinent in a particular community. As what one sociologist labeled

a "conflict group" that relied on creating and exploiting social tension, St. Louis MOWM coordinated a series of protests during the Second World War that made a considerable dent in the city's maintenance of segregated public spaces and created more employment opportunities for Black workers.[21]

Enthusiasm for MOWM in the Gateway City was so high that it even surprised Randolph.[22] The quantity and zeal of MOWM activists caused an FBI agent in the St. Louis field division to dryly report that "Negroes are restless and are pressing demands for equal opportunities with white people in industry."[23] The brief period that MOWM dominated Black activism in St. Louis corresponded with the conception of "a new dimension to the concept of civil rights" in which campaigns for desegregating public space combined with advocacy for equal access to employment in industries feeding the transitory but lucrative arsenal of democracy.[24] St. Louis MOWM embodied a trend in labor activism dating back to the Depression in which "local black organizations used the tactics of organized labor" to fight both management and existing workers in order to secure equal employment opportunity for African Americans.[25] Nationally, this cracked the fortress of exclusion that impeded African Americans from fully participating in America's economic life. In St. Louis, MOWM's appropriation of the tactics and language used by labor radicals in the 1930s helped open thousands of jobs to Black workers, 60% of whom were looking for work during the Depression.[26] Layle Lane accurately summarized this facet of MOWM's work as part of "our struggle to be fully integrated into American democracy so that we may use our labor power and skill to help in the defense of our country."[27]

Like many African Americans at that time, St. Louis MOWM activists identified the United States as "a strong-hold of democracy" and pledged their support for an Allied victory.[28] Their rhetoric was congruent with MOWM's national office, which consistently affirmed that African Americans, as "part of the warp and woof of these United States," were "vitally concerned" with an American victory in the war and "in the triumph of the expressed aims of the war" as outlined in Roosevelt's Four Freedoms and the eight-point Atlantic Charter. This interpretation of the war emphasized human dignity, racial equality, and the sovereignty of both individuals and nation-states so long as human rights were not trampled upon.[29] MOWM's patriotism was far from blind, and it was certainly not unconditional. As a spokesperson and recognized leader of the fledgling organization, McNeal connected civil rights with military conquest on grounds that America's stated democratic objectives "can't be reached so long as democracy is denied to the Negro or any other segment of our population."[30]

MOWM generated political capital by relying on grassroots support from a cross-section of African Americans in St. Louis. At least rhetorically, the image of being truly representative qualified the organization to speak for the city's Black population. MOWM's efforts were so successful that one participant, reflecting decades later, called it "the most significant grassroots movement for new job opportunities" during the Second World War.[31] St. Louis MOWM cooperated with pre-existing protest organizations, most notably the NAACP, but also the Fellowship of Reconciliation and, to a lesser extent, the St. Louis Urban League.[32] This represented a best-case scenario for what MOWM's national office saw itself as – an

umbrella organization that coordinated the efforts of racially progressive activists affiliated with other groups. At least on paper, MOWM's tendency for cooperation is consistent with a historical trend in another organization affiliated with Randolph, the BSCP. This union built an organizational base through the support of various African American institutions such as fraternities, lodges, women's clubs, and business leagues. These seemingly disparate groups coalesced to mobilize support for what became the cream of Black America's non-professional male crop.[33] Fervor for protest was high in St. Louis well before MOWM established a branch there. Led by Sidney Redmond, the St. Louis County NAACP branch supported Randolph's call to march on the capitol and prepared to send 110 members to Washington, D.C.[34] St. Louis MOWM's emphasis on gaining jobs in war industries meant that it worked for many of the same ends as the local Urban League.[35] The obvious connection between the ultimate mission of securing jobs for African American workers perhaps best evidenced by the fact that John T. Clark was director of the St. Louis Urban League and, though his tenure was short-lived, St. Louis MOWM's first chairman.[36]

St. Louis MOWM activists tapped a moment that they thought was ripe for progress. African Americans in St. Louis developed a "deep resentment…just prior to the outbreak of the war" germinating from unfulfilled promises by major employers and persistent segregation in a city that was becoming increasingly "southern." According to one observer with an interesting strand of regional nativism, St. Louis was being overrun by "ignorant hicks" whose complexion allowed them to step ahead of presumably urbane and respectable African

Americans for jobs in retail and industrial businesses.[37] In McNeal's words, if African Americans could not secure lucrative employment during the war, "what chance will we ever have to get in when the mad scramble for the few available jobs starts after the emergency?"[38] Across the nation, Walter White, a fair and perceptive observer of racial discrimination, noticed that skilled African Americans in the building trades were "victims of collusion" between the AFL union chapters and prospective employers, the end result of which was Black workers being shut out of jobs filling lucrative defense contracts.[39]

The FBI and the African American press outside the city recognized that St. Louis was one of MOWM's most active locales.[40] Uniquely situated at the northern territory of Jim Crow and at the gateway to the American west, St. Louis' geography made it important tactically and symbolically. "The anomaly of our geographic position," noted a daily newspaper as "neither south, north, east nor west," made it a dynamic place that was targeted by wartime migrants. This self-proclaimed "crossroads city" was populated by "elements reflecting the sentiments" of the entire nation, creating a demographic mixture that some thought made St. Louis "in the past, in the matter of race relations, more than a level-headed town."[41] Modern historians contest this image of St. Louis as a city too diverse to fight, and they depict St. Louis as a fully segregated southern-style city comparable to Cincinnati.[42] Competing images of St. Louis' character is best seen in contradictory accounts from the White and Black press. To the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, a White-owned daily, "St. Louis has a long and admirable record of broad-minded tolerance…this city has been for years one of the nation's leaders in maintenance of civil liberties."[43] One

year earlier, the *Chicago Defender* offered a different perspective, portraying the city as "one of the largest defense materials manufacturing sections of the nation, and one in which members of this racial group are most grossly victimized."[44]

Racial inequality in St. Louis was not as pervasive as in other southern cities such as Birmingham and Jackson, but it was, according to one of the city's African American newspapers, a city "pock-marked with little jim crows."[45] There was room for an organization like MOWM to make progress because, unlike the isolated dungeons in the Deep South, discrimination was at least debatable.[46] The parameters of urban segregation meant that African Americans in St. Louis maintained strong Black institutions and had a long history of organized social and political life. MOWM tapped this tradition and briefly become the city's leading voice of militant protest during the Second World War.[47]

As in most mid-twentieth century United States cities, African Americans were residentially clustered by custom and remained in place by collusion from the Real Estate Exchange. St. Louis' 108,765 African Americans overwhelmingly resided in segregated areas plagued by the typical list of conditions that came along with urbanized inequality.[48] As members of an urban working class, African Americans in St. Louis generally faced high population density, poor street lighting, flagrant violations of building codes, inadequate plumbing, and unreliable garbage disposal.[49] There were areas of progress, most notably through the 1937 slum clearance program. In less than five years, the U.S. Housing Authority oversaw the construction of more than 120,000 new homes in St. Louis, and African Americans resided in a third of them. In one predominantly Black area, 459 residents on

"several blocks of one of the worst slum districts in St. Louis" saw their neighborhood razed and replaced with "new and modern buildings" with room for 658 families in "clean, standard dwelling units."[50] Still, environmental issues in the city's predominantly African American neighborhoods remained problems through the war years.

The presence of 2,500 African American soldiers at Fort Leonard Wood's Jefferson Barracks, recently constructed in 1940 on the outskirts of town, added another layer to St. Louis' complicated and often contradictory race relations.[51] As in nearly all United States military posts during World War II, African-American soldiers stationed at Fort Leonard Wood served in segregated units under uniformly White officers. St. Louis was not unique in the fact that the presence of Black enlisted men incited fear from White residents surrounding the base. Without referencing any specific incident, an FBI report noted that "Allegations have been spread that Negroes, presumably soldiers, have molested white families and as a result anti-Negro sentiment is at a high pitch.[52]

African American men in uniform did not participate in St. Louis MOWM's protests, but their image was conscripted to dramatize similarities between racial discrimination in the United States and the extremism of Nazi Germany.[53] African Americans at Jefferson Barracks did not have to protest in the streets to be symbolically important. Their status as enlisted men in uniform who were prepared to make the typical sacrifices of soldiers was enough to invest their presence with meaning. Indeed, the first all-Black parade in Jefferson Barracks' history brought out local celebrities including T.D. McNeal, fellow MOWM member and Pine Street

YMCA director James Cook, and Mayor William Becker.[54] The experience of African American soldiers serving in segregated units like Jefferson Barracks was, according to one historian, "an important symbol," because "if one could not participate fully in the defense of his country, he could not lay claim to the rights of a full-fledged citizen."[55] The African American media played up this image through the Double V campaign, which was a rhetorical movement that inspired soldiers and citizens alike.[56] One of these African American soldiers was St. Louis MOWM member Roscoe MeCrary, who was stationed "deep in the heart of Texas" at Camp Swift. MeCrary occasionally wrote home requesting minutes from weekly meetings or to "tell the members I said hello and continue the fight of right" in what, for him, was a personal battle against racism within ranks.[57]

St. Louis MOWM identified unequal access to employment opportunity as the greatest racial injustice facing African Americans during the war. Black and White dominated the discourse of race and jobs in St. Louis because the city had little other racial or ethnic diversity.[58] St. Louis' racial demographics were literally a black and white issue which the *St. Louis Argus* defined as "the chief question among our people has been what part are we to play in the…industries which are engaging in production of the things that are needed for National Defense."[59] Speaking with the authority of two decades in the labor movement, MOWM chairman T.D. McNeal reached a similar conclusion when he identified "the chief crisis of the Negro people" during the Second World War as the "crisis of the Negro worker."[60] David Grant echoed McNeal's sentiments the following year. At a weekend-long seminar

about race relations in St. Louis, Grant spoke with a sense of urgency because "If we are excluded now, where will we work when the war emergency is over?"[61]

African Americans faced the problem of carving a niche for themselves in the wartime economy "because the Negro people have no great captains of industry, no landed aristocrats, no powerful financers. We are just working people."[62] St. Louis' diversified manufacturing base meant that the city made just about everything during the war including ordnances, aircraft, combat boots, medical supplies, electric generators, and steel helmets.[63] African Americans were abysmally underrepresented in nearly all of the city's largest employers and they "did the meanest work at the lowest pay" while being concentrated "into generally janitorial capacities" throughout the roughly 200 defense plants in the area that, combined, represented 82% of defense contracts in Missouri.[64] The fact that these manufacturers operated with public funding in the wake of E.O. 8802 suggested to the city's Black residents that their economic woes could only be addressed by aggressive action.

As one of the city's major organs of Black opinion, the *St. Louis American* was "Perturbed and disappointed because local defense plants still refuse to employ Negro skilled workers," creating a situation that prompted some to migrate as far as Washington, D.C., in search of jobs.[65] Nationally, the combination of increased demand for industrial laborers coupled with a shortage of able-bodied White males to hasten the proportional increase of African Americans working in defense industries from 5.8 percent to 8.2 percent.[66] In St. Louis, increased opportunity did not occur through free market machinations, and E.O. 8802 meant little until

activists forced the issue and pressed defense contractors to hire qualified African American workers. St. Louis MOWM chairman T.D. McNeal saw the Reconstruction Amendments as precedent for the issues he faced because they taught him that "we must keep in mind the fact that laws and executive orders confer rights, but organization is the source of power." In the American system, this meant that political power developed when pressure politics of public protest, letter writing, and mass mobilization supplemented voting.[67] As critical patriots dedicated to achieving racial equality in the United States, members of St. Louis MOWM hoped that they could bring the United States closer to democratic ideals.[68]

St. Louis MOWM addressed many of the typical indignities faced by Black communities in the Jim Crow American South, but forcing change at companies openly violating E.O. 8802 was the organization's primary issue.[69] In the words of historian Ronald Takaki, "The Arsenal of Democracy was not democratic: defense jobs were not open to all regardless of race."[70] Nationally, the upswing in defense production eventually ended massive unemployment that plagued the country for over a decade. Early indicators from elsewhere in Missouri revealed that defense plants would shy away from hiring in African American workers. In Kansas City, for instance, several companies excused their racially exclusive workforce by blaming White workers for refusing to work alongside African Americans.[71] Those that did hire African Americans tended to pigeonhole them into menial labor in completely segregated divisions, a problem that was endemic in many industries and was publicized through anecdotes in the African American press.[72] St. Louis MOWM volunteers addressed the situation by investigating employment conditions and

compiling statistics at defense plants, ultimately turning over their findings to the FEPC in 1944. These investigations gave empirical backing to stories circulating throughout the city about African Americans who had been employed with companies for nearly a decade without a promotion, of Black workers not being considered as serious applicants for positions with rapidly expanding companies, and of the marginalization of African Americans in the military as poorly trained "boot blacks."[73] A composite of findings from St. Louis MOWM turned into FEPC revealed that African Americans were disproportionately under-represented in all of the major defense plants. As seen in Table 2, even though the African American population in St. Louis hovered around 12-13% prior to the Second World War, they comprised a less than a quarter of that proportion among the ranks of employees at the investigated plants.[74] Though incomplete, these figures depict widespread exclusion or marginalization of African American workers throughout St. Louis' defense production force.

It seemed obvious that "discrimination hurts production," and some observers even feared that American democracy might implode under the weight of White supremacy.[75] David Grant saw racism as both unpatriotic and unpractical, for it created an artificial scarcity of workers available for national defense and impeded the development of positive morale among disaffected African Americans.[76] St. Louis MOWM's investigation found that most African American defense workers were clustered into a small set of plants, which means that many employers simply refused to hire them at all.[77] An early 1941 study by the National Urban League forecasted the shortage of trained defense workers, a problem that

was even more pronounced among young African American women.[78] By 1945, the national picture of Black employment was, in the words of one scholar, "relatively easy to describe…because the overwhelming weight of evidence shows that Negroes are concentrated disproportionately in unskilled, menial jobs…and occupy skilled jobs mainly in Negro communities."[79] As indicated in Table 2, St. Louis defense contractors practiced widespread racial discrimination.[80] The scarcity of employment opportunities for African American workers in a temporary but rapidly expanding industrial sector prompted St. Louis MOWM's outrage, making securing jobs in businesses operating with public funds the organization's greatest concern.[81]

Like the national office, St. Louis MOWM was founded as an umbrella organization coordinating protest activity "to secure complete integration of Negro workers in war industries."[82] Direct action was seen as necessary because a distant FEPC gave recalcitrant defense contractors "little to fear."[83] McNeal's personal response to a small donation demonstrates two things: his commitment to cooperation with existing Black institutions and the importance of their support for the fledgling organization. In his reply, McNeal thanked the Booklover's Club, and added that "The greatest fear of the oppressor is the unity of the oppressed."[84] Since St. Louis MOWM literally started from the ground up, its members often contributed their time and talents through their affiliation with other civic organizations, labor unions, and social clubs.

Cross-membership between St. Louis MOWM and other African American organizations was strongly pronounced, especially in its early months. Individuals identified themselves as MOWM members only after the organization made a name

for itself in St. Louis protest politics. For example, when St. Louis MOWM staged its first public demonstration at U.S. Cartridge on May 5, 1942, reporters noted that attendees came from Business and Professional Women's organizations and "Negro Trade Union Auxiliaries" such as the St. Louis chapter of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.[85] St. Louis MOWM's penchant for collaboration is also seen in its work alongside the Missouri State Association of Negro Teachers on a campaign to level the pay of African American educators with that of their White counterparts. From its inception, St. Louis MOWM appealed to the spectrum of African American organizations by attacking issues that attracted a broad audience. In the instance of the teacher's salary campaign, St. Louis MOWM cooperated with local chapters of the NAACP and Elks Lodge as well as the Mound City Bar Association.[86] Cross-membership and organizational cooperation does not appear to have deleteriously affected or undercut any of the civic, trade, and fraternal groups that St. Louis MOWM collaborated with.[87] This is evidenced by the fact that none of MOWM's members renounced her or his previous organizational affiliation. St. Louis MOWM added to the richness of the city's African American institutions because it developed leadership amongst its more committed members and it did not cause the membership base of existing groups to decline. People joined MOWM because it offered an exciting program that reflected the general mood of Black St. Louis in the Second World War. This mood, according to one editorial, was "impatient" as a "pig whose neck is under a fence rail."[88]

Much of St. Louis MOWM's success is attributable to the character of the individuals who joined it. The organization was driven by individuals who were

familiar with social or political activities and who liked to be involved with planning or participating in group operations. The ethos of supporting and participating in Black institutions was strong in St. Louis, and MOWM advantageously tapped these ethics. In A. Philip Randolph's words, MOWM attracted "loyal, patriotic Negro Americans. We love our country. We love our race. We love the human race. We have no use for Nazis, Communists or Fascists or their works."[89] Randolph's caricature of his organization's membership might be simplified, but it suggests that MOWM courted African Americans from the mainstream of Black protest and energized them by emphasizing direct action. These were the kind of people whom Mary McLeod Bethune thought indicated "a New Negro has arisen in America," that was "militant in spirit" and whose contributions to the struggle for racial equality would "save America from itself."[90]

As in the NAACP, MOWM's local branches had considerable autonomy from the parent organization. Beyond borrowing its organizational structure and enthusiasm for protest politics, St. Louis MOWM conducted its affairs with little prompting from the national office.[91] Discrepancy between the national office's platform and St. Louis MOWM's programs offers a glaring example of the disjuncture between national policy and local practice. In 1943, just about the only thing that united national and local programs was the extensive resources expended by MOWM's headquarters to school activists in the techniques of Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action.[92] Grassroots autonomy should not be interpreted as disdain for MOWM's national office. In fact, the opposite was true, as Randolph's presence

in the city usually corresponded with a measurable increase in attendance at MOWM sponsored events.[93]

An exception to this generalization about the relationship of grassroots protest to MOWM's official bureaucracy is the 1942 Poona Jail cablegram, which was an overseas telegram supportive of Gandhi's leadership. Prior to a major MOWM rally at Kiel Municipal Auditorium, Randolph wrote McNeal instructing him to "find out the cost…and let me know so that the March on Washington Movement of St. Louis may send it." Randolph took it upon himself to "suggest" McNeal offer supportive comments on India's anti-colonial struggle in his discussions with local Black newspapers.[94] Though signed by St. Louis MOWM, the Poona Jail Cablegram came verbatim from the national office. While its sincerity in solidarity with Gandhi's struggle against imperialism is unquestionable, the lack of local enthusiasm beyond presenting it as a resolution at a rally indicates that members of St. Louis MOWM identified more strongly with issues that hit closer to home.[95] Gandhi's anti-colonial struggles were important to Randolph, who believed that "the patterns of oppression and exploitation are brutally similar throughout the world," and thus followed global affairs closely in search of ways to confront racism in the United States.[96] Randolph's internationalism was not necessarily a product of his own. In a letter to the MOWM figurehead just days before the Kiel Auditorium rally, Pauli Murray took time from a summer vacation on Martha's Vineyard to urge him that MOWM get involved in Indian decolonization. Not surprisingly, Murray advised that the scope of MOWM's involvement should include a telegram "to Gandhi at the prison" informing the leader of African American support for his cause.[97] In this

example, Murray undeniably influenced Randolph's directive, which was, in turn, the only one of its kind pertaining to St. Louis MOWM.[98]

The above-mentioned exception aside, St. Louis MOWM was directed and driven by issues defined by local membership.[99] This is not to say that MOWM's chapters existed independently from the national office. If this were the case, MOWM would hardly be worthy of being called an organization. MOWM's national office kept its distance from the St. Louis chapter, only getting involved in local affairs when national events necessitated an immediate response.[100] In St. Louis, and possibly in other cities, local activists borrowed a framework from the national organization to guide their political responses to racial inequality. Members of St. Louis MOWM like T.D. McNeal, David Grant, and Pearl Maddox were, to appropriate the poetics used by one team of scholars writing about the seminal importance of grassroots activism to African American protest politics, among the innumerable "local people [who] drove the Black Freedom movement: they organized it, imagined it, mobilized and cultivated it, they did the daily work that made the struggle possible and endured the drudgery and retaliation, fear and anticipation, joy and comradeship that building a movement entails."[101]

Portraits of St. Louis MOWM Members

Once the national march was cancelled, organic leaders emerged from a vernal pool of local activists whose germination kept MOWM alive during the war years. African Americans brought the march into their own communities through pickets, demonstrations, and rallies. In St. Louis, African Americans used MOWM to

respond to racial inequality almost a full year before MOWM policy urged, "local marches on city and government buildings be held by local chapters."[102] One can speculate as to whether the individuals driving St Louis MOWM could have found an outlet for their activism in the city's NAACP, Urban League, or UNIA branches, but the fact is that they coalesced around the namesake of a march that never occurred. These working class people were unlikely to ever trek across the country to register protest, but they were energized by an organization headed by individuals who accrued political and social capitol through decades of involvement in the city's Black community.

MOWM's national affairs deeply affected David Grant, prompting him to rethink his approach to activism and leadership. After attending the "We Are Americans, Too" conference in Chicago, Grant thought about ways to transform issues and tactics discussed during the previous several days into focused and effective protest. First, Grant identified the need for criteria to establish when a demonstration could be organized and what causes should justify reaction. Second, he thought it beneficial for local units to have a set of operating guidelines directing the "preparation, discipline, and techniques of marching" so that local activism was consistent throughout the movement. Grant believed that it was expedient to march on every war plant and public utility that discriminated against African American workers. Government offices and the postal service were not immune to his expansive criteria for institutions subject to MOWM demonstrations, as were other non-specified "unique and unpredictable local situations" pending approval from the national office. Not surprisingly, outright systematic denial of African American

job applicants was a problem, but, if we can trust Grant's nuanced account, defense industries, public schools, and utility companies that did have African American employees overwhelmingly clustered them in menial positions with little opportunity for advancement. In general, St. Louis' expanding workforce had little room for African American women. Companies that did hire Black workers tended to pay them lower wages than White counterparts. Finally, African Americans were disproportionately dismissed whenever production stalled or there was a need to scale back payroll.[103] Grant's observations as a citizen strongly influenced his opinions as an organizer. Since the problem was widespread, he thought, the solution needed to cover the breadth of issues that marginalized African American workers.

As a new addition to the St. Louis scene, MOWM created more institutional space for African American leadership to grow. The roll call of individuals willing to "fight, sacrifice, & pay" for racial equality in wartime St. Louis seems endless.[104] As it did throughout the nation, MOWM could "draw from the little people" who were inclined towards leadership and were "intelligent, thoughtful people…but who are not considered generally in their communities."[105] Those who surface at points in this study include T.D. McNeal, David Grant, Sallie Parham, Juanita Blackwell, Leyton Weston, Thelma Maddox, Rev. James Bracy, Henry and Ruth Wheeler, Jordan Chambers, and James Cook.

Before speaking on MOWM's platform at Kiel Auditorium in 1942, Sallie Parham established herself as one of the most prominent African American women in the Gateway City. Parham directed the Pine Street YWCA and she spent her

extracurricular time presiding over the local chapter of National Council of Business and Professional Women. Parham's strongest connection to MOWM came from her status as a founding member of St. Louis' BSCP Ladies' Auxiliary. Parham inexplicably disappeared from the spotlight after her 1942 speech, and she remained out of public activism for the rest of the war. It is possible that gendered limitations impeded her opportunity to assume a more responsible role in MOWM. It is also possible, and probably more likely, that Parham was completely occupied with a successful career and that she was comfortable with her leadership in two other organizations.[106]

Nita Blackwell was among the many African Americans who refined leadership skills while contributing to St. Louis MOWM. As the organization's first secretary, her work was an "especially valuable" asset at the outset of MOWM's "militant program."[107] Blackwell planned and facilitated weekly meetings at the Pine Street YMCA, an outreach program that became a staple of MOWM's operations. Under MOWM member James E. Cook's leadership, this institution often provided low-cost or free space for civic and political groups to conduct business and host events.[108] Unlike public rallies, which were mixed, nearly all of the attendees frequenting the Pine Street YMCA meetings were women. The same phenomenon happened in Chicago, prompting Milton Webster to complain, "There are too many women mixed up in this thing anyhow."[109] Attendees used the weekly meetings to plan public demonstrations, freely discuss local racial conditions, disseminate information about employment opportunity, and, as Mrs. Marie Harding Pace and Thelma McNeal did, share "an interesting article from Negro

Reader's Digest on Liberia" or offer readings from *The Races of Man*.[110] Blackwell "demonstrated a spirit of eternal vigilance" at these meetings, and she did not hesitate to turn her wrath inward with challenges to MOWM's male leaders when their opinions diverged. In one such example, MOWM Treasurer Jordan Chambers downplayed the FEPC's importance in comparison to "other social gains." Blackwell contested Chambers with an "impromptu two minute speech" affirming MOWM's need to "be vigilant" and "constantly protest against injustice…Ku Klux Klanism and Nazism," with or without federal law on their side. This "brilliant young Fiskite" energized St. Louis MOWM with her talent as a secretary and her diligence in struggle prior to the 1944 sit-ins.[111] During lulls in high-profile activity, these weekly meetings maintained a venue through which St. Louis' leading African American figures rubbed elbows with each other and with less recognizable members of the community. This strengthened relationships that, in terms more familiar to activism, translated to greater solidarity among St. Louis MOWM's members.[112]

Blackwell relocated in autumn 1943 to Los Angeles for more comfortable and stable work with the USO.[113] Her departure came just as St. Louis MOWM began cooperating with the Fellowship of Reconciliation on a project to train its members in non-violent direct action campaigns.[114] Her absence was filled by other young college-trained African American women including "the winsome" Mrs. Marie Harding Pace, Thelma Grant, and Thelma McNeal.[115] These "Race women," as a *Defender* columnist noted, faced a triple burden – fighting "for her race, for her sex

and she has to fight within her group to arouse to dormant, satisfied women" into a motivated and socially conscious group of activists.[116]

Perhaps more than anyone else at the time, T.D. McNeal stands out as a "fighting crusader" in St. Louis MOWM. His stature within the community and his long record of representing the BSCP helped McNeal influence MOWM's national policy.[117] McNeal only worked one year as a porter, but remained with the union as an International Field Organizer for over a decade. McNeal earned Randolph's trust, which led to his appointment for a full-time position with the BSCP in 1937.[118] In the course of two decades spent fighting for racially progressive cases, McNeal gained the confidence of St. Louis' African American residents, many of whom recognized him for his leadership of the BSCP and participation in fund-raising and membership drives by the local NAACP.[119] McNeal's connection to the BSCP financially sustained St. Louis MOWM from its inception, when the union donated the initial $50 that started the new organization's budget.[120] For three years, McNeal was at the head of a MOWM unit that was so well organized that even the hypercritical Roy Wilkins commented favorably on their work.[121]

Born and educated in Arkansas, McNeal resided in St. Louis for twenty years - by the time he organized the city's MOWM unit.[122] Incidentally, McNeal never planned on relocating to or settling in St. Louis. He stopped by to summer with an aunt en route to attending college in Washington. McNeal decided to remain there because he "became interested in a girl" and he thought "blacks with a college degree were not getting employment commensurate with their education."[123] As the local leader of the most respected African American labor union, McNeal was an

ideal candidate to bring a national movement to his adopted home city. The rhetoric McNeal used and issues he fought for in the 1940s resurfaced two decades later in campaign literature for his 1966 re-election bid to the Missouri Senate, which highlighted the activist-turned politician's "unity of purpose, moral discipline and political independence."[124] Historians recognize McNeal as outstanding among his generation, "one of the few Brotherhood officials to consistently fight for wider employment opportunities for African American women," a characteristic that played a part in St. Louis MOWM's embrace of women's activism during the sit-ins.[125]

McNeal's activist experience situated him squarely in the labor movement, but he maintained cordial working relationships and longstanding friendships with leaders of other African American civic organizations. The best example of this is the twenty-year long friendship between McNeal and local attorney, NAACP leader, and MOWM supporter David Grant. At the beginning of their collaboration in what could loosely be called a Double V campaign, Grant praised McNeal's "meritorious and unselfish services." Two decades later, Grant stated that he "never worked with a more courageous, fearless, and dedicated person than T.D. McNeal. He was a tower of strength" who dedicated his life to what he saw as the inter-related goals of civil rights and economic opportunity.[126] The political capital that McNeal built over the course of what amounted to a career in struggle influenced the development of "a political personality that redeems the faith of a community in the arts and practices of politics."[127]

McNeal transformed his belief that civil rights and economic integration were intertwined into activism with MOWM, a praxis that ultimately helped over 10,000 African Americans join St. Louis' industrial labor force.[128] McNeal saw each of these workers as symbols of democracy in action, as people who fulfilled the American promise and gave the United States moral credibility in the post-war world.[129] Like many African Americans in the war years, McNeal interpreted the crisis of conflict as an opportunity to make significant improvements in the daily lives of racial minorities in the United States. He genuinely believed in "the hope and possibility" that the war against Hitler's Fascist extremes would usher in "a new order of democracy and humanitarian enlightenment" throughout the United States and the Western world.[130] As an activist, the "wide awake" McNeal relied on boundless energy to routinely work 12-16 hour days. As a politician decades later, McNeal's power came from a different source: he represented the 80% Black Fourth District of St. Louis in the Missouri congress.[131] Bursting onto the state political scene in 1960, in only five years McNeal parleyed his status as a pillar of the local Black community into a seat on both the Ways and Means Committee and the Appropriations Committee.[132] His career demonstrated that power in protest politics comes from respect within the community, while power in politics germinates from mobilizing voters.

McNeal was reviled by a segment of St. Louis' population that was emotionally and politically devoted to White supremacy.[133] In an article of hate mail postmarked August 20, 1942, an anonymous writer warned McNeal to "remember East St. Louis it will happen here." Though the post-World War I riot was terrible,

McNeal refused to back down to those who thought that every "nigger" should "stay in your place."[134] Another reactionary voice came from the Atlanta-based Vigilantes, Inc. In a letter from the anonymous President of this White Supremacist organization, McNeal was notified, in no uncertain terms, that "The traditions of the South… the tradition of Supremacy of the WHITE RACE" was spreading nationally as "real white people in the North realize that social equality with the negro in this country is a mistake."[135] Undeterred by the threat of violent opposition, McNeal led St. Louis MOWM through one of the most active periods of progressive racial protest in St. Louis' tumultuous history.

Harassment from local Communists and constant monitoring from both the FBI and Army Intelligence came along with McNeal's involvement in MOWM.[136] Members of the Communist Party tried to disrupt St. Louis MOWM's demonstrations by passing out leaflets that hinted at violent retaliation and warned that protest politics impeded the war effort.[137] Of all these, McNeal thought that the worst form of harassment was anonymous "threats on the telephone late at night." McNeal never notified the press or authorities, but he would get called "a lot of obscene names" and was told on several occasions that his residence was going to explode. McNeal claimed that the threats never caused him to consider stepping away from his un-elected position as a leader in Black St. Louis, but he acknowledged that the late night phone calls "didn't make me feel any more comfortable."[138] McNeal dealt with the possibility of hate crimes directed at him and his family by practicing as a target shooter. He took first prize, finishing just ahead of his son Ted and BSCP/MOWM member E.J. Bradley, at several competitions in and around St. Louis.

McNeal was not shy about advertising his prowess with firearms, and his photograph standing with a rifle and three shooting trophies in the background was published in the *St. Louis Argus*.[139]

The closest threat to impeding McNeal's activism with MOWM was induction into the military. McNeal's work with the porters earned him an occupational classification that let him avoid conscription, but the deferment barely made it on time. Many porters received this deferment because their work on the rails heavily traveled by military personnel was seen as essential. According to McNeal and Randolph, increased troop movements resulted in porters' workweeks being as long as one hundred hours. The two argued that McNeal's skill as a field organizer kept porters from slacking off or getting surly because of the increased workload. McNeal thought that his work was important to the war effort, but the draft board had other plans for him. According to McNeal, one hostile member confronted him, saying, "We understand that you like to march. So, we're gonna put you in, and let you do some real marching." McNeal narrowly avoided military service by drinking heavily the evening before induction and oversleeping the next day, causing him to miss his appointment to report at Jefferson Barracks. Later that day, McNeal found a letter from General Hershey granting deferment in the afternoon mail. Unprocessed at the time of his scheduled induction, McNeal's occupational deferment eventually went through. He believed that this twist of fate could not have saved him had he arrived at Jefferson Barracks on the appointed hour.[140]

McNeal's work with St. Louis MOWM refined his leadership skills and solidified his position as a force to be reckoned with in the community. McNeal's

activism put him in situations where friendships meant solidarity, which undoubtedly insulated him from the pressure of harassment like that mentioned above. The relationships that McNeal built in the 1940s were seminal to his Senatorial campaigns 1960s, when the same cadre of men who ran St. Louis MOWM directed his political campaign.[141] His expertise as a labor and community organizer undoubtedly shaped McNeal into a legislator who "probably accomplishes more for those he represents" than his electoral peers. McNeal's political personality was "inevitably calm…Quiet. Dignified. Superb speaker, relying on logic, organization and subject matter rather than rhetoric."[142] In his own reflections on time spent working alongside Randolph in the BSCP and MOWM, McNeal said that he learned about "the thinking, motivations, aspirations and fears" of Americans, Black and White alike.[143] McNeal thought of his role as leader of an African American protest organization and representative of a labor union as two sides of one coin because, in his words, "Negro people are essentially a working class of people."[144] McNeal saw his work was one of the many streams pouring into the river of Black protest during the mid-twentieth century in which thousands of African Americans were "on the march, fighting to complete the structure of their economic, social and political citizenship" that tragically incomplete since Reconstruction's collapse. McNeal believed that freedom meant more than the negation of physical bondage and chattel slavery - freedom was understood holistically, with equal parts of civil rights and economic opportunity. McNeal's version of freedom required "the unabridged right to vote, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement in the

community, the free public school system and above all, the right to employment and service on the basis of equality.[145]

A native son of St. Louis, David Grant was probably the most publicly recognizable MOWM member in the city, taking visible leadership on a number of issues after he "sacrificed a $4000 position" as Assistant Circuit Attorney to open a private practice.[146] Grant devoted himself to "fight on all fronts" for "Negro rights and equality before law." Together with McNeal, the tandem formed what amounted to twin pillars of St. Louis MOWM, with Grant's oratorical ability making him MOWM's public face and McNeal's organizational skills fitting him perfectly to oversee St. Louis MOWM's operations.[147] A supervisor named Henry Morris pushed Grant out of the previously mentioned Assistant Circuit Attorney position in 1942 as retaliation for his participation in NAACP activities following the Sikeston lynching. As a public figure and member of the Democratic machine since 1936, it was difficult for Grant not to cross professional and personal boundaries. In particular, Morris thought that Grant inappropriately brought his office into "controversial issues" about the "abuses and inequalities visited upon the Negro people."[148] An archetypical "race man," and life member of the NAACP, Grant believed that "No Negro who is honest with himself and sincere in his attitude towards his people can labor happily under a superior who insists that he lay aside his interests in public matters affecting the welfare of the Negro people, in order to keep his job."[149] Grant's participation on an NAACP investigative committee that looked into Sikeston openly defied his supervisor's heavy-handed edict. With a choice between "a forty-two hundred dollar job and the respect and confidence of two hundred thousand or

three hundred thousand of my people," Grant stood at a professional junction that he thought was a mutually exclusive crossroads between professional success and personal dignity. For him, "the choice was not hard to make." David Grant walked away from his last steady job in over a decade, remaining financially solvent by representing area African Americans in what amounted to small legal cases.[150]

Grant's reputation within the city grew to almost mythical proportions as he made the transformation from a child reared in a working-class Black neighborhood to progressive lawyer, and ultimately, to a highly visible activist. Grant's work with St. Louis MOWM solidified his standing as an advocate for civil rights and equal access to employment.[151] A cartoon in the *St. Louis Argus* reveals Grant's standing as a champion in the fight against White supremacy. It features an illustration of a powerful dark-skinned forearm with a clenched fist smashing two White men labeled "Southern Race Baiters." The fist is emblazoned with the name "David Grant."[152] A St. Louis native since birth in 1903, Grant left in his twenties to work as a musician and waiter on excursion steamers traveling along the Mississippi River and Great Lakes. Grant "sort of knocked around" during the inter-war years, breaking up what amounted to travel as a migrant worker to attend but not complete studies at the University of Michigan. Personal circumstances and unstable finances always seemed to lure Grant out of higher education until enrolling in and finishing a three year course of study at Howard University Law School.[153] Grant was admitted to the Missouri Bar immediately after his 1930 graduation and he opened a private practice in his hometown that same year.[154] Grant was evidentially successful, gaining admission to the Federal Bar in 1938. His

professional development was no small accomplishment for a man who spent his teens and twenties as a marginal worker who operated a crane in a Detroit ice house, ran a drill press, and traveled the resort circuit through Arkansas Hot Springs and West Palm Beach, Florida, as a porter, waiter, and jazz musician.[155] Grant's connections to everyday people in St. Louis and experiences in insecure blue-collar work informed his nearly half-century long practice as an attorney that was described by a colleague as "calm, deliberative and careful service to the cause of civil rights and justice."[156] Grant's personal history as a disposable laborer gave him an unflappable solidarity with the working class that guided his long involvement in local Democratic politics.[157] This is evidenced by Grant's participation in MOWM, which saw him organize pickets outside of lunch counters protesting separate and unequal food service, give free advise to Pearl Maddox and others who participated in sit-ins, and take an oppositional voice to the "Jim Crow Lincoln University Law School" that was one of St. Louis MOWM's final campaigns.[158]

As a young African American professional with a private practice that catered to an economically marginalized and segregated Black population, Grant believed that his financial fate was inextricably tied to that of his clients. Grant's understanding of linkages between civil rights and economic rights was shaped by the Great Depression, which, in the appraisal of one historian, "brought employment discrimination to the fore as a civil rights issue."[159] Grant was motivated by causes more pragmatic than idealistic Talented Tenth style uplift; he was convinced that it was in the best interest of upwardly mobile African Americans to act on behalf of less fortunate members of their race. After all, Grant argued, how could an African

American doctor or lawyer "whose clients were economically dispossessed earn respectable income when these same customers cold not adequately pay for professional services?" Grant believed that "those who are fortunate enough to get training…and make a living off of their peers," had it in their best interest to "do everything they could to improve the economic condition of those they are going to serve."[160]

As mentioned earlier, Grant re-settled in St. Louis shortly after finishing law school. He immediately became involved in Democratic politics, where he first met Joseph McLemore and George Vashon, both of whom would participate in MOWM campaigns in the ensuing decade. Grant and other early Black Democrats joined the party out of "resentment" that the Republican Party elicited an "emotional response to a false premise that the Republican Party was formed for their freedom." Until the Roosevelt years, Republicans counted on nearly unanimous support from African American voters but offered little more than "mops, brooms, and garbage cans" as patronage in return for their votes. Republicans dominated St. Louis' local government for almost three decades from 1904 through 1933. St. Louis' Black Democrats swam against a strong political tide, because "emotionally no man in the world would love the Democratic party if you are black because it was the party of the south and that was the party of the Ku Klux Klan and that was where the lynching was." The thin ranks of African American Democrats in St. Louis swelled after Roosevelt's 1932 election. Since African Americans associated the Democratic Party with "Lynchocrats," Grant recruited individuals to the Party by "preaching the Doctrine of the Divided Vote." He pointed out that the Republican Party took nearly

unanimous support from Black voters for granted and offered little in the way of promises or presents to the city's African American population.[161] This was the worst-case scenario of two-party politics, and Grant wanted to change it through the Negro Central Democratic Organization.[162] This partisan body gave a forum for dissatisfied African American voters and contributed to MOWM's operations by participating in negotiations with reluctant employers.

Totalitarianism's rise and the urgency of war influenced Grant's perception that his generation was experiencing a historical moment comparable to that of "the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire, the rise of Charlemagne, the Crusades, and the French Revolution."[163] Grant envisioned his legal work as part of a battle countering the "complete emasculation" of Reconstruction Amendments that were dismembered in an era of reactionary "cancerous" white supremacy.[164] History informed Grant's observation's on E.O. 8802, which he called "the second emancipation declaration." He saw "history repeating itself" because the new law was undermined by "avoidance, subterfuge, and emasculation."[165] In his senior years, Grant reflected on this trend in American history, concluding, "this is a racism country."[166]

Grant was involved with St. Louis MOWM from the organization's 1942 inception and engaged in activism for over a decade prior.[167] He saw his professional status as something that reinforced his position as a community leader who was responsible for improving the lives of African Americans in his hometown and beyond.[168] Professionally trained and somewhat well off, Grant always seemed to have time and a little bit of money to give to the cause.[169] Grant's most important

professional contribution to the dismantling of racial inequality was his counsel in the six-year campaign to equalize salaries for educators and opportunities for students. Underwritten by the Missouri State Association of Negro Teachers, *Emma Jane Lee v. Board of Education of Festus* legally closed the racial gap in salaries of educators throughout Missouri. Grant accomplished the victory through legal prowess and public relations acumen that included soliciting and screening documentation proving racially-determined unequal wages throughout the state, consulting with Thurgood Marshall of the NAACP, and speaking at fundraising events hosted by the Pine Street YMCA.[170] Grant deflected praise for his work, preferring to give credit to "fearless people" like Emma Jane Lee and other teachers who risked professional standing to file complaints about Missouri's wages. It was people like them, said to Grant, who gave reason for "hope as a racial group for the ultimate achievement of democracy."[171]

Grant believed that "economic equality" and the right to work was synonymous with the right to live, and that the federal government was responsible for safeguarding equal access to employment. Especially in his youth, Grant thought that "the solution to the racial things that we suffered were finances and we were poor…I believed this business of money until Hitler came on the scene" and proved to him that race and unequal power relations were also factors in the oppression of Black people in the United States.[172] Grant's understanding of economics as central to what many of his time called "the race problem" was in step with the *St. Louis Argus*, which featured an editorial on the plight of African American small business owners catering to an economically marginalized group of customer. In this

example, the *Argus* launched into a Jeremiad that "To deny one employment is a blow at his very existence and at his life… When the head of a family is denied employment solely because of race, creed or national origin…it makes a beggar of his wife, or possibly a prostitute, and thieves of his children."[173] Grant's association with St. Louis MOWM was deeply informed by his belief that civil rights, human rights, and worker's rights were all interconnected. He saw the systematic denial of jobs to African Americans as a form of racial violence more vile than lynching "Because when I am lynched, that is all they can do to me; I am dead; I am gone." Long-term income, however, created generational upward mobility and could crack the concrete ceiling on African American advancement. As Grant said on the floor of Congress, the problem was that "when I am unable to work, I cannot train my daughters, I cannot train my sons, and I am in a position where I feel that the man who deprives me of my right to work makes prostitutes of my daughters and criminals of my sons."[174]

Economics were central to Grant's understanding of American race relations and integral to his vision of racial uplift, which included making a "Negro Fifth Column" to turn pressure inwards on African Americans in order to have greater economic autonomy. He looked forward to the day when "we control a handsome portion of our local economic life" and no longer "remain at the mercy of those who live by the profits of the money we spend." Grant was inspired by how relatively small minority groups in Europe gained tremendous political power, and he hoped that African Americans could be tightly knit and disciplined enough to "rip the covers off of the backside" of backsliders who supported White merchants and

professionals when a choice to do otherwise was available. He advocated "a rigorous discipline" that manifested in "quarantine, social ostracism and general abuse, physical where invited, but always verbal" to keep the community cohesive on vital issues.[175]

Like McNeal, Grant was very aware of the opposition that he faced as an archetypical "race man" in the mid-twentieth century. Though no one physically threatened Grant's life or family, he deftly faced bureaucratic recalcitrance did his best to discount hate mail that always seemed to come after his biggest speeches.[176] Grant's dedication to struggle during the war years was deeply appreciated by Black residents of St. Louis, who were his veritable constituents.[177] Grant was active in local racial politics for twenty years beyond St. Louis MOWM's life. In 1946, just after the organization disbanded, Grant replaced long-time NAACP president Sidney Redmond as President of the St. Louis Chapter. His first major campaign involved calling for the resignation of a White patrolman who killed an African American civilian. Shortly after, he organized a successful picket of the American Theatre to open more jobs for African American motion picture projector operators.[178]

Founding and Financing the March on Washington Movement, St. Louis Unit

As one could expect from a local protest organization staffed by common working people, the St. Louis unit's office paperwork often lagged behind their activity. St. Louis MOWM did not bother drafting a formal founding document until October 28, 1942 – a full two months after locals acted in the March on Washington Movement's name to plan the 9,000-12,000 person Kiel Auditorium rally and four

months after the organization launched its appeal for membership. St. Louis MOWM used its office space at the People's Finance Building on 11 Jefferson Avenue, which was paid for by the BSCP, in conjunction with accessible public space at the Pine Street YMCA and Wheatley YWCA to plan protests and conduct weekly meetings that kept membership interested in the organization. Having this space available was critical to St. Louis MOWM's success. The YMCA and YWCA were two of the more frequented institutions in Black St. Louis, and having rooms available there made MOWM's weekly meetings accessible to the community. More important was the vibrancy of People's Finance Building in the 1940's, which housed MOWM, BSCP, and a variety of African American professionals. In an editorial reminiscence from the 1970s, one writer mentioned that "the People's Finance Building" housed "most of the prominent Negro doctors, lawyers, and businessmen…It was a custom to visit in each others office to exchange views." Among these visitors were T.D. McNeal and Leyton Weston of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Black Democrat N.A. Sweets, attorney N.B. Young, Sydney R. Redmond, chief counsel in the fight to have Lloyd Gaines admitted to the University of Missouri; attorney George L. Vaughn who was later to lead the fight against residential discrimination; and attorney Joseph McLemore, who was "the first Negro in this area to run for Congress." [179]

Emphasis on local activism was embedded in St. Louis MOWM's belated founding statement, which squarely situated the organization in local politics and sought to make national policy like Executive Order 8802 have real meaning to ordinary citizens. McNeal's background with the BSCP taught him that time and effort from dedicated grassroots members was often more valuable than money. St.

Louis MOWM rarely had much in its coffers but it could count on a respectable turn out at public protests and a high level of civic engagement by its members and supporters. In McNeal's words, "The program of the MOW does not require a lot of money, because all of those who do work in the movement contribute their time in addition to their money."[180] The organization's unusually engaged membership base benefited from being well managed. Everyone had reasonable and identifiable goals because they volunteered for a specific job under a variety of committees including the Speaker's Bureau, Publicity Committee, and Complaints Committee.[181] By regimenting organizational tasks and focusing the energy of members on specific goals, St. Louis MOWM extracted the most possible work out of its more active members – a group that was already predisposed to volunteerism and activism. The downside of St. Louis MOWM's organizational structure is that recruitment and retention of volunteers was difficult because the organization demanded a considerable personal investment from members. Even if they were strongly dedicated to MOWM's program, one could expect that the most zealous members could lose enthusiasm and eventually burn out.[182] Unlike the NAACP, which requested little of members beyond annual dues, African American protest organizations like MOWM and CORE were driven by small, tightly knit groups of dedicated activists – and these were the kind of people who could eventually weary of their commitments and get distracted from the movement by employment and family responsibilities.[183]

Literature from MOWM's national office outlined how and why places like St. Louis could and should form a unit of the March on Washington. Of the national

office's four stated objectives, St. Louis MOWM excelled at operating "by means of mass maneuvers and demonstrations."[184] MOWM's national office was self-consciously ambitious when stating that local chapters "should be organized in every city, county, township, ward, legislative district or political sub-division" that can compile "ten to twenty members" to coordinate joint efforts between existing community institutions such as clergy groups, trade unions, and farmer's organizations.[185] It was recommended that the Executive Board of each branch meet weekly "to study the philosophy of the Movement and to map out a close-knit program of action" and that at least monthly an open meeting for all branch members be held.[186] This was advise that St. Louis MOWM did not heed, choosing instead to hold weekly meetings at the Pine Street YMCA that were open to everybody including members and the community at large. St. Louis MOWM followed recommended procedure and had a local conference to elect officers, establish a constitution, and outline specific goals in conformity with MOWM's broad national objectives. Literature from the national office recommended local branches inflate its ranks by appealing to existing organizations, asking for their entire membership join MOWM at a rate of ten cents per person. MOWM's low dues were made possible, in part, by extensive volunteer labor, but the price eventually rose to two dollars per annum. It was hoped that affordable membership would make it easy to draw rank-and-file African Americans into the organization so that it could be "truly representative of the Negro citizens of the St. Louis community."[187] The national office advised the fledgling chapter to recruit members through a Block Plan that divided the city into "districts of not more than ten square blocks." From

this grid, MOWM members could recruit people within their geographic community through casual conversation that raised awareness about MOWM's tactics and platform.[188] By getting respected community figures to build its organization from the ground up, MOWM functioned in a way that should, in theory, strengthen the bonds of every African American neighborhood in which it operated, thus creating the Black voting bloc that Randolph championed throughout the 1940s.

Like the national organization, St. Louis MOWM "was set up for the purpose of fighting discrimination against Negroes in national defense work."[189] St. Louis MOWM identified federal power as an ally in the struggle against White supremacy and racial inequality. The organization devoted considerable energy towards getting existing laws enforced even though their closest ally, the FEPC, was plagued by what one historian called "serious innate weaknesses."[190] St. Louis MOWM helped FEPC by urging "all negroes who have been denied jobs…to go in person to the local headquarters…and give the facts in their cases to the committee."[191]

When they finally got around to putting their organization on paper, activists in St. Louis MOWM dedicated the upstart organization to "the Negro people of St. Louis, Missouri" and outlined a vision of MOWM fulfilling the American promise with an unwavering "faith in the ultimate achievability of a working democracy."[192] MOWM wanted to have a broader and more representative membership than other existing Black civic organizations in the city, including the NAACP and Urban League. To accomplish this, St. Louis MOWM originally charged no annual dues. This unprofitable arrangement quickly changed to a dime per year and, as previously mentioned, capped at two dollars.[193] Like the national organization, the

St. Louis unit kept its ranks open to "any Negro person" living in "St. Louis or its environs." Also like the national MOWM office, St. Louis MOWM was not opposed to cooperating with the city's predominantly White liberal groups. Drawing on the energy of Afro-Christianity and reflecting the cultural norms of mainstream African American protest groups of their day, the St. Louis unit of the March on Washington Movement also opened and closed each meeting with song a and prayer.[194]

Geographically distant from the nation's capitol, wartime activists in St. Louis found ways to connect their local issues to the national movement of their namesake.[195] This was not difficult to accomplish, as racial conditions in St. Louis mirrored that of the nation and African Americans were victimized by employment discrimination, residential segregation, and curtailed civil rights. Instead of marching on Washington, they marched on arms manufacturing plants, sponsored prayer meetings outside of city hall, and picketed utility companies. St. Louis MOWM kept itself in the public eye by staging rallies and sponsoring sit-ins at restaurants that refused to serve African American customers. The organization remained vibrant by constantly protesting in public space and imposing no limits to who could join. To diehard MOWM stalwarts, organizing for the struggle against employment discrimination could and should take place "in the pool room, on the street corner, in the church," and anywhere else that race women and men would find themselves.[196]

The promise of racial egalitarianism amidst rising totalitarianism influenced the guarded optimism of St. Louis MOWM's leadership, which T.D. McNeal characterized as a time of "hope and possibility."[197] If the people who supported

and participated in MOWM protests and pickets had much in common, one can presume that faith in the American promise and disillusion with the realities of race in the 1940s was widespread. The contradiction of racially inclusive democracy and the disparity between the American reality of poll taxes, literacy examinations, segregation, and limited economic opportunity did not stop St. Louis MOWM from marching in back of the American flag and frequently expressing their allegiance to the United States in print, word, and deed.[198] These ethos are exemplified by Henry Wheeler, a St. Louis MOWM member and *St. Louis American* columnist, who wrote "We are 100 per cent back of our President in all of his efforts to defeat the Axis Nations. We will follow the stars and stripes to Hades, if it is necessary to preserve our liberty."[199] Rhetorical hyper-patriotism did not translate to advocacy of closing ranks and muting protest to abet the war effort.[200] Their fervent patriotism in wartime did not translate to jingoism or the passive acceptance of injustice at home. Witness T.D. McNeal, who went out of his way to solicit trouble because "Negroes are already having trouble and a little more won't hurt."[201] His actions and words resembled that of Randolph, who also had a sense of urgency that "the Negro must fight for his democratic rights now, for after the war it may be too late."[202]

Whatever its limitations, causing "trouble" proved effective at times, and McNeal was rallying St. Louis MOWM members "to begin raising some more hell to get some jobs for Colored women" well into 1944.[203] Although its finances were in disarray and the volume of its national membership paled to that of the NAACP, St. Louis MOWM's members had an impressive faith in America's electorate and they were convinced that a disfranchised minority group work could work through the

political system that ultimately marginalized them in order to rectify existing problems. This impulse is encapsulated in McNeal's words at an Emancipation Day celebration, "we, the Negro masses in the March on Washington Movement, dedicate our spirit and pledge our lives never to grow faint by the wayside, never to compromise with truth, never to falter or fail in our fight for a truly democratic America."[204] The similarity of messages between local leadership and nationally recognizable figures reinforced each other. At the same event, for example, William Hastie urged listeners "to get off of their comfortable chairs and use their energy and ingenuity" to "struggle for basic human rights."[205]

In just one year from its inception, St. Louis MOWM claimed responsibility for 14,000 African Americans securing "jobs on war plants…a large percentage" of which were for skilled or semi-skilled labor. According to the organization's "conservative" calculations, this amounted to an additional $450,000 earned weekly by Black workers in the St. Louis metro area, "largely through the efforts of the MOW."[206] In one fundraising appeal, McNeal asked for the "nominal sum" of $3,500 from the public to buttress financial support already committed by other local groups and "professional people."[207] St. Louis MOWM relied on tapping the existing Black institutions and the African American social elite in order to raise money and cover its relatively inexpensive operating budget.[208] St. Louis' African American press was a frequent accomplice in MOWM fundraising, urging readers to contribute at least one dollar for membership and consider giving more to the organization for "its just wages" in the struggle for equal employment opportunity.[209]

A sympathetic media and support from the city's leading African American citizens certainly helped, but this did not translate into adequate financial support for MOWM. Even though the organization claimed credit for the thousands of jobs African Americans took in defense industries through the "concerted and intelligent pressure exerted by Negroes themselves," its treasury was in shambles.[210] MOWM lamented that its activities were "expensive" even though it had no paid staff and its operations were partially underwritten by other African American organizations.[211] St. Louis MOWM tried to reinforce institutional support by getting leaders and dignitaries from the YMCA, churches, labor unions, and social life to rally their constituents into MOWM's ranks. James E. Cook, Executive Secretary of the Pine Street YMCA, drafted plans for a pyramid scheme that broke down official fundraisers into four divisions. David Grant coordinated the activities of E.J. Bradley from the BSCP, prominent civic leader Mrs. Oliver Thornton, religious leader Dr. J.M. Bracy, and MOWM pioneer Mrs. R.C. Goins. Each of these division leaders was responsible for five "teams" that, according to plans, would deliver donations from a broad cross-section of St. Louis' African American community.[212] This cadre of Black leaders in St. Louis were united in their belief that "now is the time when we must strike relentlessly" for Black people to be "free…as first class American citizens."[213]

Like any grassroots organization, St. Louis MOWM appealed for funds throughout its life. 1944, however, marked the first time a campaign crystallized around a single issue. While Randolph concerned himself with devising a way for African Americans to use the "crucial and decisive" upcoming Presidential election

to get African Americans to vote together as a racial bloc, St. Louis MOWM members acted on issues more pertinent to their political reality and were shifting the focus of protests towards the impending reality of negotiating a post-war world.[214] With upwards of 1,400 members in its ranks, St. Louis MOWM prepared for what amounted to its final year in struggle.[215] It's most visible, and arguably most effective campaign was a summer blizzard of sit-ins at department store lunch counters. Led by Pearl Maddox, Ruth Wheeler, and Thelma McNeal, this "interesting side-light" departed from MOWM's traditional tactics of picketing outside of defense contractors and soliciting an FEPC presence in their city.[216] St. Louis MOWM launched what was ultimately its final major fundraising appeal as the sit-ins were in planning, and it raised over $1,000 through membership renewals and large donations.[217] Although considerable, this was still well short of the $3,500 goal – itself a modest budget for an organization claiming to be "recognized as the agency which has done more than any other to force industry and government in St. Louis to give Negro citizens a greater degree of justice in matter of jobs."[218] Even though MOWM portrayed itself as a mass organization, and indeed its events were attended by a broad spectrum of African Americans, it failed to generate a comparable membership or financial base to the NAACP. This is partially attributable to the fact that St. Louis MOWM did not need to raise as much money as the NAACP because it had few paid staff. Conversely, it also meant that all of MOWM's branches existed without the benefit of professional full-time Field Secretaries like Daisy Lampkin and Ella Baker, both of whom were significant factors in NAACP's wartime explosion in membership and seminal to the organization's grassroots credibility.[219]

BSCP members contributed heavily to St. Louis MOWM's 1944 fundraising campaign.[220] There is little reason to not suspect that this was the case in previous years as well. In 1943, E.J. Bradley, head of the union's St. Louis local, warned, "We have been seriously concerned about the upkeep of the movement here in St. Louis." Bradley and the porters felt "compelled to support it" and were "100% behind the March Movement" out of loyalty to Randolph and faith in his vision for protest politics.[221] Randolph came to the fundraiser's closing rally, which was described as, "without a doubt…the most interesting and educational meeting held in St. Louis since the mammoth mass meeting held at the Auditorium some time ago."[222] Though his attendance was symbolically important and his oration that evening was noteworthy, MOWM must be understood beyond A. Philip Randolph. One can begin by examining the list of individuals who gave twenty-five dollars to St. Louis MOWM that year. The list of donors investing in an upstart protest organization reads like a who's who of Black St. Louis. It includes NAACP members Bige Wyatt and physician Thos J. Center as well as BSCP representatives and porters such as Leyton Weston, E.J. Bradley, and T.D. McNeal.[223] It is arguable that Pullman Porters affiliated with the BSCP sustained St. Louis MOWM. The union itself made several contributions that kept the struggling organization financially solvent. Added to this is the fact that the union's members made individual contributions through membership dues and additional donations. Though unquantifiable due to inadequate documentary sources, it is likely that this union was St. Louis MOWM's financial lifeblood.

CHAPTER 5

PICKETS, PROTESTS, AND PRAYERS:

ST. LOUIS MOWM'S CAMPAIGN TO INTEGRATE THE DEFENSE WORKFORCE

"It is a new type of militancy."
Anonymous FBI investigator[1]

Making the Kiel Municipal Auditorium rally successful with a shoestring budget took support from the city's African American media, a program that would draw crowds, and the fury of St. Louis' Black population.[2] MOWM hoped that the rally could build on the organization's success at U.S. Cartridge earlier that summer. St. Louis MOWM used a demonstration and negotiation campaign to win higher wages for African American porters, increase employment of African American women, and get a promise for prospective Black workers to begin participating in federally-funded training programs that would qualify them for more lucrative positions on the production line. Harold Ross, chairman of St. Louis MOWM's Finance Committee, solicited all of the major civic, professional, and fraternal groups in the city to help pay for the rally. "We believe," Ross appealed, "that you are willing to share the responsibilities and opportunities for service to the race to be found within the movement." Citing a small victory at U.S. Cartridge accomplished despite "a minimum amount of support," leadership of this upstart organization used the familiar argument that African Americans bore a responsibility to assist members of the race in obtaining blue-collar employment.

Ross offered moral capitol and public recognition to those who financially supported this exciting new organization. Recognition came in the form of giving individuals and groups who donated in excess of five dollars a citation in the event's program, which publicly aligned donors with the new vanguard of racial protest in St. Louis.[3] There is insufficient documentation to offer a detailed analysis of social class and annual income of members in St. Louis' various African American institutions. Still, it is not unreasonable to presume that Ross and many St. Louis MOWM members followed historical precedent and thought of themselves within the context of "uplift" strategy dating back at least to the late nineteenth century club movement and was popularized by Du Bois' notion that the Talented Tenth was chiefly responsible for improving the lot of Black America.[4]

Social institutions and media outlets generated excitement for the rally by publicizing it for several weeks beforehand. The *St. Louis American* encouraged readers to attend, for "it is in the time of stress" that "insistent protests against the undemocratic acts and practices here at home" would prove to be the most effective. The paper urged readers to look inward, and instead of marching on Washington, consider protesting against "jim crow and segregation right here in St. Louis and Missouri." Placing a premium on "courage right here at home," the *American* chided readers who denounced the lynching in Sikeston, attended a race rally when big-name leaders passed through on the lecture circuit, and who accepted Missouri's segregated law school but turned a blind eye towards pressing local issues like segregated retail space and unequal employment opportunity.[5] If we can trust elements in the city's African American media, St. Louis MOWM's greatest

impediment in its quest to mobilize Black St. Louis would be encouraging individuals to direct their energies towards changing their localities rather than changing the country as a whole.

St. Louis MOWM claimed public space by marching on sidewalks, occupying grounds surrounding city hall, and taking advantage of arenas like Kiel Municipal Auditorium.[6] The August 14, 1942 rally came in the wake of Carter Carburetor's release of 146 African American workers. More than a response to the shrinking number of Black workers at a specific plant, the rally tried to drum up support for a grassroots push trying to force area defense contractors to open jobs for African Americans.[7] A handbill for the event linking employment opportunity with civil rights spoke with a sense of urgency to "Mobilize Now! It is Now or Never! We Are Americans Too!"[8] MOWM's call for "25,000 Negroes" to "storm the air-cooled auditorium" identified a multitude of issues to attract attendees that would, hopefully, join the organization.[9] Among the issues identified were limited employment in defense plants, racial violence and lynching, continued segregation of the armed forces, and the American Red Cross' segregation of blood plasma.[10]

The air-conditioned auditorium kept things comfortable on that summer night, but St. Louis had the potential to heat up with racial violence. The city's history of stormy race relations caused federal officials to designate enough soldiers from Jefferson Barracks to surround the building and ensure that "there was absolutely no trouble at all."[11] Broad support for the rally, the largest ever in St. Louis history up to that time, is evidenced in a motorcade of over 100 vehicles that paraded the city boosting the rally.[12] The motorcade was just one of the creative

ways that St. Louis MOWM generated publicity. In an apparently unprecedented publicity ploy, McNeal announced the demonstration through the city's mainstream White daily newspapers. This risky gesture saw unfamiliar White reporters augment the ranks of African American journalists covering the event. Even though it cost more money than similar advertising space in African American weeklies, placing advertisements in the White media announced the depth of discontent brewing among St. Louis' African Americans to an audience that, by all accounts, preferred to remain oblivious to the facts of segregation.[13] The Kiel Auditorium rally was supported by more conventional measures as well. As was typical for events of this type, the rally was partially financed by a wide assortment of Black-owned businesses that purchased advertising space in the program. Political and racial consciousness guided their support for the event, as nearly all of the undertakers, restaurants, night clubs, bars, auto mechanics, hotels, hair stylists, drug stores, physicians, and taxi services that advertised incorporated a message of support for Black protest and solidarity with MOWM as part of their advertisement.[14] These independent Black-owned businesses presented protest as something sanctioned by a broad spectrum of blue and white-collar professionals and workers throughout St. Louis' African American community. The support of workers and professionals did more than add a measure of respectability to African American protest, it also contributed to MOWM's coffers and allowed the organization to spend freely at the Kiel rally.[15] White supremacy and racial segregation necessitated "parallel institutions" that Darlene Clark Hine argues were "safe havens" from racism that gave African Americans "private space to buttress

battered dignity, nurture positive self-images, sharpen skills, and demonstrate expertise."[16] As seen in St. Louis, a healthy Black business community was a significant element to financing and sustaining grassroots activism.

Attendance estimates vary from 8,000–12,000, but both of these figures indicate a sizeable crowd registering concern about the local lack of compliance for Executive Order 8802 and support for MOWM's message that "Winning democracy for the Negro is winning the war for democracy."[17] A lineup of speakers contributing to the event's success featured "an aggregation of top-flight" national leaders and well-known local activists. These "men of national repute" included A. Philip Randolph, Walter White, and Milton Webster.[18] Nationally recognized figureheads were joined by local activists such as David Grant, T.D. McNeal, Rev. James Cook, and Chicago MOWM chairman Wesley Burton at the podium "to protest in one great massive voice."[19] "Playlets, skits and songs depicting the troubles and aspirations of the Negro people were presented" with acting and musical talent donated by the Aldridge Players and the Celestial Choristers performing Dick Campbell's "The Watchword is Forward."[20] In the opinion of MOWM chairman, A. Philip Randolph, the combination of outstanding oratory and the audience's enthusiastic response made the "epoch-making" Kiel Auditorium rally "up to the standard of mass meetings held anywhere by the March on Washington Movement, including New York and Chicago" as a "demonstration of Negro solidarity and power" in the United States.[21] The collection of nationally recognized orators, an action-packed program that included entertainment, the presentation of an organizational program, and follow up demonstrations in weeks ahead, reveal that

McNeal attempted to build a sustainable vehicle for protest that could harness African American discontent in St. Louis during the war years, something that the Negro Defense Committee failed to do when they had a similar well-attended rally at the same location a year earlier.[22]

Press releases and speeches emanating from St. Louis MOWM and the national office regularly affirmed that the organization maintained exclusively African American membership because of a perceived need to develop organic Black leadership.[23] The message at Kiel auditorium was no exception, and press accounts of the event indicate, "It was quite plain" that MOWM "was not against whites or against the United States Government."[24] McNeal's speech was halted by fervent applause several times, especially when he announced, "We pledge ourselves to fight against the Axis powers and at the same time dedicate our efforts to burying Jim Crowism in the same grave as the Axis dictators."[25] Likewise, Walter White argued that the real opponents to America's interests were "Gene Talmadge of Georgia, Governor Dixon of Alabama, Congressman Rankin of Mississippi, the Ku Klux Klan, the National Workers League, and all of those who share their views." By inverting an argument that equated wartime protest with sedition, White made racism in the "Fascist south" synonymous with un-Americanism – a novel, but not unprecedented, concept in the way some liberal Americans were thinking about race at the time.[26]

The Kiel Auditorium rally was structured in culturally recognizable patterns that combined secular mass protest with the rhetoric and rhythms of popular African American religious practices. Speakers "scathingly attacked jim crowism,

segregation and race prejudice in war industries and in the Army" and looked towards MOWM to resolve problems in their city and country. Familiar songs like "John Brown's Body" morphed into "Robert Brooks' Body." The chorus lent itself to MOWM's ends, as lyrics printed in the program used capital letters to emphasize the phrase "MARCHING ON."[27] Ministers, choirs, and spirituals were prominent at the event, giving it an even closer resemblance to a sacred gathering. In the performance of protest, speakers articulated a litany of social evils that could be remedied by the faithful support of an inspired audience. Aside from rhetoric, song, and structure, the rally most closely resembled a church service when long-time MOWM supporter Rev. James M. Bracey opened the event with an invocation that was followed by Pine Street YMCA official James Cook passing a collection plate in support of the upstart organization. Speech after speech expressed loyalty to God and country, as orators emphasized "that the Negro was loyal but that he preferred evidences of democracy now rather than many promises of full democracy after the war."[28]

David Grant spoke directly for St. Louis MOWM when he opened the event with a speech entitled "St. Louis Negro and the War Effort," an oration that one newspaper listed among the evening's best.[29] Audience response became so effervescent during his list of "what St. Louis Negroes resent and want remedied" that Grant had to request applause be tempered. Grant used recent history to illuminate the present. He referred to the "Close Ranks" campaign heralded by Du Bois during the First World War as a precedent for when African Americans were "promised equal rights but didn't get them." Grant thought it a betrayal to

democracy that African American soldiers returned from the war to a country with unbroken racism manifesting in "riots, unpunished lynchings, unemployment, labor union bars, and discrimination."[30] For Grant, the present situation demanded "Not 1917 promises, but 1942 action." According to St. Louis MOWM, this action had to be uncompromising in its demands and aggressive in its tactics to receive full recognition of African Americans as citizens of the United States.[31]

There was, in Grant's words, "a new Negro" in St. Louis. "In 1917 we didn't demand freedom," Grant continued, "but by the great Jehovah we demand it now!"[32] Taking the economic road to civil rights was St. Louis MOWM's hallmark in its early years, and Grant did this when listing grievances with race relations and racial inequality in his hometown. With theatres, ballparks, and eating facilities segregated, Grant identified limited opportunities in the city's booming defense industries as "a final last ditch" effort in "the fight for life" that made "the St. Louis Negro become aroused, resentful, and ultimately bitter." Grant feared that if proportionally representative employment was not achieved during a wartime labor shortage, it would probably not occur in anyone's lifetime.[33] Grant's work to alleviate dissatisfactory racial conditions was strongly influenced by his critical patriotism, a trademark that he shared with A. Philip Randolph.[34] Grant pointed out the contradiction of African American draft inductees en route to routine military physical examinations being forced to use a service elevator instead of the exclusively White elevator in the main lobby. Grant was strongly opposed to federal complicity with racial segregation but, like any sensible patriotic orator, his love for the United States was professed and he promised to "die if needs be for my country."

Grant's dedication, however, had limits, and his sacrifice would not be "1917 style…with sealed lips as to my complaints, my desires, my demands" for civil rights and racial equality.[35]

The lack of female speakers on the program that evening is a poignant metaphor for the city's African American leadership during the Second World War. The audience was mixed, as one African American female columnist "noticed just about as many women were present as men." Still, only one woman, Sallie Parham, spoke at the rally. Likewise, the fact-filled *Chicago Defender's* women's page makes only passing reference in of Frances Moseley's arrival in St. Louis to assist the MOWM chapter with logistics and operations.[36] Photographs of events and accounts from the contemporary media indicate that women were well-represented at all of the organization's sponsored marches, sit-ins, and planning meetings. Despite their strong representation, women were rarely sought out as spokespeople by local or national African American media outlets.

Gendered limitations on the parameters and scope of women's involvement in Roosevelt-era protest politics make it hardly surprising that Sallie Parham was the only woman to speak officially at the St. Louis MOWM event. As an administrator of the St. Louis YWCA and leader of the local National Council of Business and Professional Women, Parham was clearly one of the city's most recognized African American women. She used her time at the podium that evening as an opportunity to remind listeners that while men shouldered firearms oversees in the name of freedom, women on the home front had a responsibility to fight "for the American negro" by using their words as weapons. Her interpretation of the

Second World War was somewhat less overtly patriotic than that of the male speakers. Not directly connected to conscription, and somewhat unaffected by the logic of soldiering in order to justify full citizenship, Parham saw the war as one in which "White men are fighting to preserve their democracy and we are fighting to get our democracy."[37] Parham's view of women's activism was that females in MOWM "fight for victory here now so that they [African American males] may have a real victory at home when they return from war." Thus, according to Parham, the duty of African American women was to "shoulder the problems of the American negro in the same way many men are shouldering the guns" to liberate Europe. This duty translated to Black women on the home front maintaining constant agitation for equal opportunity in defense manufacturing, pressing for a federal anti-lynching law, advocating the repeal of literacy tests and poll taxes, and changing insulting policies such as segregated Red Cross blood banks. Above all, according to Parham, the most important fight was to make sure that "those who are gone for victory now" could come home "to a Victory here" at the war's conclusion.[38]

Also speaking that evening was national leader, A. Philip Randolph. As during the Harlem rally, Randolph "had to omit many portions" of his keynote address at Kiel "due to the lateness of the hour."[39] In this case, he had little time to demonstrate his well-known prowess as an orator because this Friday night event went on for over five hours and concluded at 1 am.[40] Randolph used his few minutes on the stage to ensure the enthusiastic but weary audience that "contrary to some reports that the March on Washington Movement has been abandoned, it is very much alive and it [the march] was only postponed," perhaps only until

September when MOWM would have a rally at Griffith Stadium. Randolph also urged the crowd to attack racial segregation in the Army on grounds that it reduced our "race to the status of second-class citizens."[41] Like previous MOWM rallies in Chicago and Harlem, the event was accompanied by a fifteen-minute electrical blackout "in Negro residential and business districts."[42] The resemblance was intentional, as McNeal solicited Harlem MOWM for copies of publicity material and tactics that it used in a recently successful blackout accompanying a rally at Madison Square Garden.[43] The context of America at war made the blackout an even more powerful symbol because England was using urban blackouts to confuse German bombers. MOWM seized the idea of turning off the lights in the name of freedom, an action that indicated a community taking action to defend itself under threat of a siege. The fifteen-minute duration, as Randolph pointed out to Charles Wesley Burton when planning the Chicago blackout, allowed for "better cooperation from businesses" and was publically espoused as a way to "make the most dramatic presentation of the feeling of dissatisfaction and resentment" with segregation in the military and discrimination in defense industries.[44] In the case of St. Louis, however, getting compliance from the local African American community was easy - many of them were already at the rally, making their participation in the blackout all but guaranteed. Ostensibly, all St. Louis MOWM had to do was remind people to turn off the lights on their way out the door before leaving to attend the rally.

The federal government was well aware of St. Louis' racial discontent and it is clear that the Roosevelt administration saw maintaining domestic tranquility as integral to national security during the war. There is no evidence of COINTELPRO

style sabotage experienced by later generations of Black activists, but it is certain that the FBI closely monitored racial protest organizations, including the avowedly patriotic MOWM.[45] African Americans were generally aware of federal monitoring, and even the *Pittsburgh Courier* remarked that the Kiel Auditorium rally was attended by thousands of African Americans from the St. Louis metro area as well as "many FBI men" who stood out in a sea of "sepia Americans."[46] Like the *Courier*, McNeal was aware of the presence of federal investigators, commenting in a letter to Randolph that the FBI was building a sedition case "on the basis of skits staged at our protest meeting."[47] The militant rhetoric of wartime Black protest and the crowd's visibly impressive size was obvious, but the FBI did not recognize the widespread support for St. Louis MOWM that came from other African American institutions. Although this support was just below the surface and would have been evident had investigators took the time to glance at the city's Black institutions, the FBI was occupied with investigations of genuinely subversive African American groups around the city - like the Pacific Movement of the Eastern World, a pro-Japanese organization denounced by MOWM as "hopelessly ignorant, anti-social, anti-Negro, and anti-Democratic."[48]

The list of organizations that St. Louis MOWM thanked for planning and coordinating its first major public rally reads like a directory of Black St. Louis' civic and social life: The Ushers Alliance of St. Louis, the Interdenominational Alliance of St. Louis, the Celestial Choristers, The We Group, The Business and Professional Girls Club, and the Industrial Club of the YWCA. St. Louis MOWM also thanked the bands playing at the rally and Black media outlets, *Argus* and *American*, for their

positive coverage of the event.[49] The importance of existing Black institutions to St. Louis MOWM's operations is further illustrated by the list of co-sponsoring organizations for the Kiel Auditorium rally: St. Louis NAACP, YMCA, BSCP, American Legion, and Elks Lodge 1012. The ability of "practically every Negro organization in the St. Louis area" to coalesce and make this impressive one-day protest rally happen made organizer T.D. McNeal comment that, "For the first time we seem to have absolute unity and solidarity among Negroes in the community and everyone is doing everything possible to make this the greatest demonstration of Negro power ever seen in the country."[50]

March on Carter, August 29, 1942

Federal investigators had legitimate concerns about proceedings at Kiel Auditorium because it led to a surge in public demonstrations – all of which had potential to explode into racial conflagrations. McNeal and other members of St. Louis MOWM hoped that the wildly successful rally "was merely incidental to the general program" of organizing local people "to intelligently and militantly fight for their rights."[51] The rally was somewhat of a coming out party for the upstart organization, but it also served to drum up support for a public demonstration taking place at Carter Carburetor's small arms plant later that month. A relatively large defense contractor with a $1 million contract to make artillery and bomb fuses, Carter had upwards of 3,200 employees and no African Americans on its payroll.[52] The company's recalcitrance made it an obvious target for MOWM to plan a demonstration appealing to "all Negroes who are interested in fighting for

economic justice in the form of jobs for our people." St. Louis MOWM's primary grievance against Carter was that it "flatly refuses to employ a single Negro in any capacity." More galling was that, as a defense contractor, war bonds that Americans of all races invested in subsidized the company's racially exclusive hiring practices.[53]

Two weeks after the "orderly demonstration" at Kiel auditorium, a crowd of 200-500 African Americans assembled on a hot late summer day.[54] They marched in single file for a mile from Tandy Park to the company's plant "with grimness of facial expression and a spirit of militancy" noticeable to at least one observer.[55] These were the kind of individuals cultural historian Robin D.G. Kelley had in mind when he drew on Paul Laurence Dunbar's poetry to conclude, "the mask was no longer visible" on the faces of African Americans during World War II, it was replaced "with a militant face."[56] The March on Carter established the precedent of walking behind "a large American flag" that became one of St. Louis MOWM's signatures at all of its demonstrations. Denouncing "the Fascist practices of the Carter company" brought little immediate gain, but it did keep St. Louis MOWM in the headlines.[57] There seems to be a ripple effect, as Sportsman's Park, home of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball club, was across the street from Carter Carburetor. Accounts of the march on Carter mention that the demonstration attracted the attention of fans in the stadium, and two years later this venue voluntarily desegregated its seating.[58]

MOWM used local African American media outlets like the *Argus* to announce that "all Negroes who are interested in fighting for economic justice in the form of

jobs for our people" could and should assemble at a local park and "saunter" together for nearly a mile to Carter Carburetor's plant.[59] McNeal advised "all intelligent Negroes" to "drop everything and join this demonstration," but he didn't rush St. Louis MOWM into action. McNeal's experience as a labor organizer taught him the productivity of negotiation with management. According to McNeal, Carter's management "ignored our request for a conference," and implicitly "ASKED FOR A MARCH!"[60] Carter explained its actions to MOWM, rationalizing them as necessary because a company-wide retooling of machines meant that no new employees were needed for the immediate future. Carter's general manager, H.H. Weed, reacted to the march with what one left-leaning newspaper called a "manifest untruth" when he claimed that the company had "no established policy barring Negroes from employment."[61] A less partisan newspaper recorded additional comments by Weed that suggest Carter Carburetor intended to stand firm on its racially exclusive hiring practices. According to Weed, the company's first responsibility was rehiring the 600 workers who were laid off during the retooling that slowed production while the plant was outfitted for defense work. After that, the company had "3500 applications" to sort through before any new employment applications were solicited.[62] In short, Weed tactfully and transparently informed St. Louis MOWM that Carter's racial status quo would be maintained for the foreseeable future. Carter management held fast to racial exclusion, and unlike other employment centers targeted by MOWM, it never capitulated to pressure politics or integrated its workforce.[63]

Members of the "large crowd" were unquestionably bitter about Carter management's resistance towards integrating its workforce. A police squad car and two motorcycle patrolmen followed the "quiet and orderly march."[64] This well-disciplined "group of more than 500 Negroes" followed a path on the sidewalk through a White neighborhood, whose response ranged from disaffected to vocally sympathetic.[65] One eyewitness account reports that a White supporter yelled, "I don't blame you!" and another shouted that the city's racial problems were the result of White Southerners.[66] Reports from White newspapers mentioned that Carter employees silently stared at the procession but remained aloof, giving "no sign of recognizing the demonstration."[67] David Grant led the march, which by all accounts was within the boundaries of propriety, and he made sure that everyone quietly disbanded after completing the mile-long trek to a picket outside of the factory.[68]

The march on Carter was the first demonstration sponsored by St. Louis MOWM. Although risky, its decision to march over a mile and through a predominantly White neighborhood gave the organization prominence and helped rocket it to the top of the city's ranks of African American leadership. McNeal and Grant believed that mobilizing local people to take action at plants like Carter placed their city at the locus of national problems. Working class African Americans came out in droves, and their presence that day was noticeable. This was made possible by keeping the action close to home, which made it easier for working people to assemble without missing wages or possibly losing their jobs for taking time off.[69]

It was clear that attendance was far short of T.D. McNeal's call for "10,000 Strong" to fight for "jobs, freedom, equal opportunities, and full citizenship," but the *Chicago Defender* called this demonstration "a complete success" that raised consciousness of the "vicious" racist hiring practices at Carter and other defense plants in the area.[70] McNeal himself was pleased with the turnout, and he thought that the march satisfied its objectives. "The purpose of this demonstration," McNeal said, "was to dramatize the plight of the discriminated Negro" and put contradictions of the issue squarely in the "conscience" of the city's White residents. McNeal's scheme of protest politics caused him to believe that effective protest would put "our problem before the people of St. Louis." Once awareness of the situation was raised, McNeal believed, "The conscience of the people will do the rest."[71]

In quantifiable terms of jobs gained as a result of St. Louis MOWM protests, the march on Carter was one of the organization's least effective demonstrations. This event is noteworthy because it was the first of its kind in the Gateway City and it heralded the ascendency of McNeal, Grant, and St. Louis MOWM to the pinnacle of local Black leadership. The march on Carter also introduced rhetorical and representative precedents that St. Louis MOWM adhered to in subsequent campaigns.[72] Also important was the prominent display of the American flag and the use of Christian prayer as a vehicle for protest stayed with the organization for its entire life. The recurrent appearance of patriotic Christianity in St. Louis MOWM's pronouncements and practices indicates that McNeal, Grant, and other MOWM members were convinced that claiming loyalty to the United States and

expressing this ideal in sacred rhetoric was both salient to them and familiar to the city's White power structure. In the end, it was evident that loyalty to God and country was expected to translate into greater employment opportunities for African Americans.[73]

Prayer Demonstration at St. Louis Memorial Plaza, October 18, 1942

As a young Black protest organization, St. Louis MOWM relied on the twin pillars of militant civic engagement and public exposure that hyped its protests. Keeping the community motivated necessitated that the organization always follow through with more demonstrations, pickets, and public meetings. In the march on Carter's aftermath, McNeal announced that people "from all walks of life" were called to gather for a prayer meeting at City Hall the following week. [74] There is no documentary explanation why the public prayer demonstration was rescheduled, but the event was eventually held on October 18, 1942. Organizers chose St. Louis Memorial Plaza as a place to "pray for victory of the United Nations and for justice to the Negro people" because the venue was nearby to city government buildings.[75] The prayer demonstration was part of an orchestrated effort by MOWM's national office to have local units sponsor solemn public prayer services as a form of protest against racial discrimination.[76] St. Louis MOWM was in the vanguard in advancing the idea of integrating sacred and secular protest in an outdoor public arena. Though planning was difficult and the weather uncooperative, the ultimate success of St. Louis MOWM's public prayer demonstration prompted A. Philip Randolph to direct Charles Wesley Burton of Chicago MOWM to "plan [for November 9th] public

prayer meeting in the Loop, in the interest of teen age boys lynched in Mississippi."[77]

Plans for this joint effort between St. Louis MOWM and the Inter-Denominational Ministerial Alliance were "perfected" at MOWM's weekly YMCA meeting the week after the march on Carter. According to one account, this planning meeting attracted 350 attendees, far more than any other weekly MOWM meeting at the Pine Street YMCA.[78] McNeal wanted to capitalize on increasing support from "whites of the city," and he hoped that "all local churches" would support the public prayer "for the victory of the United Nations and for justice to the Negro people now."[79] The outdoor service was advertised as a way for people to demonstrate their faith in God and express support for St. Louis MOWM while "presenting a mass Prayer Petition to the All Mighty for a full share of the Democratic way of life for the Negro people."[80]

St. Louis MOWM tapped into a well of overtly patriotic religious reform that McNeal hoped would be "the greatest thing of its sort ever seen in America."[81] Publicity consisted of broadsides posted throughout the city, radio spots, announcements in pulpits, and supportive editorials in African American newspapers.[82] The *Pittsburgh Courier* also used patriotism and religious devotion in order to publicize the event, ensuring potential attendees that, "Every effort is being made to see that the citizens of St. Louis attend and share in this event with the view in mind of obtaining divine help in the fight on the part of the Negro for justice and fair play and for an eventual victory for the allied forces…this war will be a righteous war that will bring true Christianity to all and a real peace to the world."[83]

McNeal never overlooked the power of religion as a tool for mobilizing masses, but his call in the *St. Louis American* used a slightly more secular tone. Promising, "we, the Negro people of St. Louis, will consecrate our souls to the unfinished task of completing the structure of our economic, social and political citizenship," McNeal weaved religious devotion with messianic civic involvement that promised to fulfill egalitarian ideals. McNeal understood that, in the world of protest politics, results deepened support, and he used his forum as event organizer to point out St. Louis MOWM's accomplishments. Chief among these victories was that "Plants where five months ago Negroes were formerly confined to sweeping the floors and other extremely menial work have opened the doors of economic opportunity…to well paid jobs, in-plant training and better jobs with better pay."[84]

Estimates of attendance placed the crowd at the prayer demonstration at 1,500-3,000, which was greater than the march on Carter but significantly less than the Kiel Auditorium rally.[85] In a letter to A. Philip Randolph, one St. Louis MOWM member commented, "the entire program was undoubtedly soul-stirring" but the attendance was smaller than hoped, and "there were not many souls for it to stir."[86] Though disappointing to some St. Louis MOWM members, the outcome was impressive considering that this was a grassroots demonstration without the benefit of national star power like A. Philip Randolph or Walter White. Perhaps a larger factor was the weather, which was overcast throughout the event and eventually turned into a steady downpour towards the conclusion. Thus, even though "all the ministers appeared as scheduled" and the event "was very beautiful," attendance

was less than predicted and the cloudburst during the collection meant that only forty dollars - less than half of the event's cost - was recuperated.[87]

Publicity for the prayer demonstration promised "a most unusual event" showcasing an ethos of militant Christianity that portrayed African Americans as "not only a fighting people, but also a praying people."[88] In planning for the event, McNeal was careful to ensure that it could be easily attended because "the program as a whole will consume less than an hour and will be packed with interest."[89] He secured co-sponsorship from the Interdenominational Minister's Alliance, which enlivened proceedings with a 300-voice choir that drew from African American churches across the city. The most prominent ministers participating in the service, and at many other St. Louis MOWM events, included Noah Clark, James Cook, and Inter-Denominational Ministers Alliance leader James M. Bracy.[90] For the zealous race women and men in attendance that day, religion and politics were inseparable – the path to true Christianity was also the way to truly fulfill the American promise of democratic equality. A recurring message in publicity leading up to the event was that sincere Christians supported America's military efforts abroad and carried on "a righteous war" against racial inequality "that will bring true Christianity to all."[91] Leaders of the service saw religion as a vehicle for smashing racial hostility and perfecting human relations. This is best exemplified by Rev. Bracy, who believed that spiritual power was the only way for mankind to break down "ancient as the Chinese walls…racial walls, some walls of hate, others national, others social." Bracy continued his prayer, "and since most walls are built by the prisoners themselves, they can be destroyed only by Jesus, who is the kind of truth that sets men free."[92]

As a secular leader, McNeal's message that day was that African American soldiers faced the threat of replaying the experiences of their counterparts in the First World War, when Black veterans returned from Europe to a racial landscape marred by violence and plagued with inequality. To McNeal, the physical war against Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito was also an ideological battle. Victory meant that soldiers would come home to see the democratic promise fulfilled with voting rights unimpeded by the poll tax and abundant employment opportunities unimpeded by racial restrictions. In his prayer, McNeal told the outdoor congregation that "we can win the war and lose the peace" if steady efforts to promote racial equality were neglected.[93] As nearly every MOWM spokesperson did at some point during oratory, McNeal took a moment from his ten-minute prayer to reiterate his unwavering support for the United Nations and seized the opportunity to "restate the composition, aims and purposes of the March Movement," defining it as "an all Negro movement that is not anti-white." McNeal took this message of self-reliance a step further, reminding listeners that "Negroes should supply the money and pay the price" for their freedom. A consummate organization builder, McNeal urged listeners to join MOWM at the fee of one dollar per person. He made sure to "stress and emphasize" that support and encouragement "of all liberal forces" was appreciated, but that "the main and basic responsibility" for social change rested "upon Negroes themselves."[94]

McNeal's message of self-reliance was part of a longstanding tradition in African American protest politics, but it was also indicative of another reality in Roosevelt-era America. The idea that African Americans should bear ultimate

responsibility for eradicating racial inequality was an admission by McNeal that he saw White supremacy as being so deeply entrenched in America's fabric that it could not be effectively challenged by the country's sincere but marginalized White liberals. Thus, McNeal prayed that "we, the Negro masses in the March on Washington Movement dedicate our sprit and pledge our lives never to waver in our patriotism and all-out efforts to help win the war for the United nations and never to falter, grow faint, or fail in our fight for a truly democratic America, SO HELP US GOD." He believed that African Americans could obtain equal protection as citizens and ultimately bring the United States to a place where it could justly "assume the moral and spiritual leadership of world democracy."[95]

The formation of St. Louis MOWM over a year after Executive Order 8802 became law was recognition that African Americans stood at a critical disjunction in the praxis of American democracy. Once hailed by the African American press as the first significant progressive federal legislation since the nineteenth century, E.O. 8802 made little impact in the lives of countless African Americans. Publicly, Randolph professed that President Roosevelt's support was enough to cancel the proposed march, and he repeatedly stated that E.O. 8802 was more than a gesture of the Roosevelt administration's commitment to equal opportunity. As seen through the experiences of local leadership in St. Louis MOWM, African Americans were cognizant of the disparity between theory and practice when it came to the implementation of progressive public policy in a racial democracy. Members of St. Louis MOWM believed that E.O. 8802 was their generation's version of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Reconstruction Amendments. As such, they

understood that constant public pressure was necessary to ensure that legal victories did not become dead letters through the willful ignorance or hostile intransigence of local officials.

The Long Campaign to Integrate U.S. Cartridge, 1942-1944

In the course of three years, St. Louis MOWM expended much of its energy engaging in a series of protests, pickets, and negotiations with U.S. Cartridge, a bullet manufacturer known to locals as the Small Arms Plant.[96] Armed with "a new set of alphabets," St. Louis MOWM took its campaign at U.S. Cartridge with law and the FEPC on its side.[97] Chances for some degree of success seemed likely because U.S. Cartridge, like other ordinance plants that were expanding, did not have a long tradition of excluding African American workers.[98] In short, racial discrimination was not deeply woven into the company's history. Compounding this was the fact that U.S. Cartridge needed all of the qualified manpower it could find. As the most prolific producer of .30 and .50 caliber ammunition in the world, U.S. Cartridge boasted, "its production is measured in fantastic figures, literally billions of cartridges." The campus of this critical component in the arsenal of democracy was "a vast fenced in area, covered with hundreds of ultra-modern brick and concrete buildings."[99] Six months after Pearl Harbor, this impressive production center had 21,000-23,500 employees, only 300 of which were African American. Of this 300, there were zero African American women. Severely under-represented, Black workers at this company also had their opportunities for promotion greatly

curtailed. All of them were classified as porters, and their duties encompassed janitorial service and moving material.[100]

If comments from a company spokesperson can be interpreted as indicative of management's attitude, U.S. Cartridge's view of Black workers was a neo-paternalism that allowed the company to imagine itself as a beneficent and well-intentioned employer. This view was tinged with a *Gone With the Wind* paranoia of misguided and ill-prepared African Americans infiltrating and ultimately destroying cultural and economic institutions. The comments of a spokesperson rationalizing the company's reluctance to utilize Black workers to manufacture bullets illustrate this well. "You just can't," U.S. Cartridge explained, " turn unskilled workers loose in an ammunition plant."[101] The implication was clear: African American workers could not be trusted with direct involvement of armament manufacturing.

The few African Americans employed at U.S. Cartridge faced racial conditions that were, at best, insulting. In addition to always being passed over for promotions, they were often served leftover food in the employee cafeteria and were inconvenienced by "Colored Only" restrooms.[102] By 1943, disdain for their treatment was at the core of a walkout that was designed to express their opposition to "enforced segregation" and register protest against perceived racial insults hurled by an exclusively White cadre of foremen. "Prior to the war," U.S. Cartridge told the FEPC, "Negro Workers found employment chiefly in heavy industrial trades" that were limited to the most "menial and lowest-paying jobs."[103] This occurred in spite of an eighteen-month old promise to the Urban League that the company would train more African American workers for skilled positions with

greater prestige.[104] The company could clearly not be counted on to hold its word. The daily experiences of African American workers gave lie to U.S. Cartridge's claim that "there was no concerted or set policy of intra-plant segregation of Jim Crow."[105] This was personalized by the experiences of Blyden Steale and Elvin Matthews. Just days before St. Louis MOWM's first demonstration at U.S. Cartridge, the company denied Steale and Matthews employment "despite the fact that they are the only two Negroes in the city who are members of the St. Louis local of the A.F.L. union of Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers Union" and they had extensive experience on union job sites alongside White workers.[106]

Attempts by African American organizations to carve a niche for Black workers on U.S. Cartridge's payroll began in 1941, when the local Urban League negotiated with the company to offer more training opportunities for those already employed with the company. This program's ultimate goal was to prepare Black workers to fill supervisory positions in racially exclusive divisions, thus eliminating the possibility that orders from a White foremen could be interpreted as racial antagonism. This compromise offered the appeal of upward mobility for blue-collar African American workers but, over the course of a year, it amounted to little real progress.[107] St. Louis MOWM stepped with protest politics to force the company to follow its word and the law.[108]

Maliciously or not, U.S. Cartridge dismissed nearly 200 African American workers without providing paperwork explaining their separation – an action that all but ensured their permanent exclusion from St. Louis' industrial labor force. This event was the impetus for St. Louis MOWM to get involved with demonstrations at

U.S. Cartridge.[109] St. Louis' Black residents were outraged. With little FEPC presence in the city "so that we could feel that something or somebody was there," David Grant later explained to Congress, "the only place we could go was to the streets."[110] This is precisely what happened on June 20, 1942, when an "army of marchers," numbering between 200-600, "representing all social and occupational strata" picketed for two hours. Demonstrators "from the dicty to the despised" braved temperatures in the low nineties on a balmy solstice day to surround the perimeter of U.S. Cartridge's sprawling campus.[111] In order to get there, they walked over four miles, much of which was through a predominantly White neighborhood.[112] The determination of this diverse group of African Americans surely pleased A. Philip Randolph, who urged McNeal to "try to get as much people…as possible, old and young, educated and uneducated, good and bad, crap shooter and preacher; for everybody is needed in this fight for Negro rights."[113] Ranging from "adolescence to almost senility," this loose assortment of "Ministers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, housewives, laborers and labor union representatives" demonstrated the heightening resolve and increased solidarity of Black St. Louis.[114]

Typifying the patriotic atmosphere St. Louis MOWM cultivated at all of its pickets, protestors at U.S. Cartridge marched behind a "huge American flag" that unquestionably testified their allegiance to the United States and symbolized their claim to full citizenship. "A large detachment of squad cars and police officers" received this "peaceful" protest "courteously" while curious but aloof U.S. Cartridge employees looked on.[115] The police came out at McNeal's request, and there is no indication that law enforcement behaved antagonistically that day.[116] David Grant

remembered that White observers "kept their thoughts to themselves," perhaps in respect to a demonstration that exemplified the pageantry of mid-twentieth century Black American protest.[117] Grant's responsibility at the demonstration was to ensure that the crowd's words and gestures could not be interpreted as an expression of animosity towards potentially hostile onlookers. In this capacity, Grant had "to advise people in the line of march not to carry on conversations with bystanders, with people who might be there to heckle." He also instructed the crowd make sure that police or appointed event monitors be notified of any disturbances.[118]

Demonstrators communicated with plant management, the city's power structure, and other citizens through messages carried on eighteen different MOWM-authorized placards. Without bullhorns or a marching band, St. Louis MOWM relied on the public dignity and orderly procession of demonstrators to present a multi-faceted argument for incorporating African American workers into military production. Strongly influenced by Double V rhetoric, their messages often made racial discrimination and fascism synonymous. A sampling of St. Louis MOWM's slogans includes "How can we DIE FREELY for democracy abroad if we can't WORK EQUALLY for democracy at home," "Selective service for Negroes – U.S. Army – Front Line! – U.S. Cartridge – Rear Line!," "Winning Democracy for the Negro is Winning the War for Democracy," and "Why Make Propaganda for Nazi Goebels?"[119] Their rhetoric was an attempt to bring the war against fascism home to America, where its parallel was the struggle against racism.[120]

The *St. Louis American* called MOWM's protest at U.S Cartridge "one of the most significant demonstrations ever staged in St. Louis."[121] The *Pittsburgh Courier* followed suit, praising it as "one of the most spectacular ever held in the Mound City."[122] The reaction of St. Louis' White media was, at best, tepid. The *St. Louis American* attacked *Sunday Post-Dispatch* for sending a "crudely biased…Dixie-trained reporter." The *American's* biggest gripe was the use of the modifier "alleged" whenever it mentioned the plant's racial discrimination because signs designating racial segregation were clearly posted throughout the plant. U.S. Cartridge's "jim crow policy is an open book," the *American* wrote, comparable to the "alleged…Jap attack on Pearl harbor on December 7th."[123]

McNeal knew that the equation for progress was more complicated than the simple arithmetic of street demonstrations and a need for manpower translating into more jobs for Black workers. From the beginning of his organization's involvement at U.S. Cartridge, McNeal thought that the aim was "to bring this matter to the attention of the public here, to the Roosevelt administration and particularly to the Fair Employment Practices Committee in Washington."[124] This stance speaks to St. Louis MOWM's remarkable commitment to the democratic process and faith in a well-informed electorate to behave sensibly. In this framework, displaying banners and placards "pointing out what we considered the justice of our cause" should be enough to foster meaningful social change. In reality, getting African Americans included in the defense industry took more than snappy slogans and sound logic. Numbers were what mattered most, and St. Louis MOWM constantly

tried to get people to come out and publicly express faith in the federal government to enforce its own laws in spite of local customs and practices.[125]

In a letter to U.S. Cartridge's public relations director, McNeal warned that this demonstration "was a mere token of what the Negro people think…and how they resent discriminatory policies and anti-democratic attitudes of the U.S. Cartridge company, all of which flagrantly violate the declared policy of the American people as expressed in President Roosevelt's executive order number 8802." McNeal threatened to occupy public space around U.S Cartridge indefinitely to publicize the extent of racial discrimination at the plant. He promised to keep the issue "in the streets" with "constantly increasing numbers…until it is settled and settled right." These comments encapsulate St. Louis MOWM's program, which intended to attract the attention of a reluctant but dutiful federal government through non-violent disruptions of everyday life. As pointed out by one scholar, this tactic relied upon "the physical impressiveness of large numbers" and support from the Roosevelt administration.[126] St. Louis MOWM believed that it could topple racial employment barriers with a politically mobilized community and a supportive federal government.

Before committing St. Louis MOWM to picketing, McNeal and Grant negotiated with U.S. Cartridge through Industrial Relations Manager, R.V. Rickard. Discussions quickly hit an impasse and collapsed, but small gains were made in the aftermath of the June 20 demonstration. In its aftermath, African American workers at U.S. Cartridge, all of whom were porters, received a ten-cent per hour raise. This is noteworthy because it marked the first time in company history that African

Americans received a pay increase of any sort, even though White employees enjoyed periodic raises throughout their career.[127]

Post-protest negotiations also secured a promise from the company that 100 African American women would be hired.[128] Within four days, seventy-two African American women added to the over 8,000 women already employed by U.S. Cartridge.[129] The gain was small but welcome for a group that, as of 1941, averaged only one-fourth the weekly earnings of their male counterparts and, even towards the war's end, only comprised 4% of the 7 million women workers employed nationally in war production.[130] Progress at U.S. Cartridge was bittersweet, as all of the newly hired Black women were taken on as matrons. The concentration of Black women workers into this one position added stigma to a job whose primary duty was to clean women's restrooms on the company's sprawling campus.[131] Statistics reveal that African American women integrated the defense workforce, with their proportion in this industry rising from 6.5 percent to 18 percent between 1940-1944.[132] Numbers such as these suggest that the proportion of African American women working in defense industries tripled during the Second World War, but incidents like U.S. Cartridge caution historians to consider the *quality* of work as well as its *quantity*. Emphasizing quantifiable gains like pay grades and the amount of jobs secured allowed MOWM's literature to cheer, with some amount of truth, that its demonstrations represented "action followed by immediate results!"[133]

Still, a small pay increase for porters and the acquisition of 72 jobs for African American women were only partial victories in St. Louis MOWM's first round of negotiations and pickets at U.S. Cartridge. The young organization was still

well short of its stated goals, which was universal compliance with E.O. 8802, the complete desegregation of all work facilities, and convincing the company to stop recruiting workers from outside the St. Louis metro region until the city's existing labor supply was exhausted.[134] David Grant thought that the campaign at U.S Cartridge symbolized a paradigm shift in the city's race relations, which he believed were analogous to that of the United States as a whole. As such, Grant did not want to cause trouble or instigate counter-productive friction because "we are hopelessly outnumbered." Compounding the problem of being a minority group in a representative democracy was a longstanding tradition of conflict at the confluence of racial protest and law enforcement. "The constabulary and police department," Grant pointed out at a Congressional FEPC hearing, "are never sympathetic" to African Americans who agitate against the status quo. Facing a hostile police and an unresponsive FEPC, Grant argued that "there was no agency to which we could reliably look," thus leaving the city's Black community with no other choice but to agitate for change.[135]

Like Grant, McNeal also located the strongest force of change outside of city or state government. He saw Black St. Louis' strongest ally as the federal government – not local defense plants that seemed to be in desperate need of qualified workers. As he did at Carter Carburetor and in subsequent campaigns, McNeal's plan to integrate U.S. Cartridge's workforce hinged upon attracting the FEPC's attention and getting the agency to conduct hearings with a view of correcting the bad employment conditions for Negroes."[136] This was a departure from the St. Louis Urban League's previous efforts, which relied on good-faith

agreements between individual employers for increased representation of African American workers. In the words of one newspaper, the addition of protest politics added a sense of urgency to a situation that was already in flux, and St. Louis MOWM's program "spread like a fire" through St. Louis' Black community.[137]

Acting as a mouthpiece for St. Louis MOWM, the *St. Louis American* predicted that this success "served notice to other defense plants that their time is coming."[138] This was welcome news to MOWM, which wanted to use its success at U.S. Cartridge as a springboard to accomplish the same "in every plant in St. Louis working on war production."[139] Not content with a few menial jobs and a small raise for the company's existing Black workers, McNeal promised, "there is no intention on the part of the Negro community to let up in its fight on small arms because of these…token job considerations." Emboldened by the implicit support of federal authority of E.O. 8802 and a handful of politically engaged African Americans, McNeal asserted that "the Negro citizens of St. Louis have a right to thousands of jobs" filling defense orders throughout the city.[140]

Members of St. Louis MOWM hoped that pickets and protests would not be seen as opposition to U.S. Cartridge, and the organization cancelled the next round of pickets to demonstrate this.[141] David Grant even boasted that St. Louis MOWM "worked hand in glove with management," as a sort of Urban League that drew its power from protest politics.[142] This blend of protest and uplift was a factor in the six-fold increase of African American employees at U.S. Cartridge over the year to almost 1,700. MOWM's organizational literature boasted, "Brother, that is money you can count!"[143]

Things were quiet between St. Louis MOWM and U.S. Cartridge for almost a year, but then the organization sponsored another rally at Kiel Municipal Auditorium to give "shot in the arm of St. Louis" and generate interest in resuming demonstrations at the bullet factory. The purpose was to rally support for FEPC hearings in the city and cheer the 8,000 African Americans who entered St. Louis' defense workforce in the past year. Unlike the previous year's rally, when attendance estimates reached over 10,000, only about 1,500 came out on May 9, 1943. Event planners told reporters that this one "will be shorter but promises to be even more impressive than the one last August." The small attendance figure is puzzling considering that MOWM's "masterful, intelligent, and fearless" national leader A. Philip Randolph and the "eloquent" David Grant were on the bill.[144] McNeal was not on the program that evening, but his leadership style was better suited to organizational work than oratory. Randolph acknowledged this by opening his address with a gesture to McNeal and "fellow marchers."[145]

The *St. Louis American* cheered Randolph for "LEADING like a real leader at a time when a REAL LEADER is sorely needed." The national leader urged listeners to join AFL and CIO unions, demand equal citizenship rights, and pledge unity with "democratic forces against fascism." He also cautioned African Americans to avoid radical third party politics, advocating instead for building a "strong political bloc among 15,000,000" African Americans that was comparable in strength to other special interests such as farmers and manufacturers.[146] Speaking with "his low-pitched voice and clearly enunciated words," Randolph denounced Republicans and Democrats as "tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum as far as the Negro is concerned,"

criticized Socialists as "too weak," and cautioned about the "handicap" of "being red" when "it's hard enough being black." Randolph's salvo closed with a salute to winning the war, reminding his audience that an Axis victory was a "negation of all freedoms." This, in Randolph's mind, was something that African Americans could ill afford because they "are not free, never have been free and we have to fight for our freedom at home."[147]

Within a day of St. Louis MOWM's second rally, upwards of 200 White women, "many of whom have come to work from small towns where Negroes are kept in segregation," staged a "sit-down strike" at U.S. Cartridge.[148] This wildcat hate strike demonstrates what one historian identified as "the Rosetta stone of American working class history," in which "white American workers are race-conscious first and class-conscious second."[149] The impetus for their action was learning that "about 50 Negro floor men" from the nearly all-Black Unit 202 were now servicing machines in their production unit.[150] Reactionary fervor spread quickly as about thirty female machine operators on the first shift that Monday stopped working. Within hours, their number grew sevenfold. Surprisingly, there was only one physical confrontation during this tense moment and, fortunately, plant guards quickly defused it.[151] Company spokespeople explained the hate strike was caused by a "misunderstanding…that the white men had been discharged," when in reality, "they were promoted." The presence of "the Negroes" was apologized for, with the rationale being that it was "impossible to get white men…because of the manpower shortage." It was further explained that floormen "merely moved material," and had no supervision over the female machine

operators.[152] U.S. Cartridge handled the striking group gently. Within a day, it conceded their demand for an exclusively White shop floor, announcing it "abandoned" a plan using African American material handlers in previously all-White units. U.S. Cartridge capitulated to White supremacy and reverted to its former policy of keeping what by that time was all 3,500 of its African American employees in the completely segregated Unit 202. The company decided to make Unit 202 a self-contained segregated workforce. It started advertising in St. Louis' Black newspapers for "men with some experience in machine and metal trades" as well as "housemen, clerks, dishwashers, janitors, porters, elevator operators," looking for "clean inside work" to apply for a position that helped the country and furthered the war effort.[153] This was the beginning of U.S. Cartridge's equivalent to the Tuskegee Airmen, and it allowed African American workers to "carve a niche for themselves" in an industry that was previously racially exclusive.[154]

Race relations at U.S. Cartridge in the aftermath of the women's strike were tumultuous. A month later, an estimated 3,600 African American workers from three different shifts at U.S. Cartridge walked out in reaction to "the appointment of a white foreman to supervise them."[155] The foreman in question had a year of experience working with the company's all-Black squads and came to U.S. Cartridge from another war plant, but strike leaders complained that "the company had fallen down" on its "promise" to racially integrate the exclusively-White floor management crew that had been in place since Unit 202's inception in July 1942.[156] As a result, the wildcat "man bites dog" strike began with 1,500 African American workers simultaneously sitting down. Like the White women's strike, they did not picket or

create any other disturbance. The strike easily spread through the next two shifts and included all of the company's African American employees, effectively shutting down production in unit 202.[157]

The *St. Louis Argus* explained that African American workers at U.S. Cartridge were bitter that members of their race were always passed over for promotions to foreman.[158] The racialization of the relationship between low-level management and laborers was even more bitter because the company had recently promised to give greater consideration to African American workers for promotions.[159] St. Louis' African American newspapers were favorable to MOWM but these same media outlets were ambivalently guarded in their appraisal of the striking Black workers.[160] An example of this is seen in the *St. Louis American*, which criticized the day-long strike as "provincial" and "non-democratic." The *American* restrained its criticism because the controversial strike was a reaction to racial segregation that had little to do with "any innate prejudice against their foreman's hair, eyes, religion, or color" and more to do with carving out upwardly mobile job opportunities for Black workers.[161] The *Daily Worker* was more vociferous in its condemnation of the strike as the product of "Fifth Column traitors, or misled dupes who either deliberately or thoughtlessly join in provoking internal strife that disrupts and endangers our war effort."[162] CIO Local 825 shared this opinion, albeit in more tactful language. This union represented many of the striking workers, and it took a blanket stance against all work stoppages.[163]

As could be expected, St. Louis MOWM downplayed the strike's magnitude. After all, the organization fought valiantly to secure jobs for the three thousand plus

African American workers at U.S. Cartridge. St. Louis MOWM denounced strikers as "unwise, ill-timed, hasty and without outside support of Negro people, your union or the March on Washington Committee."[164] With little outside support from Black protest organizations or media outlets, this strike still managed to be the largest one led by African Americans during the war. Though their dissatisfaction was clearly deep, the strike was settled in one day – hardly enough time for the notoriously inefficient FEPC bureaucracy to set in motion and rectify a deeper systematic problem at U.S. Cartridge. The strike had a program, but workers agreed to return to their positions and continue arbitrating while resuming production.[165] St. Louis MOWM tactfully stayed away from wielding the kind of mass pressure politics that made it an effective wartime organization. Instead, McNeal had the organization confer and cooperate with company management to address the problem. In short, St. Louis MOWM functioned as union in its position as a liaison between African American workers and U.S. Cartridge.[166] The result of the strike was a promise to "replace the white foreman" and train Black leadership in Unit 202, which it quickly followed through with by placing almost three dozen African Americans in foreman positions by the month's end. In only eighteen hours, production resumed to pre-strike levels and an agreement was made "to arbitrate the dispute."[167] Resistance by White employees to work as peers with African Americans and the refusal of Black workers to labor under exclusively White foremen came to a head in the day-long strike.

The fight for equal employment opportunity at U.S. Cartridge did not end with a labor disruption that was "one of the most spectacular ever held in the

Mound City."[168] As was the experience in Reconstruction and later in the Civil Rights Movement, members of St. Louis MOWM knew that constant vigilance was necessary to protect gains that were won by pressure politics. In this case, a reactionary response came quickly. In July 1943, over one hundred African American employees, many of whom were women, were fired from U.S Cartridge. The *St. Louis American*, a local Black newspaper that had a history of being very sympathetic to MOWM campaigns, acknowledged that miscreants and rascals were indeed among some of the released. The paper blasted "Every shiftless, drunken, poorly disciplined colored war worker" as a "double saboteur" of racial progress and the war effort.[169] Roughly half a year earlier, another of St. Louis' African American media outlets anticipated mass firings and the racially coded language explaining their dismissals. The *Argus* championed African American war workers for "making history." As the beneficiaries of Roosevelt's momentous executive order, they were responsible for being on their best behavior at the job site. "Common sense," the *Argus* argued, dictated that "exacting" government work should be done with an eye for perfection, even in personal appearance while in uniform.[170] For commentators and common people who understood race relations in the moral terms so common to that generation, the irreverent and outspoken George Schuyler's words encapsulated the problem of African American workers. Poorly disciplined and uncouthly mannered workers that did not meet company standards of personal behavior and appearance "are in the minority, but they shape white majority opinion, which in turn shapes our lives."[171] Thus no one, not even St.

Louis MOWM, rose to defend U.S. Cartridge's first mass layoff of African American workers.

This was not a time to take antagonistic action against any defense company in St. Louis that would hire African Americans in any capacity. Further layoffs at U.S. Cartridge and slower than expected hiring at Curtis-Wright made "available jobs for colored women" bottom out at a "critically low point." In 1943, these were the only two out of 325 total companies holding defense contracts in St. Louis that had an appreciable number of African American women employees. The prospect of more layoffs and continued recalcitrance from other employers presented working African American women with a choice: "going into domestic service at extremely low pay or be subjected to actual want." With 20,000 African American women available for work in St. Louis area defense plants in 1944, it seemed likely that they would only be incorporated into defense work after the supply of Black men was nearly exhausted.[172] Two years of MOWM activity on their behalf and intervention by Mayor's Race Relations Commission made little impact, causing a local observer to conclude, "there is no city in the nation where employment conditions are as bad for colored girls and women."[173]

In 1944, after three years of racial animosity that saw wildcat strikes from workers of both races, U.S. Cartridge and St. Louis MOWM leadership agreed upon the "St. Louis Plan." This management program officially designated Unit 202 as an all-Black production unit. In comparison to other programs, the most important change that this designation brought was the introduction of African American management to this historically Black unit. Unit 202 employed 5,000 workers, all of

whom labored and lunched in segregated but respectable facilities. Though St. Louis MOWM saw this as a compromise "at which we were not over happy," it represented a pragmatic solution to the problem of offering a minority group economic opportunity in spite of pervasive White supremacy shared by many employees and managers.[174] The city's Black institutions did not unanimously accept this double-edged sword of increasing employment for Black workers coupled with the compromise of accepting a completely segregated workspace. The Urban League, for example, was concerned that its agenda of securing jobs for Black workers was incorrectly aligned with MOWM's support for Unit 202 and the St. Louis Plan. Executive Secretary John T. Clark explained that his organization would never support the "segregation of Negro workers" even if it meant more immediate opportunity for the race as a whole. Clark and the Urban League dissented because it saw segregation "under any circumstances" as a "doubtful expedient." He argued that segregating the workplace "fails to get the best production output from those who are segregated and creates in their minds suspicion and distrust" of the American government for supporting employers engaged in such practices.[175]

McNeal's reserved approval and Clark's opposition to racial arrangements in Unit 202 reveal an ideological fault line separating MOWM and the Urban League. This division seemed to matter little to the workers in Unit 202 who, after eight months on the job, outpaced the rest of U.S. Cartridge's employees in all relevant measures of production. U.S. Cartridge's statistics indicate that Unit 202's absenteeism rate was 20% lower than the rest of the company. Workers in Unit 202 not only showed up more often than their White counterparts, they were also more

efficient. Unit 202's output was 12% higher than the next most productive unit and they made 6% more "Grade A" bullets than the next most accurate group. David Grant saw this as an example of "just how far the Negro worker will over-compensate, will attempt to make good if given the opportunity."[176]

Unit 202's overachievers saw their fortunes rise and fall with the company in which they were employed. As early as November 1943, U.S. Cartridge started laying off workers at its Small Arms Plant, including nearly 1,000 African Americans. The problem with their work, as with all war industries before the military-industrial complex became entrenched in America's economy, was that employment was unsustainable. A surplus of ammunition made the possibility of keeping superfluous workers on active payroll a luxury that no capitalist economist schooled in the Great Depression could advocate.[177] St. Louis MOWM fought for the integration of Black workers into an industry undergoing a temporary surge. The increase of African American workers, males and females alike, at U.S. Cartridge was only part of a three-year period in which they enjoyed the economic benefits of being integrated into the industrial workforce.

CHAPTER 6

MARCHING BEYOND DEFENSE PLANTS: ST. LOUIS MOWM FIGHTS TO INTEGRATE PUBLIC UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SPACES

Freedom's not just
To be won Over There.
It means Freedom at home, too –
Now – *right* here!
Langston Hughes, "Jim Crow's Last Stand" [1]

Southwestern Bell Telephone, 1943: "It is not the will of the St. Louis community…to practice such undemocratic, un-American and pro-Hitler employment policy."

By its second full year of campaigns, St. Louis MOWM leadership recognized the need to create employment opportunities that would remain after the war. This shift in focus led the fledgling organization to reposition itself as working towards "integrating colored citizens in employment of public utilities," a mission that fit MOWM's tactics well because utility companies in St. Louis benefited from substantial federal contracts during the war but obstinately stood "in flat refusal…to even discuss hiring Negroes," and that federal policy considered telephone service part of national defense and thus subject the anti-discrimination measures outlined in E.O. 8802.[2] This program preceded the more widely recognized "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaigns waged by MOWM's Harlem unit against Metropolitan Life Insurance Corporation by two years. A distinguishing characteristic of MOWM's "Don't Buy" campaign from similar struggles by progressive and left-leaning groups during the Roosevelt years was that gender was

at the center of this struggle. MOWM's literature argued for increased employment of African American women because "the demands of war" left a void in the industry because "men [are] being taken out of the public utilities."[3] Historically, White women operated the company's switchboards and staffed its local collecting offices. Some argued that "even racially prejudiced minds" could not discern race through a telephone and therefore it was more practical to direct African American women towards the operator's room. With more women in general entering the workforce during the war, Southwestern Bell was a coveted white-collar job that must have attracted females who needed to work but wanted to avoid the assembly line.

In St. Louis, the target for what one observer called "the greatest and longest campaigns" in the history of that city's MOWM unit was Southwestern Bell Telephone.[4] MOWM's concern with the situation at Southwestern Bell makes sense, especially because of a pervasive belief in an "inherent right to employment" through the public sector that was nourished by New Deal rhetoric.[5] In short, MOWM's ideology of democratic capitalism envisioned a world in which one's citizenship was predicated by one's job.[6] Like Metropolitan Life in Harlem, Southwestern Bell profited from the business of its many African American customers while employing relatively few Black workers even though, as the *Chicago Defender* reports, "a number of highly intelligent and adequately prepared colored girls made application."[7] However sincere the city's African Americans were in their struggle to open more employment opportunities for Black workers, pragmatism kept them from completely boycotting telecommunications. Instead, St. Louis MOWM "marche[d] on in the struggle for jobs for Negroes" through pickets at

company headquarters and staging dramatic demonstrations to deleteriously impact the productivity of Southwestern Bell's billing department.[8] There was reason for optimism, as telephone companies in Washington, Cleveland, and New York had recently integrated their workforces.[9]

As an experienced grassroots strategist, McNeal knew that "The Southwestern Bell Telephone Company is going to be a tough job," but he was convinced that the campaign would attract widespread support because the promise of secure and respectable employment appealed to "men and women of color in all walks of life in St. Louis."[10] McNeal, like many African American activists of his generation, thought that White liberals could be forced to act as agents of change by prodding their conscience with dramatic protest.[11] Thus, St. Louis MOWM's protests hinged on the presumption that White allies would advocate on their behalf because, in McNeal's approximation, "it is not the will of the St. Louis community…to practice such undemocratic, un-American and pro-Hitler employment policy."[12] To make support for St. Louis MOWM appear larger than it perhaps was, McNeal devised easy ways for ordinary people act as armchair activists protesting Southwestern Bell's racially exclusive hiring practices. This is best seen in a set of penny stickers that St. Louis MOWM printed emblazoned with the slogan, "Discrimination in employment is undemocratic. I protest. Hire Negroes now." The intent of these stickers was to have them attached on the envelope of phone bills to demonstrate that customers favored integrating the company's workforce.[13] Another way that MOWM tried to make protest accessible was by urging people to "call the companies business office and register their opposition to

the employment policy."[14] While pickets outside of the phone company might draw 300 supporters, these other forms of protest could allow those who were occupied with other affairs to add their voice to a chorus of protest that, to borrow the grand rhetoric of a writer from the *St. Louis American*, that "knew their reason for marching was just and each person had supreme faith that the walls of discrimination would tumble."[15]

As reported by Eleanor Green, an African American woman who applied to work at Southwestern Bell, one of the biggest hurdles facing prospective Black female employees was that their applications were handled "with a diplomacy we would find hard to resent." If Green's experience can be taken as typical, and it was by the St. Louis' Black media, African American women were routinely received graciously and courteously throughout the application process they were uniformly denied employment on grounds that the advertised positions were filled. As is the ritual faced by working class people for generations when they apply for jobs that they have little chance of obtaining, Southwestern Bell promised that resumes would be kept on file and carefully considered if an unexpected opening arose.[16] This ritual was familiar to Eleanor Green, a former schoolteacher, who was unsurprised that the hiring screener favorably appraised her skills and experience but dismissed her without a job offer.[17] Green's example demonstrates that it was indeed difficult for, "pretty intelligent Colored girls" to "put the Bell telephone Company on the spot."[18] In an effort to save face, Green thanked her interviewer and reminded her to carefully consider applications like her own because "I was qualified for the job and also because Negroes as a race were subscribers to the

telephone company and deserved some share in the jobs." It all amounted to, in Green's words, "the run-around" that African Americans of her generation were accustomed to. Even though "care was exercised to not even mention race," the *St. Louis American* reported, "the March Movement takes the position that the only reason none of these young women have been hired is the fact that they are Colored."[19] At a MOWM picket outside Southwestern Bell, McNeal explained that African American women like Eleanor Green were frustrated because "The pigeon-holing of applications due to race, creed or color, is an undemocratic, un-American and pro-Hitler employment policy" that ultimately retarded the war effort.[20] Green's experience is best understood when contextualized as part of a city-wide push by the Black media to integrate African American workers into St. Louis' expanding economy. This is most obviously seen in a *St. Louis American* that followed up an excerpt of a Randolph speech about taking initiative and self-responsibility to "Tell the Bell Telephone Company, we mean business" because "we are on the march" and "neither iron-bands nor prison cells or death or all the demons can stop us."[21]

Using last year's gains at U.S. Cartridge as a precedent for when "hard headed discriminatory policies" were overcome with mass protests, St. Louis MOWM opened its campaign to integrate Southwestern Bell's workforce with a picket that leadership believed would be successful because the company had a very real need for workers and observers in the city thought that the campaign excited much of the city's African American community.[22] Eyewitness accounts of the June 12 picket describe an all-Black crowd numbering 100-300 gathering outside "the jim crow

citadel…with appropriate banners and signs" united thematically through the slogan "work where we spend our money."[23] The most succinct description of the picket was from the *St. Louis American*, which described people "Carrying placards and walking single file, the Negroes circled the entire block let the printing on the signs they carried take silent messages to the group that can be employed by the telephone company."[24] St. Louis MOWM leaders thought that by emphasizing respectability through orderly public demonstration that they could embody an argument for equal opportunity that would "bring this situation to the attention of our fellow St. Louisians dramatically" and effectively. Although attendance was small in comparison to other MOWM-sponsored protests, there were enough marchers to form "a complete circle of Negroes from all walks of life and of a wide age range" around the city block of Bell Telephone's building. The "wide awake" T.D. McNeal led the picket line while it marched on "the walls of Jerico" demanding "decent" jobs in exchange for the estimated $4,000 dollars spent by African American customers every day on Southwestern Bell services. The core of McNeal's argument was that since "we pay our money to make Bell Telephone a solid institution and we are entitled to some of the returns."[25]

With no immediate gains to show for this rhetoric, however, reports from sympathetic newspapers resorted to cheering the demonstration's ability to increase general awareness of racial exclusion within company ranks and "attracted the casual curiosity of passerby."[26] As usual, St. Louis' African American media outlets were clearly partisan regarding the Southwestern Bell campaign. Though the print media's crusading attitude was often an asset in struggle, it sometimes

distorted reports. For instance, the *St. Louis American* reported that "Fully 90 percent of the white observers were sympathetic" to the picket, some of whom even sent well wishes to St. Louis MOWM's office.[27] This contrasted other accounts, which depicted local Whites as demonstrating little interest in the spectacle of "peaceably" marching African Americans behind a United States flag.[28] Other accounts emanating from the city's White daily newspapers even suggested that the picket fell short of raising public outrage at the company's lily-White hiring practices because it elicited only "the casual curiosity of passerby."[29] Partisan reporting aside, the image of a couple hundred African Americans "following the flag of the United States of America, mute in their appeal to be accorded full rights of citizenship" was undeniably poignant in the context of Black protest in a segregated city during a war against fascism.[30]

The Southwestern Bell picket was followed by a summer-long lull in visible protest that abated with a revival of public demonstrations in autumn. That September, St. Louis MOWM launched a program which ultimately galvanized over 200 African Americans to pay their phone bills en masse with unsorted pennies on a busy Saturday morning.[31] According to St. Louis MOWM's plans, "this un-American situation" of racial exclusion from the company's ranks would be "dramatized" during peak visitation hours. In addition to hampering the collection process by overwhelming cashiers and frustrating other customers, the volume of pennies deposited would have made a visual impact about the power of African American consumer dollars – effectively making a non-verbal argument for the hiring of African American women in public sector jobs in backrooms as operators and on the

front line as collectors. Somehow, MOWM's plans were leaked to the company, who prepared for the protest by having additional collectors on duty that day with empty change bags and instructions to count the remuneration later. Even though the company prudently prepared for the onslaught, "considerable excitement was caused at the Bell Telephone Building" as 205 "irate" MOWM activists and supporters arrived together.[32] Like the pickets earlier that year, the penny-paying protest was undeniably dramatic but did not yield immediate results and thus, failed to generate sustainable enthusiasm for the kind of continual agitation that could have hastened the pace of corporate change.

Three months later, and after yet another series of negotiations involving Bell Telephone and War Manpower Commission, St. Louis MOWM issued a press release finally announcing a small victory. Southwestern Bell planned to open a branch office in a predominantly Black neighborhood at 1047 N. Vandeventer Avenue effective immediately after the present tenants' lease expired and appropriate interior renovations were complete. Though limited in scope, this new office promised better service to the neighborhood and a small number of jobs staffing the to "receive payment of bills, handle moves and orders for telephone service and perform certain accounting functions." MOWM cautiously praised the action, calling it "a step forward" and proof that, with enough prodding, Southwestern Bell's management took "a sympathetic appraisal of the problem." Though only a small gesture, St. Louis MOWM recognized the Vandeventer Avenue branch as a necessary first step towards the "ultimate objective" of "complete integration of Negro workers into all phases" of employment at Southwestern Bell.[33]

At worst, this was a compromise that allowed White supremacy to persist at the price of increased African American opportunity. It was, nonetheless, progress towards developing a sustainable African American "white collar" workforce in St. Louis during the Second World War and it hinted at the possibility of securing other public works and utilities jobs for African Americans in the Gateway City.

For his leading role in this battle over access to jobs, co-worker in struggle and St. Louis NAACP leader David Grant commended McNeal for his "meritorious and unselfish services" while "fighting to get big public utilities like Bell Telephone" to hire African American workers.[34] More important than accolades exchanged between leading figures on Black protest was the fact that Southwestern Bell's capitulation established a precedent for St. Louis MOWM to wage similar campaigns at several other municipally supported corporations such as Union Electric Company, Laclede Gas and Light Company, and St. Louis Public Service Company. These were strategically important businesses because the wartime labor shortage offered a porthole through which a foothold could be made to equitably integrate African American workers into industries that would remain vital during peacetime.[35]

Citizen’s Civil Rights Committee Sit-Ins, 1944

In times like these, when there is so much being said about Democracy, we naturally feel racial discrimination more keenly than we would under ordinary times.”[36]

In the summer of 1944, African American women planned and implemented roughly a dozen sit-ins at department store lunch counters in St. Louis. Their efforts are an example of unity among grassroots members from a variety of protest organizations, the establishment of nonviolent direct action as a tool for political change, and the effectiveness of women’s activism during American racial apartheid.[37] Additionally, the sit-ins should be seen as an incident where the struggle for worker’s rights and protest for equal access to spending opportunity was unified into a holistic fight under the general heading of racial equality. This occurred through the Citizen’s Civil Rights Committee (CCRC), an arm of the city’s NAACP chapter that splintered off and became almost synonymous with MOWM during the 1944 sit-in campaigns. The timing of the sit-ins in 1944 is significant, for as the war waned, so did the possibility of using a genuinely anti-fascist moment to further civil rights efforts – and so long as there was a war, African Americans could reasonably use the anti-fascist rhetoric of war to explain why merchants should “give all of our countrymen justice.”[38] There are innumerable instances of similar rhetoric in wartime St. Louis, all of which was part of a national pattern in which, as historian Barbara Savage demonstrates, “African-Americans used democracy’s rhetoric against itself.”[39] More important than their contributions to protest rhetoric, however, is the fact that four months worth of sit-ins directly led to

improvements in the food service at several department stores and influenced other spheres of public space to desist practicing racial discrimination.

CCRC and St. Louis MOWM's collaboration was successful largely because of the ability to draw the city's rank-and-file of African Americans. Energized by increasing participation throughout the summer, "the fight against discrimination…intensified" during June and July of 1944.[40] Fifteen "white, courageous, determined and dignified women" as well as an unreported but probably small number of men joined forty African American women to "hasten the winning of the war and lay the foundation for a lasting peace."[41] Unsurprisingly, Pearl S. Maddox, Thelma Grant, and Ruth Mattie Wheeler were present, but journalists also noted some of the fleeting women who took the same risks as protest leaders but of whom little is known. Indeed, there is an absence of documentary sources on women like Hattie Bobo, Lillian Sawyer, and Evelyn Roberts, but their participation was undoubtedly important to the St. Louis sit-ins.[42] Though historians know little about these women, MOWM officials claimed that they "came from all walks of life…professional people, office workers, house wives, college students."[43] A clear pattern of distancing women's activism from traditional blue-collar or lumpen activity is evident, the function of which was to give CCRC and MOWM the appearance of speaking for a "middle class" that supposedly constituted a large segment of African Americans in St. Louis. In this instance, race, gender, and class identities are layered in such a way so as to represent the "politics of respectability" which saw participants behave in a uniformly "dignified manner."[44]

Democratic rhetoric proliferated throughout the United States during the war years but it did not necessarily create social or political change. Indeed, other forces were at work as well. For instance, at David Grant's speech to the St. Louis Race Relations Institute in 1943, he argued that race relations in the city "are probably at their lowest ebb right now." Grant reached this conclusion because migrants from the countryside brought "rural attitudes on race" into supposedly cosmopolitan war plants. Grant attributed increased racial tension among St. Louis' working class as a departure from a pattern developed in the Depression, when shared hardship created temporary but effective bonds of solidarity.[45] In terms of racial demographics, wartime St. Louis resembled Chicago because it was a place where African American migrants had long relocated from the lower Mississippi Valley. Literature from the Race Relations Institute likened Black urbanization as comparable to "earlier streams poured from rural Italy and the counties of Ireland." Like most rural peasants, they "came poor, illiterate, unskilled; yet filled with boundless hope and ambition" that relocation could lead to increased opportunity.[46] This was, of course, an impediment to desegregation efforts that was mirrored in Missouri's legislature. Twice in the years immediately preceding the sit-ins, representatives from areas other than St. Louis were outspoken opponents of legislation equalizing access to public space.

House Bill 47

Legislative efforts pushing public desegregation provide a context for looking at direct action and sit-ins as the result of the political system's failure to address

social change at a critical moment. As such, wartime sit-ins can be seen as part of a larger struggle in which equal access to public space was contested in a Mississippi Valley manufacturing center. In 1943, Representative Edwin F. Kenswil, husband of St. Louis NAACP Vice President Liza Kenswil, proposed House Bill No. 47 for "equal privileges in public spaces" throughout Missouri. This bill threatened to punish violators with a misdemeanor sentence of 30-90 days and/or a $300 fine.[47] Kenswil modeled the bill after other recently approved civil rights acts in midwestern states including Kansas, Illinois, and Iowa.[48] St. Louis chapters and branches of MOWM, NAACP, and Negro Business League all lobbied for the bill, coalescing in a "mass demonstration" outside of the state congress in Jefferson City the day that the proposed legislation cleared the Committee on Civil and Criminal Procedure and came to the house floor for discussion and voting.[49] Kenswil's legislative efforts, as well as lobbying by NAACP leader Sidney Redmond and MOWM chairman T.D. McNeal were undoubtedly on the minds of Pearl S. Maddox, Vora Thompson, and other sit-in participants when they chose to use direct action to claim civil rights when the legal process denied them.[50]

As one could expect, House Bill 47 was challenged in committee and eventually put to rest. Rep. Phillips W. Moss, the "Tom Connally" of St. Louis, led an attack on Kenswil's proposed legislation, likening it to "the old prohibition act – a law that possibly the people were not ready for and would not enforce." Kenswil defended his position, arguing that he was "no radical" while presenting the case that "real democracy" was only possible when "all citizens enjoy the same privileges."[51] Missouri's African American press cheered Kenswil, the only person of

color in that state's legislative body. As was consistent throughout the loosely organized Double V campaign, the symbol of African American soldiers was appropriated to convince the White power structure that, "he is good enough to enjoy the fruits of his sacrifices just like any other citizen," with one of those benefits being full civil rights. St. Louis' Black media portrayed House Bill No. 47 as something that would bring Missouri "out of the horse and buggy days" and into a modernity where human rights mattered and citizens participated in daily life on an egalitarian field. Advocates of House Bill 47 generally recognized that there was a disparity between law and implementation – after all, E.O. 8802 had only recently illustrated that point all too well – but they recognized that "the law against stealing or robbery does not stop such crimes, but the law is there and has its effect."[52] For Black Missourians like St. Louis MOWM who were working for political change, getting the law on one's side was an important part, but not the only part, of the battle to disassemble the structures of White supremacy.

State Representative Kenswil's failed anti-discrimination legislation demonstrates that there was a top-down push from at least one politician concerned with racially segregated public space. The failure to get Kenswil's bill passed heightened awareness of the possibility that what came to be known as the "Greatest Generation" could crack Jim Crow. At least for sit-in participants, this awareness quickly became disillusion with the legislative process, which ultimately translated into their use of direct action. The sit ins were "promulgated by the National March on Washington Movement and the Fellowship of Reconciliation" but organized under the auspices of St. Louis' NAACP's Citizen's Civil Rights Committee.

Members of this cadre of grassroots activists had strong NAACP ties, but their work in the CCRC was strongly identified with MOWM because of that organization's commitment to direct action. For all practical purposes, one can portray the CCRC as a predominantly female group of African Americans with organizational ties to both the NAACP and MOWM. Within this matrix, the sit-ins should be understood as officially sanctioned by MOWM because that organization's name appeared most widely in contemporary media accounts of the event and that organization's national platform strongly endorsed such direct action.

St. Louis MOWM's name was emblazoned across most media accounts of the sit-ins, but it is difficult to give the organization full credit for this phenomenon because, according to St. Louis MOWM president T.D. McNeal, he contributed little to the events. Though somewhat convoluted, this instance is an example of local activists appropriating a grassroots organization to further their autonomously determined ends. In short, women in the St. Louis chapters of both NAACP and MOWM found an outlet for their leadership impulse through CCRC. MOWM inherited visible leadership of the sit-ins from longtime NAACP member Pearl Maddox, a prominent resident of Black St. Louis who was the primary strategist and frequent participator in St. Louis' wartime sit-ins. Maddox's voluntary resignation of her rightful position in Black public leadership probably had something to do with unequal gender relationships in MOWM and NAACP, but this decision was also influenced by a pragmatic need to protect herself. As a property-owning widow who actively confronted proto-apartheid, Maddox understood that her leadership could threaten her livelihood.

"These women really did the work": MOWM, NAACP, FOR and the Genesis of the Citizen's Civil Rights Committee's Sit-Ins

Maddox's choice of McNeal to assume leadership of a movement that she galvanized speaks as much to the limits of how far one could transgress boundaries in mid-twentieth century America as it does to McNeal's stature within Black St. Louis. Likewise, McNeal's willingness to step in as a leader of a campaign that he appeared to have little involvement in is indicative of his role as a full-time paid labor organizer, his stature within the local Black community, and his status as a bachelor who boarded at a hotel and was thus insulated from institutional reprisals punishing his activism. In short, Maddox chose McNeal because he had the least to loose and the best reputation. Thus, the sit-ins must be understood as "not really a March on Washington project, not a project headed by McNeal." While McNeal was a public face, he acknowledged that "the women were still calling the shots…These women really did the work."[53]

If Pauline Murray and her Howard University classmates set the standard for Second World War sit-ins in January 1943, St. Louis' summer 1944 sit-ins certainly measured up.[54] Predominantly female, these "Crusaders for humane treatment" were loosely affiliated with MOWM through the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the CCRC. The women who planned and participated in sit-ins were part of a broader national trend in which, as one historian notes, "The war against racism, in short, furnished African American women with models of pride and resistance" that

served to inspire further action and to also give rhetorical structure to their desegregation appeals.[55]

St. Louis MOWM held a fundraising appeal and membership drive just before the sit-ins began. This event was highlighted by a visit from Dr. W. Montague Cobb of Howard University School of Medicine. There is no record of Cobb's remarks at the keynote event, but it is possible that he mentioned the efforts of Howard's students the previous year.[56] By this time, the CCRC coalesced under Pearl Maddox with support from a dedicated cadre of females from the MOWM and NAACP, Labor Union Auxiliaries, Postal Alliance Auxiliary, Civil Liberties Committee, and Coordinating Council.[57] Housed loosely under MOWM's auspices, the CCRC and all of these other organizations were as responsible for the sit-ins as MOWM was. The professional women and co-ed college students of CCRC recognized "certain possible dangers" and chose to use "non-violent direct action" that was previously discussed through collaboration with FOR at MOWM's 1943 Chicago conference.[58] Though delegates at the conference almost unanimously endorsed this unconventional tactic, few considered St. Louis as a laboratory to evaluate this tactic's usefulness.[59] Likewise, there is little linkage between their activism and a national MOWM campaign to have Bayard Rustin A.J. Muste train members in non-violent goodwill direct action at the Harlem Ashram.[60] As evidenced by the fact that St. Louis did not appear on a list of potential locales for this dramatic new protest tactic to be implemented, the 1944 sit-ins occurred at the impetus of local people addressing their immediate concerns.[61] At the local level, there was significant cooperation from FOR, who back in 1943 joined St. Louis MOWM to survey White

public opinion in the city about opening jobs at Public Service Company and Bell Telephone to African Americans.[62] Members at a MOWM weekly meeting in 1943 noted several stores that enjoyed considerable Black patronage but had no African American employees. This observation is notable because most of these stores were targeted for sit-ins the following year.[63] Members of these two upstart organizations joined disaffected NAACP members like Pearl Maddox to form a coalition that successfully increased the consumer options for St. Louis' African American community.

The most active women with strong ties to MOWM who also participated in this campaign were Mrs. Thelma McNeal, Ms. Vora Thompson, Ms. Shermine Smith, and Ms. Ruth Mattie Wheeler. These ladies embodied Adam Clayton Powell's definition of a "new Negro" that was committed to "the technique of non-violent direct social action" and carried him or herself with a stoic demeanor that dramatized the plight of African Americans by displaying coolness in the face of emotionally charged adversity.[64] If statements from female sit-in participants could be taken at face value, they interpreted activism as an extension of their belief that women in wartime were responsible for making the home front a better place for male soldiers to return. This was combined with religious rhetoric, as they were "praying that the Hitlers over here see the light before our boys return from over there."[65] In short, the community was an extension of the home, and it was their responsibility to ensure that men came back to a place that was improved in their absence.

In addition to Kenswil's proposed legislation, 1943 also saw the foundation of a collaboration between Fellowship of Reconciliation and MOWM that resulted in "a new effort to break down discrimination…using the technique of non-violent direct action" at department store cafeterias in St. Louis.[66] In April of that year, the organizations jointly sponsored the St. Louis Race Relations Institute, a weekend-long program attended by an estimated 400 people.[67] FOR-affiliated James Farmer, Ira De Reid and author Krishnalal Shridharal joined national MOWM secretary Pauline Myers as keynote speakers on "Non-Violent Good Will Direct Action in St. Louis."[68] Myers' presence in the city was part of a broader national strategy to instruct and train MOWM locals to challenge racial segregation and discrimination through a combination of Thoreauvian non-cooperation and Gandhian spiritual solidarity.[69] After two days of speeches and panels, inter-racial attendees split into groups guided by a young Bayard Rustin "to study amicable solutions to racial questions involving social, political and economic conditions." The product of this workshop was a yearlong poll of White public opinion about African American employment, the data from which was used in attempts to discredit the rationale that African Americans could not integrate workforces because White workers would protest.[70]

MOWM's national office did its best to inform local branches about Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action and convince them to adopt this method of protest when confronting segregation.[71] In addition to facilitating cooperation between local branches with officials from the Fellowship of Reconciliation to conduct non-violence training seminars, MOWM's national office made its ideological

commitment to non-violent goodwill direct action public through its access to African American media outlets. African American newspapers reported on this fresh protest tactic by using its full name, but correspondence between MOWM secretary Pauline Myers and officials in St. Louis MOWM suggests that non-violent goodwill direct action "seems like a really long hard name but it is really simple and easy to understand."[72]

Since the organization saw itself as "a mass action movement…fighting for justice for the American Negro," MOWM had to construct an operational and ideological framework that was relevant wherever African Americans were found in the United States. Thus, MOWM's national office recognized that "different parts of the country are ready for different kinds of action," and urged local branches to commit to non-violent direct action as an effective method to desegregate busses in Richmond, open lily-White YMCA hotels in New York, or repeal restrictive covenants in Chicago.[73] Regardless of the target or the region, MOWM saw the purpose of protests as bargaining chips that built negotiating power to be used in conferences with members of the power structure. As such, MOWM's program for protest depended on individual employers' pragmatism as much as it relied on the power of public opinion. In MOMW's scheme, "If talking it over with those who have power to change the system does not move them, the pressure of public opinion" will create conditions in which it was implausible to deny Black demands.[74] Of course, this scheme operated on the presumption that a silent majority of racially progressive White liberals would rally to MOWM's support and lend a voice to the chorus calling

for desegregation – a plausible but not likely scenario in mid-twentieth century America.[75]

St. Louis MOWM officials knew that their optimism for non-violent goodwill direct action would be out of place in the Deep South.[76] For example, the "two or three white women" who David Grant reported participated in sit-ins by ordering food that was passed on to African American protestors" were the products of a place that was segregated but not completely "Jim Crow."[77] Interestingly, utilizing White sympathizers in civil disobedience does not appear to have attracted much dissent from within the traditionally Black organization even MOWM relied on an "in-group" mentality that reinforced psychological solidarity and solidified relationships bonds amongst its most active members.[78]

A series of small fundraisers and a sizeable rally at Kiel Auditorium with A. Philip Randolph and David Grant coincided with the first rumblings of protest through direct action.[79] As MOWM did with its first major rally, this "follow up" took advantage of public space by using Kiel Municipal Auditorium to boost membership, raise funds for operational expenses, and increase awareness of problems that token measures insufficiently alleviated.[80] Randolph and Grant gave orations that were preceded by "a Biblical narration" presented as a skit composed by David Grant, who used the book of Moses in order to interpret contemporary problems facing African Americans in St. Louis. The story of Israelites' suffering and bondage under Pharaoh was cast by the March on Washington Players, a performance group led by Ernest Hutchinson.[81] The skit was strongly influenced by Grant's penchant for using history to illuminate current affairs. This was also a common practice for

events planned by MOWM's national office, which frequently used plays to outline the organization's campaigns through an entertaining and accessible medium.[82] Grant looked towards Biblical antiquity for precedent when unlikely leaders overcame seemingly insurmountable odds. In his Biblically-based skit, Grant emphasized the how Moses used words as weapons to demand that Pharaoh "let my people go." Grant hoped that Black leadership in wartime St. Louis could succeed in toppling "the walls of discrimination, intolerance, prejudice, deceit and abuse" through an "onslaught of truth, courage, determination, and forthright thinking" to defeat "the false prophets and traducers of the democratic way of life."[83]

Grant was prone to rhetorical flourish in his literary production but his orations were blunt. At the podium that evening, he addressed issues surrounding employment in local defense plants. He cheered advances made in war industries but tempered this enthusiasm with dismay that African Americans were still unable make inroads into more sustainable civilian jobs such as bus drivers for the Public Service Company and operators for Southwestern Bell Telephone.[84] Attendance for the second Kiel rally was respectable, but the numbers once again were far short of stated goals and did not compare to the approximately ten thousand attending a similar rally at the same location only one year earlier.[85]

Randolph's speech that evening underscored his status as a wartime reformer. He differentiated MOWM's "non-violent goodwill direct action" from Gandhi's anti-colonial struggle because, in the United States, direct action was employed as a method of protest that "seeks upholding rather than the breakdown of civil government." Indeed, Randolph emphasized that MOWM's purpose was "to

UPHOLD our government and seek to rectify its faults…Jim Crow and discrimination."[86] This sentiment was evident again in 1944, when a St. Louis MOWM member wrote that "practicing 'White Supremacy" was the chief impediment to America fulfilling its egalitarian principles.[87] For many African Americans in St. Louis, "getting democracy practiced" meant expanding their consumer rights and increasing opportunities in civil service.[88]

Organizational literature and African American journalists denounced public segregation as "Fascism, pure and simple," and explained the sit-ins through Gandhian theory or as a way to fulfill the American promise.[89] Yet, the impetus for many participants was personal; they had simply "reached the limit of human endurance in accepting the yoke of fascism in America."[90] Other women complained that "the further denial of service" at department store lunch counters, "affects us more than can be expressed in decent words."[91] These women connected human rights to consumer rights, asserting that human dignity in a consumer economy was contingent upon unrestricted participation in the cash economy. Whatever their motives, women of the CCRC indisputably possessed "devotion to the cause and moral stamina that will not quit them when the going gets tough" that MOWM's national office deemed necessary for successful deployment of this exciting new protest tactic.[92]

In addition to consciously incorporating non-violence as a protest tactic, the sit-ins also introduced an element of inter-racial cooperation to St Louis MOWM's affairs. Indeed, this was the first time in the organization's history that it collaborated with even a small amount of sympathetic White activists. In St. Louis,

this was strategically sound: their presence at sit-ins allowed food to be procured while also proving that White supremacy was not an ideological monolith in St. Louis.[93] The presence of White progressives at sit-ins challenges the prevailing conception of MOWM as a uniformly Black protest organization. At least in St. Louis, localized autonomy from national policy allowed for some degree of White participation in MOWM's challenges to White supremacy.

Recovering Details of Sit-Ins in 1944 St. Louis

"We get no thrills out of these fights, all we want is to be free from insult just like any other citizen in our pursuit of happiness."[94]

The first wartime sit-in to occur in St. Louis was on Monday evening, May 15, 1944, at Grand-Leader, a site "chosen because that store was more friendly toward colored people" and, as such, "enjoyed" sizeable patronage from St. Louis' African American shoppers.[95] NAACP members Pearl S. Maddox and Birdie Beal Anderson were flanked by a "valiant" group of "Three young American pretty brown college girls," with ties to MOWM: Vora Thompson, Shermine Smith, and Ruth Mattie Wheeler.[96] Also present was Hugh Gilmartin, a "true conscientious" liberal White Catholic.[97] At around seven o'clock that evening, they occupied a small corner of the food counter and placed an order without "fear" or "excitement." Accounts from the Black media are clearly partisan, depicting the students as stoic and poised while the waitress "stammered…incoherently." Soon, Vora Thompson was invited into a private conference with Grand-Leader's management in a private office. Mr. Hyatt, the manager, explained that "revolutionary change" would "create a

disturbance" and reminded her that racially integrated dining services were "against the traditions of this state." Thompson "intelligently explained" to Grand-Leader management that "Our brothers, and our sweethearts are suffering and dying all over the world, to destroy Fascism and you and I must get rid of it at home."[98] Thompson made her discussion with Hyatt public, causing her colleagues to prod Hyatt into admitting that Grand-Leader served "other races including Japanese and Germans," and that African Americans were the only group excluded from full participation as consumers.[99] In her absence, Gilmartin procured a soda and sandwich that he gave to Smith and Wheeler. They ate "leisurely" and were "unmolested" while "hundreds of curious persons gazed" at what must have been a spectacle in wartime St. Louis – and a pattern of public protest that became a weekly ritual in the summer of 1944.[100] The strategy of incorporating White supporters visibly demonstrated that at least some White Americans supported desegregated public space in St. Louis. Perhaps more importantly, it also allowed the procurement of food for African American demonstrators – an important gesture of inter-racial solidarity and a theatrically dramatic way to confront the perceived injustice of the racial status quo. This important tactic was expanded upon in July at Famous-Barr, when fifteen White women helped the forty "courageous, determined, and dignified women" from the CCRC by purchasing and distributing ice cream.[101]

It is worth mentioning that eyewitness accounts make no mention of police or private citizens verbally threatening or physically accosting any of the sit-in demonstrators at Grand-Leader. This pattern held true throughout most of the 1944 sit-ins, in fact, there were even several White customers who expressed

support with the protestors.[102] The most notable exception to the lack of overt resistance occurred at a sit-in earlier staged at Katz Drug Store sometime in May. One report mentions that the manager, Mr. Francis, "lifted" Shermine Smith "from her seat by the arm" and "took a half-eaten sandwich from her hand." Smith responded to this affront of her person with "poise…she never resisted or uttered one word."[103] Accounts of the sit-ins from St. Louis' African American newspapers and from documents generated by groups like MOWM and CCRC suggest that the only White opposition to the first round sit-ins came from employees and managers of target stores - not the White patrons dining at these lunch counters.[104] Thus, it appears that the phenomena of racial segregation in St. Louis was understood or presented as a practice driven by top-down store policy and enforced through the action of managers. In other words, it seems that White customers were indifferent, supportive, or silently opposed to African Americans being served at department store lunch counters. Typically silent resistance should not be misunderstood as widespread complacency among those who favored racial apartheid. Indeed, there were incidents when it appeared that the generally tranquil sit-ins elicited strongly oppositional emotional responses from White Missourians. In July 1944, at sit-ins staged in three stores - Stix, Baer, and Fuller, Famous-Barr, and Scruggs Vandervoort's – the demonstrators met the same response. Waitresses declined service as per management's orders, White customers grumbled and fled, and the store's lunch counters closed for the day.[105] Each of these three department stores took up an entire city block and was six to nine stories high. The fact that they ceased food service would surely be newsworthy in Detroit or New York, but St.

Louis' daily newspapers kept a code of silence in order to not give protest publicity.[106]

Thelma McNeal quickly followed up with another sit-in at Stix-Baer & Fuller's lunch counter in early July.[107] This time, management tried to defuse the activity at the demonstration's onset by getting all of the protestors into a closed-door meeting. Hyatt and another manager, identified as Mr. Lawson, affirmed their belief that slowly educating the American populace was a necessary and unfulfilled step that needed to occur before the store could integrate its food service. Hyatt and Lawson believed that racially equitable consumer rights were unlikely to occur in the immediate future, and they pledged to offer food service to African Americans if, and only if, other St. Louis stores did so first.[108] The first round of sit-ins failed to reach their goal of integrating lunch counters, but the participants gained important experience in handling recalcitrant store management who passed responsibility for discriminatory company policy off on supposedly widespread White Supremacy in order to justify their store's policy.

This "dauntless band of well-trained young colored women" continued applying pressure wherever they thought progress could be accomplished. The piecemeal strategy of staffing sit-ins with whatever possible demonstrators at the stores most likely to be receptive towards their demands brought the CCRC back to Famous Barr. This store's segregationist minions included a "cute little illiterate waitress" and "some kind of a nut" who physically shoved sit-in participant Modestine Crute Thornton. The unnamed assailant was chased away by angry demonstrators who, according to one journalist, quoted the Constitution while

pursuing him. It is likely that strongly partisan journalists simplified the encounter at Famous Barr in order to emphasize the contrast between dignified African American women and brutish White employees, but there is little doubt that thirteen African American women and one White friend resolutely sat at Famous Barr's food counter to demand service symbolizing recognition of their status as consumers in a democratic capitalist economy.[109]

July 1944 was a high water mark for CCRC civil disobedience because it featured sit-ins on lunch counters at three different department stores, all of which "cater to a very large Negro patronage," and had few if any African American employees.[110] Another pattern characterizing the sit-ins was that participants all maintained an almost stoic public persona. As a whole, the 1944 St. Louis sit-ins were part of a sporadic and unorganized wave of African American challenges to racially segregated space that occurred throughout the Second World War. During the demonstrations, David Grant tells us, the stores were "honeycombed with cops, plainclothes cops" that he recognized because of his work in the Circuit Attorney's office.[111] This increase in racial protest manifested itself in scores of accounts of African Americans refusing to move from restricted areas on busses as well as sit-ins at diverse locations such as St. Louis, Washington, D.C., and North Carolina.[112]

Sit-ins occurred throughout summer 1944, abated only by a two-week moratorium during which the Mayor's Race Relations Committee sought to mediate a racial crisis brought on through sustained Black protest and steady White recalcitrance. Progress seemed plausible, especially in light of recent desegregation of eating space at St. Louis' central post office and all municipal buildings.[113]

Schooled in the labor movement, MOWM's principal strategists David Grant and T.D. McNeal strongly believed that "a march should never be staged during attempts at negotiation." Women from CCRC had considerably less faith in the ability of bureaucratic channels to create lasting change.[114] "Not depending on… action" from store owners prodded to do right by a comparatively moderate and politically weak committee, CCRC "remained busy from day to day getting ready for future demonstrations" and recruiting more "liberal minded citizens" during the interim.[115] Like other inter-racial cadres fighting racism in the Second World War, this group was comprised of "sensitive, intelligent, loyal" liberals who were motivated to join a pre-existing African American protest movement through their own sense of morality and a strong political conscience that took the promise of an egalitarian America seriously.[116]

CCRC and MOWM adjusted tactics as the sit-in campaign grew increasingly protracted. This was an organic outgrowth of a protest movement germinating from escalating discontent beginning with letters and telephone calls "protesting this humiliating pattern."[117] With correspondence ignored, direct action functioned as a lever through which lines of communication were forced open. Political maturity developed alongside the escalation of tactics. For instance, the date for direct action was altered from Mondays to the busier lunch hours of Saturdays.[118] Using a weekend increased pressure on store management because simply closing the shop to thwart the campaign had more serious economic consequences.[119] They also learned to prolong protests and delay law enforcement response time by waging simultaneous campaigns at several stores. Yet another way that sit-in

tactics became more sophisticated was the incorporation of signs. By July, the third month of demonstrations, participants at these "silent protests" wore placards inscribed with patriotic and anti-racist slogans.[120] Likewise, the CCRC identified ways to enlarge attendance and participation at its demonstrations, primarily by increasing the involvement and visibility of nearby students and faculty in protests.[121] For example, three sit-ins in mid-June 1944 were supported by students and clerics from the nearby Eden Seminary, who printed and dispersed "several thousand" handbills grounding the sit-ins in patriotism, Christianity, and the democratic extension of a war against Nazi Germany's fascist extremes.[122]

One of the most important developments arising out of the St. Louis sit-ins was the shift in religious emphasis of non-violent direct action. Though Bayard Rustin and others in CORE commonly explained spiritually driven direct action through an Eastern religious framework popularized by Gandhi, African American activists in CCRC and MOWM interpreted their struggle through a framework of militant messianic Afro-Christianity. For example, an op-ed in the *St. Louis Argus* written by a CCRC member equated atheists with the even more "stupid" people who "are still trying to hold on to the status quo." To the editorialist, who unfortunately chose to remain anonymous, patience and protest over the summer amounted to little real progress, leaving "our cups…sweetened with the bitter dregs of racial prejudice." Further drawing from Biblical allusion, the writer continued, "We have…asked for bread, but have been given stones," just as the CCRC and MOWM asked for economic integration and affirmation of human dignity towards

African Americans but failed to accomplish significant structural changes to the racial order.[123]

White patrons at stores where CCRC sit-ins took place responded in a variety of ways. Accounts from the first sit-ins in May indicate that outright hostility was muted. The *St. Louis American* reports, "heads turned and people mumbled."[124] Likewise, this same newspaper claims, "not one angry word was spoken" and that "no unkind attitude shown by anyone present" other than stubborn managers who refused to equally accommodate African American patrons.[125] This pattern continued as the sit-ins grew in size and frequency during the next month. According to T.D. McNeal, the norm was that "large crowds" of curious White patrons gathered to observe the unusual sight but "few comments" expressing opposition were ever uttered. In fact, McNeal claims that most White spectators that did speak up "expressed the belief that the demonstrators were well within their rights" and offered "sad commentary on our democracy" because "such demonstrations are necessary."[126] The initial lack of outright resistance suggested the possibility that opposition to desegregating food service might not be as outrageous as expected. Silence was the norm on this issue, as the mainstream daily newspapers gave sit-ins little coverage. Likewise, while there was little outright hostility, there was also little explicit support. White support was strongly gendered and based in religion. All of the three documented White males that supported the sit-ins were Catholic, two of whom were clerics.[127] Little is known of the religious background characterizing the fifteen White women that abetted a sit-in at Grand Leader, but the disparity between public female and male support for sit-ins

indicates that gender was an important variable in determining who was likely to participate in racially progressive activism.

Local Black media outlets enlivened discourse about the sit-ins by explaining them as part of the complimentary struggles for consumer rights and civil rights that, when combined, represented a significant step in fulfilling the egalitarian American promise. For example, Henry Winfield Wheeler, MOWM activist and father of sit-in participant Ruth Mattie Wheeler, used his weekly column in the *St. Louis American* to argue "that you cannot be happy as long as any group of human beings are being denied food or drink or civil rights and economic justice."[128] Typical of coverage by African American journalists is the depiction of sit-in participants as college trained "pretty young colored girls" connecting consumer rights with human rights by demanding the privilege of getting "nourishment like ice cream, soda, sandwich or malted milk" at department stores where non-edible items were purchased freely. Though the nutritional value of their dietary selections is questionable, reporters noted that the CCRC's sit-ins "pricked the consciences" of observers who witnessed store management "out-Hitlerizing Hitler."[129]

African American women in the CCRC were "looking for a new world after the war," but columnist and MOWM member Henry Wheeler looked to the past for inspiration. He saw progressive White Christians as heirs to a tradition established by abolitionists like "Elijah Parrish Lovejoy, Chauncey I. Filley, James Broadhead, Francis Blair, Judge Roswell Field and Carl Shurz" who "spoke out fearlessly…in those dark days."[130] By locating the historical inspiration of desegregation efforts in

the abolitionist movement, Wheeler portrayed the Double V moment as a time when political and cultural changes as significant as those of the mid-nineteenth century were possible during the Second World War.[131] Wheeler was unquestionably over-enthusiastic, as few White Christians in wartime St. Louis possessed the combination of spiritual and ideological zeal that characterized the most fervent abolitionists, but at least White opposition was muted and generally confined to store management.

Women involved in direct action and sit-ins used discourse that was well within the boundaries of respectability for gendered activism during the war.[132] Instead of declaring an all-out fight against White supremacy, they were simply doing "the least we can do on the home front" by helping to "make a safe place" for soldiers in post-war America. Thus, the domestic sphere of home was enlarged to include the community and, ultimately, the entire nation. As the movement's most active propagandist, Wheeler used the *St. Louis American* to reinforce the image of women in sit-ins as properly bourgeoisie. The activists were depicted as "cultured" and "refined" individuals who "gracefully" took seats at the lunch counter. Speaking a language of class privilege, educational attainment, and unbridled consumer rights, they were contrasted against "the cute little illiterate waitress at Famous-Barr" who "stammered…incoherently" when she refused to accept their orders. [133] It cannot be overemphasized that women participating in the sit-ins were precisely the kind of people Pauli Murray saw of as leading the race with "Good taste, poise, co-operativeness, firmness, personal neatness and cleanliness, and ordinary human decency." In Murray's understanding of cultural politics, this was the type of

demeanor that could "yield the largest returns."[134] However demure these women were depicted as being, it must be recognized that individuals like CCRC leader and MOWM member Thelma Grant had enough political acumen to see through "bedtime stories" and "phony conferences."[135] While St. Louis MOWM curtailed protest during negotiations with Bell Telephone and U.S. Cartridge, Grant, Maddox, and CCRC members symbolically chose "to sit and enjoy the scenery" long after stores "discontinued all service" for the day.[136] Their unceasing commitment to protest until a resolution was reached was a major factor in CCRC's successful campaign to improve food service at some of St. Louis' busiest establishments.

Women participating in CCRC sit-ins spoke the language of women in wartime. They saw themselves as "lay[ing] the foundation for a lasting peace" by making a "safe place" for "our sons, husbands, and sweethearts" returning from war.[137] Their patriotic protest and loyalty to the United States was behind a complaint in Henry Wheeler's *St. Louis American* that contributions by African American employees at Famous-Barr made to the war by purchasing war bonds was undermined by the store's "Sabotage!" by refusing to integrate its lunch counter, thus undermining "President Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie."[138] At the June 10 Scruggs Vandervort's sit-in, some African Americans passed for White and successfully ordered food. Since "only persons who seemed white" were treated with dignity, the *St. Louis Argus* accused the store of "hanging a Millstone around the neck of America that will drag her down to hell." As was typical for Black protest rhetoric in that era, "Nazism" was feared as the logical end of "segregation, Jim Crowism, and discrimination."[139] More dramatically, and with fewer words, Hattie

Duvall attended one sit-in with a sign declaring "I invested five sons in the Invasion."[140]

In autumn, the Mayor's Race Relations Commission proposed a compromise that would have businesses serve African American patrons food of equal quality but only in designated basement spaces. Though an improvement to the existing order, the implied insult was glaring. On the surface, this compromise is surprising considering that MOWM stalwarts T.D. McNeal and David Grant were longstanding members of the Mayor's Committee and eight of this committee's members participated in various degrees at MOWM events.[141] The inability of activist-oriented African Americans like McNeal and Grant to direct the Mayor's Race Relations Committee towards a more progressive solution illustrates the tendency of fundamentally conservative institutions to preserve the existing order. Indeed, the Mayor's Committee also included a member who accidentally used a racial slur instead of "Negro" when reporting from the City Plan Commission. Likewise, the temporary Chairman was "one of the worst offenders" against E.O. 8802.[142]

The Mayor's Committee acted uncharacteristically by stepping in as an arbiter between the CCRC and St. Louis businesses, especially considering that the committee's typical activities included sponsoring the National Negro Music Festival at Sportsman's Park and initiating informal discussions with the Real Estate Exchange to open restricted blocks.[143] While sit-in participants wanted to fulfill a democratic ideal that "our boys are fighting and dying for, and what we are paying taxes and buying bonds and Saving Stamps for, and preaching to the world about," the Mayor's Committee's sought "to amicably settle the demand for equal treatment

at all lunch counters."[144] These competing visions of desegregated public space provide context for CCRC's profound "disappointment that department store owners should even suggest that American citizens be confined to eating in basements" and disillusion with an official body that would broker this compromise.[145]

Protest rhetoric emanating from *St. Louis Argus* depicted "the women leading a quiet but earnest fight" with the benefit of "right and justice on their sides," they did not have access to bureaucratic channels that could force change from the top down.[146] For unexplained reasons, the Mayor's Committee stepped in as an arbiter during the sit-ins but this body avoided issues where it probably had more jurisdiction. One such place was the employee cafeteria at City Hall, which was recently desegregated by local ordinance. Social stigma and underlying racial animosity hardly made this a welcome place for inter-racial dining. A *St. Louis Argus* investigation revealed that some division heads were "angry with the Negro employees for eating" in previously forbidden areas, which suggests that predominantly or exclusively Black groups of employees tested the boundaries of where they could actually dine. The investigation also found that at least one African American employee claimed that he was asked to "take a cup of coffee in the kitchen." Sources do not give a context for this encounter, but it is obvious that a racialized subtext informed interracial interactions. Already tense, the situation at City Hall was exacerbated by a rumor that one African American employee was fired for eating in the recently desegregated lunchroom. The *Argus'* investigation revealed that the employee was, in fact, on personal vacation, but the presence of

rumors and prevalence of hostility made the situation at City Hall ripe for intervention from an outside source like the Mayor's Committee – and of course, the interventions never occurred.[147]

Somehow, a rumor was spread that CCRC and MOWM accepted an offer from Scruggs Vandervoort's for a basement cafeteria that exclusively catered to African American patrons. As is the nature of rumors, its origins are unknown and this false information spread without the authority of anyone in either organization. CCRC responded by hosting meetings discussing the nature of civil rights and by publishing position statements in the city's African American media outlets. In one such editorial, the CCRC defended its "no compromise" stand on human rights and civil rights, promising that it "will not make any compromise in…non-violent resistant action for the same treatment in cafeteria and fountain services as all other Americans."[148] While CCRC tried to defend its militant reputation, Scruggs Vandervoort's quietly, and without fanfare, offered food service to African American patrons who accepted eating in a segregated room.[149] Though it is likely that Scruggs altered its discriminatory practices without an impetus from disruptive activism, it is likely that management offered this concession to ward of future protests and to dictate for itself the nature and extent of its service to African Americans would be.

Few African Americans appeared eager to capitalize on this new dining opportunity, but at least one observer saw benefit in the changing store policy because it was a component in the "process of getting white persons used to seeing us…in places frequented by them, that is important." Reports from African

American customers at Scruggs Vandervoort's indicate that they were treated courteously, and, more importantly, that the facility, product, and service was superior to that of other establishments targeted by CCRC for integration.[150]

Another side in the debate within St. Louis' African American community was that the "hydro-headed monster" of "the spirit of Hitler" would be emboldened if the compromise for segregated department store lunch counters were accepted.[151] In response to allegations by various department store managers blaming pervasive White supremacy among its existing patrons as the raison d'être for racial discrimination, an editorial in the *St. Louis Argus* cited recent successful instances of integration at unlikely places such as Philadelphia Transportation Company, the employee cafeteria in St. Louis' central post office, and seating at St. Louis' Sportsman's Park.[152]

In the end, of course, St. Louis' sit-ins brought lasting change to more than the city's department store lunch counters. Scruggs Vandervoort's opened a downstairs cafeteria catering to an exclusively African American clientele. Shortly thereafter, Famous Barr made a similar arrangement and Grand-Leader desegregated its food service. There was a ripple effect, as voluntary desegregation occurred at several places that did not experience any form of direct action protest, chief among these was Sportsman's Park and the employee dining room at City Hall. The sit-ins also caused an upsurge of sensitivity to the hypocrisy of practicing racial discrimination during a war against fascism. For example, just as the sit-ins were happening, Mayor Kauffman announced that Wendell Pruitt, a native son and member of the Tuskegee Airmen was to be feted with a parade. David Grant

challenged Kauffman's credibility with African American voters, threatening to get protestors at "all three of the department stores" to stand outside with placards reading "Pruitt may be a hero, but he can't get a sandwich in this joint." Kauffman called off the parade.[153]

Finally, the sit-ins established a model for inter-organizational, inter-racial protest that, in the words of one historian, "signified an emergent new model of political agency built around the creative methods of nonviolent direct action."[154] The presence of long-standing members from MOWM and NAACP, as well as White collegian supporters, demonstrates that grassroots protest is sometimes characterized by an intense localism in which activists define programs, tactics, and ideology to suit immediate needs within their community. Thus, while national officials for NAACP and MOWM had a relationship marked by cautious cooperation and an undercurrent of conflict, in St. Louis members from both organizations collaborated through CCRC to challenge manifestations of racial discrimination. Likewise, while A. Philip Randolph formulated an anti-Communist explanation for keeping MOWM racially exclusive, the St. Louis chapter successfully practiced the policy of incorporating White sympathizers so long as African Americans defined the battles for themselves. Still, for all of the individual businesses that de-segregated as a result of CCRC activism, this tactic had limited application in codifying change. The most important limitation was the inability to pass a bill desegregating public accommodations, and Board of Aldermen shut down proposed legislation to this end twice during the war years.[155]

CHAPTER 7

'"AN ECONOMIC D-DAY FOR NEGRO AMERICANS": TRANSITION AND DISSOLUTION, 1944-1946

"The struggle is not over, it assumes new forms."
- Greg Bennick[1]

T.D. McNeal spent nearly all of his life in struggle. McNeal's career as a labor organizer for BSCP gave him a foundation for understanding public service and grassroots activism as facets in the complimentary struggles of race and class. Two decades after MOWM's heyday, McNeal became the first African American elected to Missouri's state senate. Campaign literature in McNeal's 1966 re-election bid campaign credited his contributions towards MOWM's success "in opening up a whole area of new industrial employment opportunities" deriving its power by getting "the 110,000 St. Louis Negro community…in motion as it had never been before."[2] McNeal's capacity to galvanize grassroots protest made him a power broker in wartime St. Louis. McNeal's status within Black St. Louis earned him a place on Mayor Kauffman's Citizen's Committee for Post War Improvements and Employment, a temporary committee that, on paper, sought many of the same ends as MOWM: minimizing the threat of racial violence by facilitating better race relations, increasing representation of African Americans in municipal employment, and improving the urban environment.

Discrimination by the Public Service Company was particularly galling to St. Louis MOWM. The typical response of protests and complaints addressed the fact

that African Americans were shut out of bus driving positions. As it had in other instances, MOWM solicited White public opinion to gauge whether the community was ready for African American drivers, used the Black media to register dissatisfaction with exclusion for what would become an important career in the post-war world, and even met with company management to ensure that African American applicants would have a fair chance to fill vacancies.

St. Louis MOWM's increased attenuation to post-war employment was consistent with A. Philip Randolph's shifting focus on the same issue in both BSCP and MOWM. At BSCP's 1944 annual convention, the indefatigable labor leader predicted that Black workers would be subject to the "old rule" of being the "last hired and first fired" once "the shooting ends." Now nineteen years old, the union dedicated its convention to mapping plans for a post-war world and a contracting economy characteristic of military demobilization.[3] Lester Granger of the National Urban League Speaking spoke with a similar tenor. His speech on a radio broadcast in St. Louis emphasized the necessity of confronting a constricting economy and the imperative of adjusting American culture to make congruent with progressive wartime shifts in global race relations. Granger agreed with St. Louis MOWM activists that it was necessary to "make secure the temporary gains made during this emergency," so that race relations in the United States "can see some brightening" though Black Americans participating equitably in the post-war economy.[4] Over a dozen MOWM members had similar hopes as Granger, and they institutionalized their aspirations through service on the Citizen's Committee for Postwar Planning and Improvements in St. Louis. This advisory committee was

comprised of over 200 of the city's most visible leaders in politics, industry, and social life. Charged with helping the city adjust to economic life without the heavy infusion of defense dollars into its manufacturing base, the committee acted in an advisory capacity for the mayor. In addition to McNeal, other committee members who worked with or alongside MOWM over the previous three years included churchmen like Dr. John M. Bracy, Urban League Director John T. Clark, and MOWM members Richard Jefferson, David Grant, and Bige Wyatt.[5]

The other significant trend in post-war economic planning was the push for a Permanent FEPC, a drive nationally spearheaded by A. Philip Randolph and supported by a conglomerate of labor unions and special interest groups.[6] Individuals like T.D. McNeal worked to "make FEPC a permanent governmental agency" responsive to local conditions and nationally strong enough to confront discriminatory employment by large manufacturers.[7] St. Louis MOWM joined the progressive chorus in lobbying for the Dawson-Scanlon-Lafollette Bill, also known as the Fair Employment Practices Act, and sent David Grant to Congress to argue that an adequately staffed, sufficiently funded, bureaucratically permanent FEPC would have a positive impact on St. Louis.[8] Appearing before the Committee on Labor on June 6, 1944, Grant testified, "Thousands of Negroes in and around St. Louis have been refused employment by war factories, despite the need of workers."[9] Grant's experience with the MOWM and CCRC made him especially aware of "a great reservoir of Negro women" with mechanical aptitude. More saliently, given his generation's beliefs about gender and military service, Grant argued, "Negroes in the Armed Services won't accept the closed door labor

policy…that met them in 1918." This new kind of soldier was better educated than the previous generation and promised to return prepared to fight remnants of segregation remaining after the war because they "would not take the closed-door policy with the same trust in the paternalistic policy that happened in 1918."[10] The very real possibility that well-trained African American veterans would come home to a rigidly segregated United States made Grant "shudder to think of their resentment, their justifiable resentment, which must well up in their hearts" if African American soldiers have no "governmental authority to which they can state their case."[11]

The House Committee of Labor chair Mary Norton introduced Grant as representing the Mayor's Interracial Conference, the Committee for a Permanent FEPC, and St. Louis MOWM. Grant knew that he was an ambassador for each organization and that his leadership in all of them gave him credibility as a spokesperson before Congress. Cognizant that his audience had the power to federally back the FEPC with finances and greater enforcement power, including the ability to revoke contracts for noncompliance, Grant offered details of St. Louis MOWM campaigns such as the demonstrations at U.S. Cartridge. He did this "for the purpose of showing how far we had to go to become employed…because there was no responsible agency to which we could look with any degree of confidence" to confront employers in violation of E.O. 8802.[12] Grant believed that racial protest got results, and implicit in his testimony was the bargain that demonstrations would be immediately curtailed once disaffection could be channeled through an effective bureaucratic outlet.[13]

Grant and St. Louis MOWM based their support for a permanent FEPC on grounds of fair play, and he rejected the notion that such legislation constituted preferential treatment. In questioning before the committee, Grant affirmed the right of employers to hire and fire at will with the limitation that private industry could not completely choose its workforce. Grant cited the existing child labor laws as an example analogous to proposed fair employment legislation because both of these cases impacted exactly whom an employer could choose to hire. Grant supported his case for federal intervention in private industry with "The mere fact that employers have at times used up the best years of employees' lives, has brought about social security legislation and unemployment compensation assistance…in order to have safeguards against unscrupulous employers."[14] In short, even the freedom of employers to buy the type of labor that they wanted needed restrictions, and free labor could not exist in an unregulated market. In response to Michigan Congressman Hoffman's questioning as to whether a famer would be forced to hire a Mexican, Grant reminded Hoffman that the proposed legislation did not apply to small businesses like the one in his hypothetical situation. In reality, the law only applied to employers with federal contract, engaged in interstate or foreign trade, and had a payroll of five or more people.[15] In this incident, the sanctity of small business was used as a foil to argue against fair employment legislation even though the law did not apply to it. Grant did his best to bring the questioning back to his district, where the issue was not that Missouri's farmers refused to hire and live with African American stable hands, but that big businesses such as Carter

Carburetor, McDonald Aircraft, and American Torpedo still offered limited, if any, employment opportunities to African Americans.

Increasing Labor Militancy and the Arrival of FEPC in St. Louis, 1944

Notoriously underfunded and inadequately staffed, FEPC's failure to immediately foster significant change in St. Louis was an important reason why MOWM remained relevant long after the march itself was cancelled. Without a strong FEPC presence, MOWM became a leading advocate for alleviating the double burden of racial and gender discrimination that factored into the city having 17,000 African American women out of work.[16] The combination of sheer necessity for laborers and pressure from groups like St. Louis MOWM created new opportunities "for the integration of Negro women" into positions that White women formerly held in their exclusive domain.[17] The most publicized example of increased employment opportunities for African American women was at the aircraft plant with a $16 million contract, Curtiss-Wright.[18] In 1944, this company was among the first in St. Louis to offer, free of charge, five-week training sessions for twenty-four Black female workers. While not statistically staggering, the two dozen African American women earned "the same rate of pay as other workers in like jobs," and enjoyed on-the-job training for riveting, drilling, and "skilled jobs" in defense production. Two dozen trainees does not herald a new era of workplace equity, but their employment at Curtiss-Wright was a small landmark in the protracted fight for access to well-paying jobs.

A survey of the professional profiles of applicants for Curtiss-Wright's training program indicates the difficulty that otherwise qualified workers had securing white-collar jobs. The first class of trainees included four college graduates, a social worker, a postal worker, a swimming instructor, and two recent high school graduates - hardly the background one would expect for a group of applicants to work on warplane assembly lines.[19] The belated and disproportional presence of professional African American women in blue-collar manufacturing during the war speaks to Jeanetta Welch Brown's observation that "The employment of Negro women is not a social experiment but an economic necessity," which she predicted would exacerbate after the war because "many of the men will not return."[20]

Grassroots protest and top-down federal action in the form of sit-ins and a FEPC hearing both occurred in St. Louis during the summer of 1944. Public hearings were an important part of FEPC operations that occurred at many major manufacturing cities during the war.[21] Like most of these hearings, the 1944 session in St. Louis was the result of White supremacy's persistent recalcitrance and prolonged protest from vocal minority groups and labor unions. As labor historian Andrew Kersten demonstrates in *Race, Jobs, and War*, the industrial midwest typified the pattern of FEPC success through strong local support.[22] Though not articulated in such a way, getting St. Louis congruent with this pattern of expanded opportunities through FEPC intervention was St. Louis MOWM's primary concern. As early as August 1942, T.D. McNeal urged FEPC officials to investigate allegedly unfair hiring practices at four defense factories: U.S. Cartridge, McQuary-Norris,

Carter Carburetor, and Curtiss Wright.[23] St. Louis MOWM provided local activists with a constructive outlet by directing activism towards soliciting, investigating, and quantifying complaints of industrial discrimination. Perennially short-staffed, FEPC relied on local cooperation with organizations like MOWM throughout the midwest in order to accomplish its mission.[24]

MOWM assumed responsibility to investigate racial discrimination in defense plants, as well as the general employment situation of Black Americans in St. Louis, because "the FEPC is such a small group" that it could not effectively "investigate conditions in every town and city." St. Louis MOWM's logic was that individuals "must help to enforce" E.O. 8802, thus "it is necessary for the people in each community to report any violation" in which the FEPC had jurisdiction. In short, the prevailing conception was one of a responsive government that would rectify injustice whenever citizens reported illegal activity. To use the rhetoric from African American journalists of the day, FEPC represented David fighting the Goliath of deeply entrenched discrimination in industries that had "billions of dollars."[25]

MOWM's role as arbiter of protest and investigator of racial discrimination was recognized long before the FEPC hearings and subsequent opening of a sub-regional office in the city.[26] The trend in St. Louis was true throughout the country, as African American activists took it upon themselves to fight against "the complete emasculation of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice."[27] Indeed, Black activists in St. Louis were convinced that grassroots participation and mass pressure were necessary to ensure that FEPC's presence was not reduced to conducting "fruitless investigations" confirming grim facts that people already

knew.[28] This facet of St. Louis MOWM's program made it a natural ally with progressive factions of the city's labor movement, namely the CIO-affiliated St. Louis Industrial Union Council, in the "call for the immediate establishment of a fair employment practices committee for this area."[29]

The push for an FEPC office in St. Louis succeeded, but federal authority's belated arrival hampered its ability to enforce E.O. 8802. In strictly bureaucratic terms, the October 1944 opening of a new sub-regional office increased bureau visibility in Region IX. Of course, African Americans who pushed for FEPC's presence expected more from this short-lived office, especially since it received over 100 complaints in its first day of operations.[30] As a labor organizer, McNeal's leadership style of calculated decisions based on an abundance of accurate data translated well into St. Louis MOWM's fact-checking of racial inequality. In fact, this was part and parcel of the organization's operations since at least 1942, when McNeal and others tried "ascertaining facts and correcting the existing deplorable conditions" in preparation for an FEPC public hearing. Early the following year, the greatly anticipated hearings were cancelled, prompting McNeal to denounce a "flagrant violation of the intent and spirit of Executive Order 8802."[31]

In an effort to register protest about this new federal agency being "handicapped by a small staff and a lack of funds," St. Louis MOWM sent President Roosevelt a "Giant Protest Card" measuring 60 by 40 inches.[32] Emblazoned with the signatures of 32 African American leaders in St. Louis representing a variety of constituencies including labor, fraternal, religious, and civic welfare groups, the card carried a message of "indignation," reminding President Roosevelt that "The St.

Louis Negro Community remains aroused and gravely concerned" by the railroad hearings' cancelation.[33] Some factions from St. Louis' African American leadership personally wrote President Roosevelt, protesting Paul McNutt's decision to "indefinitely postpone" the aforementioned hearings. MOWM members Joseph McLemore and David Grant led two of these organizations, the St. Louis Lodge of Colored Elks and the Mound City Bar Association.[34]

Almost two years passed since the first hearings in St. Louis were postponed, but when they finally occurred, the hearings brought out an impressive crowd. Under Monsignor Francis Haas' direction, forty different witnesses testified that 22 railroads and 14 railway unions excluded African Americans in both practice and policy.[35] To the *St. Louis American*, it seemed as though "Presidential intervention" was the only remaining option to get railway unions to recognize Black workers as fully-fledged members.[36] Unfortunately, St. Louis FEPC hearings were hardly covered in America's major news outlets – a damaging problem fact for an already weak federal agency born through the threat of mass protest. MOWM's strategy for positioning FEPC in a way that it could create meaningful change relied on agitation that elicited sympathy from a well-informed electorate. Unfortunately for MOWM, the *New York Times* and left-leaning *PM* were the only major media outlets covering the hearings.[37] As a result, knowledge of the hearings was limited, and public outrage of the railroad industry's lingering racism was largely confined to African Americans.[38]

Budgetary and human resource limitations plagued FEPC throughout its existence, and its time in St. Louis was no exception. Twice rescheduled in order to

save travel expenses, the 1944 hearings finally occurred as summer waned.[39] It was no secret that FEPC was "living a hand-to-mouth existence" with little funding or and few full-time field staff.[40] As such, the agency relied on private citizens to report grievances about racial discrimination in hiring practice. "MOW and other agencies" capitalized on FEPC's "administrative difficulties" that twice postponed the hearings by using the interim as an opportunity "in which to prepare and process cases [that] expose local discriminatory employment policies."[41] In anticipation of FEPC hearings, St. Louis MOWM "asked that all local Negroes who have been discriminated against" file a complaint through its volunteer staff.[42] This was a continuation of an established pattern in which MOWM functioned as an arbiter racial discrimination in defense employment. During St. Louis MOWM's earliest campaigns at U.S. Cartridge and Carter Carburetor, it urged "every Negro who has been refused employment…because of his or her color" to visit the Jefferson Avenue headquarters in order to discuss the matter with David Grant and volunteers in the complaints division. Once "in proper form," this team "submitted [documentation] directly to the Fair Employment Practices Committee."

This same procedure was used in 1944, when St. Louis MOWM cited an "extreme need" for individuals who could "prove" that they were refused employment or were dismissed "on account of their color." To support the hearings with empirical data, St. Louis MOWM urged local residents to visit its office during business hours for an interview. Several months of accumulated facts armed St. Louis MOWM with sufficient information to present a case to the FEPC and "open the way for new jobs for the race."[43] African American women were especially

sought out, as MOWM officials urged them "to actually make application to the war plants now barring them" in order to build a stronger case to present the FEPC.[44] The times were, according to the *Chicago Defender*, "over ripe," because "local war plants are daily turning down hundreds of colored women applicants."[45] Those who did not experience employment discrimination but still "believes that orderly procedure is the only permanent solution" were encouraged to attend the public hearing and help assure that "the intent of the Executive Order" was fulfilled so that "the security of America and the United Nations may be guaranteed by full production."[46] In St. Louis MOWM's version of pressure politics, all interested members of the community played a role in making E.O. 8802 more than a dead legal letter.

If testimony gathered by St. Louis MOWM can be trusted, many African Americans reported racially discriminatory hiring and job placement practices, unsafe and unsanitary working conditions, and racially based wage scales for employees performing the same work.[47] For instance, Christine Berry Morgan, a worker at International Shoe Company, wrote St. Louis MOWM "in the interest of others and myself" asking for "several members of your organization to visit the factory" and give credibility to her complaints about working conditions. She was concerned about "the sanitary conditions where colored girls work, especially the fifth floor," and unequal "work and salary compared to others in the same building." Morgan also asked St. Louis MOWM's advice on forming a union and questioned the sagacity of striking to address problems outlined above.[48] One African American woman wrote instead of visiting MOWM's office "because my job doesn't allow me

to come in person." After completing training as a welder through NYA, she "was not fortunate enough to get a job." Recent weeks saw Kaiser Shipyard advertising openings for welders, so she visited company headquarters at 410 Broadway. Even though she claimed, "I could weld anything including cast iron. I can weld vertical, horizontal…and overhead welding…I could weld like a machine," her on-site visit was to no avail and she asked MOWM to intervene on her behalf.[49]

Another anonymous author writing under the name "A General Cable Employee," petitioned MOWM to not "forget to mention General Cable Corporation" at the FEPC hearings. The disgruntled employee complained, "That place is the most outstanding in discrimination against Negroes in employment," and accused the company of only hiring Black workers "to keep on the safe side of the F.E.P.C." The writer took White supremacy personally, claiming that supervisors "treat all their negro employees as if they don't give a dam if you work there or not." Subsequent investigations supported the writer's claim that General Cable shifted African American workers around in divisions but only limited job opportunities to "janitors, maids, and kitchen supply clerks." Discrimination and protests at Carter Carburetor and the Small Arms Plant at U.S. Cartridge drew headlines in the city's Black press, but countless companies like General Cable continued daily operations as if there were no FEPC. It was, in the plaintiff's words, "the worst place of discrimination against negroes in employment I have ever seen."[50] In fact, the situation at General Cable went largely unnoticed by most observers until hundreds of White workers reacted to the hiring of a few African Americans with a wildcat strike.[51]

MOWM's efforts supplied FEPC with so much information that the agency needed to extend the hearings an additional day. Both ten-hour sessions occurred before a "crowded courtroom with white and Negro spectators." Seven of the eight firms present at the hearings had charges involving, in FEPC chairman Malcolm Ross' words, "the alleged refusal…to hire needed and available Negro women war workers and the refusal to upgrade Negro workers to jobs utilizing their highest skills."[52] U.S. Cartridge set the tone, claiming innocence of discrimination and showing evidence that it "made a sincere effort to integrate Negroes into industry and provide them with the same opportunities offered whites." U.S. Cartridge's case was unique because the company had a relatively long history of employing African American war workers in the all-Black Unit 202. The charge levied against U.S. Cartridge was that it discharged more senior African American workers before it let go of White counterparts with less experience. It was alleged that White men took priority when the company re-absorbed workers even though, again, many of them had less seniority.[53]

In a departure from past pressure tactics, MOWM urged members to not confront racial discrimination through direct action. Instead, St. Louis MOWM proposed following a protocol for filing discrimination charges – effectively taking protest from the streets to the proper bureaucratic channels. The result was over 100 complaints, "mostly from the failure of qualified Negro women to be employed," against St. Louis area employers operating on federal defense contracts.[54] An anonymous letter from a writer claiming to work at General Cable is a good example of the rhetoric used to grumble about racist hiring practices and the prevalence

racial confrontations at the few workplaces that employed any considerable number of African Americans. If we can rely on the author's testimony, General Cable hired Black workers as menial laborers and refused to promote them. The reason for hiring them at all was to subvert FEPC regulations by having at least some representation of African Americans on their payroll. Not content with menial work and practically excluded from promotions, Black workers must have felt that the ceiling on their careers was not one of glass but of reinforced concrete. Perhaps because he or she was afraid of being identified and face retribution at work, the writer would not attend the FEPC hearings, but reminded MOWM representatives that his or her employer routinely pigeonholed African American workers into dead-end positions. The anonymous complaint indicates that some local people saw MOWM, not FEPC, as an organization that was responsive to their needs. Further proof of this is that the writer wanted MOWM representatives to not "forget" about Black workers in places where African Americans had secured employment, however menial, in plants at which MOWM did not regularly hold demonstrations at.[55]

The most obvious gains coming out of the hearings was the creation of a sub-regional FEPC office in St. Louis - a bureaucratic event that was hoped for by MOWM's most diehard activists and stodgy members of the St. Louis Race Relations Commission alike.[56] Coming of the heels of demobilization that one newspaper called "an economic D-Day for Negro Americans," creating a FEPC office in the midst of imminent economic contraction was too insignificant of an accomplishment at a point too late in the struggle. Still, the flood of discrimination complaints filed

during its first day of operations gave the St. Louis FEPC office one of the nation's largest case loads, thus legitimating the past three years of MOWM demands for an increased federal presence. Somewhat shortsightedly, the new FEPC office supervisor Theodore Brown attributed the astonishing volume of complaints to St. Louis' geographic location on the borderlands of north and south. Brown's analysis is surprising considering the sustained efforts of St. Louis MOWM to solicit, investigate, and analyze complaints prior to the office's opening. His blindness, intentional or otherwise, to St. Louis MOWM's contribution to the impressive volume of complaints processed by that city's FEPC is even more astonishing considering that an overwhelming majority of the cases did not come from White ethnic or religious minorities, both of whom comprised a small proportion of FEPC complaints in other cities. In St. Louis, African American men complaining that they were systematically passed up for promotions and African American women who believed that employers blacklisted them for reasons of race and gender comprised an overwhelming bulk of FEPC's cases.[57]

Shortly before FEPC's St. Louis office opened, statistics were released indicating that an "all-time high" of 6,000,000 Black workers were gainfully employed throughout the nation. The *Chicago Defender* attributed this to the combined confluence of manpower shortages, efforts of pressure groups, and FEPC's increasing visibility.[58] National progress did not necessarily translate to a tranquil working class. In St. Louis, perceptions of increased opportunities with imminent FEPC hearings were probably a factor in an upsurge of labor unrest amongst African Americans who held positions at companies with defense contracts.

In July 1944, 160 African Americans at National Lead Company's titanium plant went on a wildcat strike without support from their union, Local 12 of CIO United Gas, Coke and Chemical Workers. Contemporary newspaper accounts do not indicate specific demands from the striking workers, but reporters noted that ten White employees joined their picket line and the complaint of "unfair discrimination against Negroes" was often voiced.[59] The wildcat nature of this CIO local's action, the predominantly Black nature of the strike, and the regional African American press' silence to the event are all significant, but the timing of this wildcat strike less than one week before the FEPC arrived make this incident even more historically salient. Unauthorized autonomous militancy among African American workers occurred in other Missouri locations as well. Earlier that July, Granite City witnessed 290 African American chippers strike at General Steel Casting Corporation, a company making locomotive beds, tank parts, and gun mounts. These members of CIO Local 1022 were inspired to action by "because a white foreman to whom the chippers objected had not been discharged or transferred by the management." Since this factory was subject to federal intervention, African American workers thought that FEPC's presence in Missouri was leverage that could get this unpopular White foreman transferred to a different division or dismissed altogether. The mid-day strike was cut short after only five hours because CIO officials coaxed about a third of the striking workers away from the picket with a promise that negotiations between the union and management were underway and that their unauthorized shut down would not aid these discussions.[60] Even with a good-faith commitment from company management and the union, resolving the

conflict required representatives from the War Labor Board to step in with the threat of suspension and discharge of the roughly 200 African American workers who remained on the picket line.[61] As articulated by shop steward J.C. Cole, the chief complaint was that Black workers were systematically barred from four of the company's seven units and that existing Black employees were routinely overlooked when other employees were upgraded and promoted.[62] The chronological proximity of both of these strikes to the FEPC hearings indicates that the promise of increased federal presence in St. Louis coincided with a feeling among African American war workers that progressive changes in their industry were on the horizon.

Desegregating Higher Education in St. Louis

Progress sometimes occurred in places that were never flashpoints of struggle. In April 1944, St. Louis University, a traditionally Catholic institution in a city where more than half of the residents shared the faith, announced a plan for racial integration in the ensuing summer session. The school's gradualist approach brought in three female African American public school teachers as graduate students and two African American males enrolling as undergraduates. Shortly after, eight more African American women entered the School of social work.[63] St. Louis University's voluntarily removal of racial barriers and the subsequent conflict between MOWM with Lincoln University occurred in the context of an era in Missouri's history when, according to one commentator, African Americans found that "Education on a college level, except for the teaching profession, is virtually

impossible." This problem was more acute at the graduate and professional level, where opportunity for Black students to pursue advanced or terminal degrees was severely curtailed, causing one commentator to remark that the school was "neither equipped, organized, nor financed on a basis which permits real college work…a University in name only."[64]

St. Louis University's Senior President Father Patrick Hollohan pro-actively denounced racial segregation as "undemocratic" and "un-Christian." He explained desegregation as the extension of "the evident duty of all Catholics to receive a Catholic education…not restricted to grade school or even high school." As the only Catholic institution of higher education in the city, Hollohan argued that St. Louis University was morally obligated to admit qualified African American applicants who otherwise had no alternative for Catholic higher education.[65] Hollohan's anti-racism is remarkable considering that one year earlier, White students protesting against the school's racially exclusive practices were expelled.

Just as MOWM and FOR cooperated to quantify public opinion, St. Louis' League of Women Voters provided the university with data from a poll that, though far from representative of the city, revealed that 90% of St. Louis-area Whites favored integrating the institution.[66] Father Claude Heithaus concluded from this data "that the number of fair-minded people in this country is larger than many of us realize."[67] Heithaus, a professor of classical art and archeology, grounded his appeal for institutional integration in legal theory, arguing that "The law demands that they fulfill their civic duties…They are required to pay taxes, to serve in the armed forces, and to observe the law. Therefore the state is bond in return to see

that they get their rights."[68] To Catholic liberals like Heithaus, the issue was a conflict between Christian doctrine and Herrenvolk Democracy in the United States, a contradiction "that could not be reconciled," and, in Heithaus' appraisal, already forced a hundred thousand African Americans to "turn in despair to the followers of Lenin."[69]

As a theologian, Heithaus explained his position as one of "Paternal affection," ensuring "Christian justice and charity for the Negroes."[70] Heithaus used his role as a leader in a hierarchical religious institution to give a "surprise sermon…against race prejudice," which was received favorably by a student body that had already staged a five hundred-person demonstration calling for their school to integrate.[71] Just as "Jesus denounced injustice in the highest places," Heithaus used his pulpit to identify racists as not worthy of calling themselves Christians and criticize White supremacy as "snobbery against Negroes" that amounted to "diabolical prejudice."[72] While Heithaus gave clerical support for desegregating religious higher education, St. Louis University's student body led the institution to desegregate itself. Of all of the pontificating in the school's pulpits, none was more impressive than the student's response to Father Heithaus' sermon against racism. They joined him in a prayer of penitence and "reparation for the suffering which prejudice has inflicted" and for "the wrongs that white men have done to Negroes."[73]

There are no reports of anyone in the student body opposing the brief prayer that he asked them to repeat: "Lord Jesus, we are sorry and ashamed for all the wrongs that white men have done to your Colored children. We are firmly resolved never again to have any part" in propagating or abetting racism.[74] MOWM member

Henry Wheeler praised Heithaus' sermon in the pages of the *St. Louis American* as "the most courageous, the most direct and the only test of real Christianity of a white group that has ever been made in the history of our city."[75] Even though African American enrollment did not proportionately reflect the city's racial demographics, it was, to people like David Grant, symbolically important because it showed that "doors are opening up."[76] In another appraisal of St. Louis University's self-directed desegregation, and editorial in the *St. Louis American* praised the school for giving "all true Americans" a reason to believe in "the greatness of our Country." The *American* noted "a fine feeling within the Negro citizenry…not a feeling of celebration or overt jubilation, but one in welling respect for a deed done in the cause of [Christian] brotherhood."[77]

In contrast to St. Louis University's voluntary desegregation, Lincoln University, Missouri's only publicly supported institution for higher education open to African Americans, resisted enrolling Black students in some of its graduate programs.[78] The evasiveness of Lincoln's "Missouri Compromise" mirrored much of the South in its tendency to inadequately fund separate and ostensibly equal services for African Americans. The extension course at a satellite campus allowed Missouri to not finance a separate and equal School of Journalism while also avoiding the integration of its flagship university.[79] In 1941, three years after the *Gaines* decision, an investigation by the *Chicago Defender* revealed that most of the fifteen states with segregated higher education simply ignored the Supreme Court's decision.[80]

Journalism was not the only field that Lincoln University did not offer an adequate program in. The law school was so poorly equipped that an editorial referred to Dean William Taylor as “Judas” and a two-faced “Janus” more concerned with his career as an administrator than with the inequity of a “Jim Crow Law School” that constituted “a ridiculous insult to all fair-minded Missourians.” The *American* recommended that, since this mock law school was already “dead,” it be “buried without benefit of the clergy.”[81] Inflammatory editorial commentary aside, in 1944, both the School of Law and School of Journalism were on the verge closing on account of insufficient enrollment. MOWM and the NAACP attributed low enrollment to Lincoln’s practice of discouraging prospective students as part of a broader plan that the State of Missouri had to ultimately close the Law School.[82] Like the School of Law, Lincoln University’s School of Journalism was on the verge of dissolution. If this occurred, aspiring African American journalists had to get instruction from White faculty who were based out of Missouri University. Formed in Gaines’ aftermath, the School of Journalism was essentially created to fail, as it was never adequately funded or staffed.[83] By design, Lincoln’s School of Journalism was an extension school, with a small campus to call home but no faculty to call its own.[84] In a public letter, President of the Alumni Association William Green reiterated the crux of NAACP and MOWM’s argument, “If the state desires to preserve its dual educational system, let it pay for it.”[85] The legalese was clear: follow the letter of *Plessey* or desegregate inequitably funded publicly supported institutions.

After an agreement was made for Missouri University professors to lecture at Lincoln University, St. Louis MOWM took the helm and led a charge that the arrangement violated the Gaines decision.[86] In February 1944, Washington Tabernacle Baptist Church McNeal hosted a St. Louis MOWM rally protesting what T.D. McNeal called the "sneak-plan of shifting teachers from Missouri U. over to Lincoln in order to keep democracy out of education in Missouri." With support from NAACP and twenty-three other African American institutions including the Inter-Denominational Ministers Alliance, the rally drew over 500 attendees whose attitude revealed, in the words of one newspaper, "the Missouri Negro of 1944 is not for sale**."**[87] About two months later, longtime MOWM member Thelma McNeal stepped forward as a test case to gauge the extent to which under-funded segregated institutions could be forced to either disintegrate or get enough public money to be legitimized. Just four months before she played a leading role in the sit-ins, McNeal applied to study at Lincoln University School of Law.[88] Dean William E. Taylor truthfully testified to the Lincoln University Board of Curators that he refused McNeal's application because the Law School became inactive as of February 1944, and it only existed on the campus of this publically funded Black university to comply with *Gaines*. Thelma McNeal claimed that Taylor "would not allow her to register," but that Lincoln School of Law would accept her application when funding to reestablish the program was secured. MOWM member David Grant represented McNeal in court, and he alleged that Lincoln's administration was "shoving around" African American students and "ignored" the Supreme Court's 1938 decision. Thelma McNeal's sincerity as a law student cannot be verified, but

her case successfully illustrated that Lincoln University maintained the rudiments of a law school so that the University of Missouri could "avoid the necessity of opening the doors" to Black law students.[89]

MOWM's battle with Lincoln's Dean escalated, with David Grant and Thelma McNeal questioning his leadership as an academic administrator. Grant and McNeal accusing Taylor of discouraging applicants to the law school, abusing official power in order to gain control of the Poro Hotel for his private lodging, and converting a University telephone into a line for personal calls.[90] The Board of Curators exonerated Taylor of any wrongdoing, prompting Henry Wheeler to denounce University administration as "contrary to the spirit of the Gaines Decision."[91] The battle waged by MOWM and NAACP against Lincoln University led to a stalemate in the maintenance of a "scholarless school," and it exposed fissures in Black St. Louis by controversially casting University leadership as figures unworthy of emulation from students because they sheepishly compromised with "Jim Crow politicians to perpetuate their bad acts of faith."[92] For all of the rhetoric, Lincoln University remained as it was. The school's integrity among area African Americans was publicly called into question, but little actually changed. The final full year of American involvement in World War II witnessed St. Louis University voluntary desegregate on a very limited basis and without incident. Meanwhile, name-calling and resistance to handling racial equity in public higher education tarnished Lincoln University's image.

Vigilant protest politics reaped other unintended dividends in 1944, this time in the improvement of living conditions within St. Louis' predominantly Black

communities. Urban rehabilitation, an issue long advocated by the city's Urban League, became a reality that summer under the guidance of the St. Louis Race Relations Commission's Housing and Living Conditions Committee.[93] Headed by Reverend John Markos, the Housing Committee acted through the mayor's office to eliminate *de jure* segregation and restore blighted urban spaces through an ambitious program of improving home fronts, streets, sidewalks, and sanitary services.[94] This ambitious season of urban improvements was delayed by negotiations with the Real Estate Exchange and undercut by funding difficulties. These obstacles aside, the Housing and Living Conditions Committee managed to make a "marked improvement of housing conditions in the so-called blighted areas."[95] The committee also pushed the city's Commissioner of Parks and Recreation to schedule playing time at city fields for all-Black ball clubs that were formerly shut out of access to public fields. Though certainly not revolutionary, this was an instance where a municipal body recognized and acted upon the need for all city residents to have access to public recreation lands.[96]

A final noteworthy alteration in the city's racial order was the desegregation of grandstand seating at Sportsman's Park, home of the Major League Baseball club St. Louis Cardinals – a team whose star player, Stan Musial, served in World War II and was somewhat of a racial progressive.[97] Desegregating seating at the stadium, "the last outpost of Jim Crow seating in the majors," was an important harbinger of change, but the historical process through which this occurred is less than fascinating.[98] There was little fanfare surrounding the change in stadium seating policy, local Black protest organizations like MOWM never staged a picket, and there

appeared to be scant, if any, resistance from White spectators. Although St. Louis MOWM never targeted the team for demonstrations, Cardinals management was undoubtedly aware of the scope and nature of MOWM's protests because the stadium was located only a few blocks away from Carter Carburetor. Instances of voluntary top-down directed desegregation like this and St. Louis University's recent desegregation represented small steps which some interpreted as signs that "pointed toward a truly integrated democracy."[99]

With little fanfare, the summer of 1944 saw significant changes in the city's race relations. Just as administrators at St. Louis University never publicly mentioned increased Black protest throughout the city as a factor in its decision to abruptly change a longstanding policy of racial exclusion, St. Louis Cardinals owners Sam Breadon and Don Barnes never acknowledged that groups like MOWM coordinated highly visible protests over the past two years that influenced their decisions.[100] It is likely that these sudden changes in racial policy were the result of a ripple effect originating from activity by groups like the "March on Washington Committee…the agency which has done more than any other, to force industry and government in St. Louis to give Negro citizens a greater degree of justice."[101]

With the war waning and a march on Washington surely not about to occur any time soon, MOWM faded from the national scene.[102] Locally, when FEPC established an office in St. Louis, David Grant said that MOWM "sort of slacked off" before formulating a new campaign to keep the organization relevant in the post-war world.[103] There was still no shortage of issues to tackle, many of which looked like the changing same as St. Louis MOWM urged activists to continue pressuring

plants like McQuay-Norris, U.S. Cartridge, and Amertorp to ensure that they followed recommendations from the FEPC.[104] With E.O. 8802 on the books and a FEPC office open in St. Louis, MOWM's persistent utilization of public protests to draw federal attention to illegal practices seemed passé, if not stale. The inability to adapt its program after FEPC opened an office in St. Louis was certainly a factor in why the organization began to lose its appeal in a city where it once thrived.[105]

St. Louis MOWM tried to keep interest going in protest politics, non-violent direct action, and mass mobilization, but it could never distance itself from sharing a name with a national organization that never did what its name boldly declared was its mission. Interplay between national leaders and local activists demonstrate that national/local interaction was usually mutually beneficial. In October 1944, David Grant and A. Philip Randolph spoke at Washington Tabernacle Baptist Church to discuss "Where Will The Negro Be When The War Ends?"[106] This time, however, Randolph's appearance did not ignite a passion for protest among St. Louis' Black residents and, in less than a year, the answer was obvious. By July, 1945, the *Chicago Defender* reported that 6,000 recently unemployed African Americans in St. Louis crowded the U.S. Employment Service office looking for work.[107] A full-page photo essay in this same newspaper just a month prior to Grant and Randolph publicly speculating on post war prospects indicates that this issue was on the mind of many African Americans during the war's conclusion.[108]

Grant and Randolph addressed the question from a local and national perspective, but they shared the belief that "The fight that we put up between now and the post-war period will determine whether we will be found in the bread lines,

pushing apple carts or on good paying jobs when the war ends."[109] Grant and Randolph concretely addressed salient and sustainable issues for the organization to tackle as America re-adjusted to a peacetime economy. These issues included St. Louis' persistent use of an exclusively White workforce on its bus line, recalcitrant employers who still rejected *en masse* applications from African American women even after FEPC had an office in town, and demanding full integration of the city's lunch counters instead of accepting seating and service in a segregated section.[110]

National Council for a Permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission

Ever since Randolph unequivocally called off the march in summer 1941, his critics pointed out that FEPC had little power to coerce defense contractors into obeying the President's anti-discrimination policy as outlined in E.O. 8802. With little legal authority, FEPC's principal pressure tactic was moral suasion from within the federal government.[111] African American newspapers throughout the nation lifted their pens in defense of the beleaguered agency whenever the Southern-dominated Congress attacked its authority or threatened its appropriations. In St. Louis, the *Argus* cheered FEPC for "giving the Negro a man's chance to work and earn a living" and warned that without the embattled agency, African Americans would be set back "for years – or maybe generations" in public sector employment. The crisis of war created a moment of opportunity, and the paper warned, "If we do not get integrated into industry now…our future in the industrial life of the nation is too dismal to think about." Without FEPC as representative of federal support for equal opportunity, "there is little hope for the future."[112]

African Americans throughout the nation recognized that statistical gains made during the war were threatened by “extreme job displacement” when the economy reverted to traditional civilian patterns of production.[113] Expanded job opportunities in places like Los Angeles, where over five thousand African Americans entered war industries in a single year, and in Milwaukee, where one plant with a forty-year history of racial exclusion suddenly had almost five hundred African Americans on its payroll, were obviously threatened by the imminent conversion to a peacetime economy.[114] It is statistically impossible to gauge the extent FEPC influenced rising employment of African Americans, but gains such as those mentioned above contributed heavily to one perceptive commentator’s remarks that FEPC was “one of the most significant and one of the frailest” agencies created during Roosevelt’s lengthy tenure.[115]

A. Philip Randolph’s assumed leadership of the National Council for a Permanent FEPC because he recognized the urgency of preserving this federal agency. Randolph’s position as head of MOWM made it awkward for him to criticize FEPC because his reputation as a national figure in the pantheon of protest heroes depended on the agency’s existence. Still, even Randolph admitted that “success of this committee” was surprising considering that it was “hampered by insufficient funds and lack of authority to enforce its orders.”[116] Despite its alleged impotence, FEPC was certainly an ingredient in the recipe that made the number of gainfully employed African Americans reach a reported all-time high of six million workers, veritably wiping out unemployment among African Americans in urban centers.[117] The *Pittsburgh Courier* best summarized the problem of FEPC’s precarious place in

the federal bureaucracy, "When the war ends…the Fair Employment Practices Committee…will also end, because war contracts will end and the national emergency requiring tremendous war production will also terminate."[118] The *Courier's* gloomy forecast was correct, and the Russell Amendment made sure that even an activist Oval Office could not revive the dying agency. By mandating that the president could not allocate money to executive agencies whose budgets have not been previously approved by Congress during that fiscal year, the Russell Amendment was a virtual death knell to the FEPC, and the agency continued operations for only a year under the Truman Administration, which effectively renamed it the President's Committee on Government Contract Compliance.[119]

The push for a national FEPC ultimately failed, but the immediate post-war years saw two dozen states take the initiative to ensure that all citizens within their jurisdiction were guaranteed equal access to employment opportunity. In lieu of federal backing for equal opportunity, individual states created their own fair employment commissions. Although they operated on a smaller scale, state commissions were generally more effective because they had more legal authority and they were usually better funded than the old federal agency, which was symbolically important but actually had little ability to create change.[120] Politically, Democrats were the most vocal and visible supporters of permanent national and state fair employment commissions, with New Yorker Vito Marcantonio and New Mexico Senator Dennis Chaves leading the way.[121] These states tended to have strong labor lobbyists as well as multiracial and multiethnic populations comprised of African Americans, Asians, and European ethnics.[122]

In part because MOWM was unable to generate a strong showing in support of a permanent FEPC, Randolph joined with Allan Knight Chalmers to direct the National Council for a Fair Employment Practices Commission.[123] Formed in 1943, this single-issue special interest group sought to form an alliance between America's racial and ethnic minorities with the predominantly white labor movement. Without a grassroots base inspired by Randolph's leadership, his leadership in this short-lived organization existed primarily on letterhead. Rather than street theatre and public protest, Randolph's new organization depended almost exclusively on lobbying.[124] Though the tactics and its avowedly inter-racial composition were certainly different than MOWM, these two organizations shared many of the same goals.[125] Another similarity is that both MOWM and the National Council for a Fair Employment Practices Commission relied heavily on the work of its executive secretary, in this case Anna Arnold Hedgeman, to coordinate its national affairs. Hedgeman served in this capacity from 1944-1946 before personality conflicts and "a big fight" with Randolph caused her to abandon the organization.[126] Gender problems were likely a factor in Hedgeman's departure because, like MOWM, women did much of the organizing but men were almost exclusively the organization's mouthpieces.[127]

AFL economist Boris Shiskin and other influential members of the National Council for a Permanent FEPC hurled charges of mismanagement at both Randolph and Chalmers, but the fact that Hedgeman virtually ran the organization by herself and that the Council had difficulty fulfilling its financial obligations to her should not be overlooked. Never one to burn bridges, Hedgeman simply resigned and let other

members of the organization accuse Randolph and Chalmers of poorly leading the fledgling but much-needed lobbying group.[128] Reasons behind Hedgeman's departure include dissatisfaction with her position, personal frustration with Randolph's notoriously poor management skills, and the organization's incurable financial distress. The latter of these factors figures strongly in a handwritten letter from Arnold Aronson, her successor at the position, to A. Philip Randolph. This undated personal letter from sometime in the 1960s includes reminisces on his time working with Charles Wesley Burton for Chicago MOWM in 1941. Aronson reflects proudly on "that great day 22 years later, when we marched side by side holding hands down Constitution Avenue." Arnson's memory some two decades later indicate that the National Council for a Permanent FEPC was hamstrung by trying to "surmount the financial problems inherited from Ann Hedgeman."[129] In sum, Randolph's efforts in this new organization appear doomed from the start. His influence in the mixed and predominantly White organizations that comprised a bulk of the NCFPFEPC was limited, and his proposal to march on Washington in 1946 for a permanent national FEPC was opposed by nearly all of the leaders whose organizations backed the NCFPFEPC.[130] In part, this was due to FEPC's historical record as an agency that disproportionately addressed African American exclusion, a tendency that made it difficult to develop inter-racial alliances.[131]

Fighting the Jim Crow Army

MOWM lost much of its steam but Randolph remained entrenched in civil rights battles and in the fight against racial apartheid. He found success in the

campaign to abolish segregation in the armed forces, an issue that MOWM identified as urgent but ultimately could not rectify during the war. Randolph was at home in this campaign because it featured one of his specialties, Presidential pressure politics. The military was an ideal camp for pressing top-down desegregation because it was under the President's direct authority and not subject to Congressional pressure. Randolph's experience lobbying Roosevelt for change proved, to him, that the Executive Branch could be swayed more easily than America's traditionally conservative legislative body. Since MOWM's conception in 1941, Randolph wanted to employ civil disobedience and a march on the Capitol to "shock" the government into ensuring the safety of Black soldiers stationed at southern military bases surrounded by hostile locals and to desegregate the military.[132] The march was called off without any measures addressing segregation in the military, but Randolph persisted in pressing the issue.[133] By mid-war, the issue reinvigorated with a letter writing campaign urging Roosevelt, as Commander in Chief, to force the desegregation of what former Civilian-Aid to the Secretary of War William Hastie identified as the largest employer of African Americans in the country.[134]

MOWM's interest in getting the military to alter a long-standing policy of segregation re-kindled when African American draftee Winfred Lynn refused to serve in a segregated army. MOWM joined the ACLU in arguing that the draft's racial quota system and the existence of segregation in uniform was unconstitutional. MOWM raised funds to support Lynn's legal defense and printed a pamphlet authored by Dwight MacDonald entitled "War's Greatest Scandal: Jim

Crow in Uniform," that sold "by thousands" to grassroots distributers for three cents, who in turn peddled the literature for a nickel.[135] Just as MOWM's local chapters operated somewhat autonomously from the national office, Randolph threw the organization behind campaigns like the Lynn case even though there is little evidence of MOWM's local chapters latching on for the battle.[136] In hindsight, it appears that the Second World War was an unlikely time for a successful military integration effort. Activists like Randolph saw opportunity during the crisis, but the military was reluctant to alter a longstanding pattern of racial segregation at a time when the armed forces were actively engaged in combat. It is also to important to recognize the depth of resistance to change permeating the military's upper echelons. This is best seen in 1940 comments from the War Department arguing that racial segregation "has been proven satisfactory over a long period of years and to make changes would produce situations over a long period of years and to make changes would produce situations destructive to morale and detrimental to the preparations for national defense."[137]

Randolph's discussions of applying non-violent civil disobedience to confront segregation and racial inequality within America's fighting force petered out as MOWM faded from the limelight, but he remained interested in the issue through the Truman Administration. Randolph's inner circle for this successful campaign included many activists with whom he was acquainted with through his work with MOWM and the battle for a permanent FEPC: Maida Springer, Pauli Murray, Hazel Alves, and Bayard Rustin. Randolph also brought the same spirit of confrontational militant rhetoric that was typical with MOWM. At his most brash, Randolph told

members of a Congressional hearing that he would go so far as to commit treason and oppose a “Jim Crow army till I rot in jail.”[138] True to form, Randolph never followed through with this defiant promise, but the possibility of protest was undoubtedly a factor in President Truman’s integration of the military with E.O. 9981.[139]

CHAPTER 8

EPILOGUE

"Most of this nation's conflicts of arms have been – at least for Afro-Americans – wars-within-wars."
Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*[1]

With the war over, the idea of a march on Washington became "outmoded" and the national organization floundered. In St. Louis, as throughout the country, "the war affected but did not revolutionize race relations" while African Americans "remained on the occupational and economic fringes."[2] MOWM's executive committee unanimously agreed that the "March on Washington" name was misleading, and they recommended that it be changed to "Progressive Negro March Movement," "All-American Negro Progressive Movement," or "National Institute for Negro Affairs."[3] There was considerably less discussion when St. Louis MOWM disbanded. Once the organization lost its steam, members flooded the city's NAACP branch. The transition was natural people like T.D. McNeal, David Grant, and Henry Wheeler, all of whom had previously existing ties to the longest running organization specializing in registering Black protest. Thus, while MOWM dissolved as an institution, its members remained active in protest politics and the struggle for Black equality. In fact, David Grant used political capitol accrued by his activity during the war and parlayed it into being elected president of the city's NAACP.[4] He was the first Democrat, and first native son of St. Louis, to hold the position.[5] This was possible, in part, because "officers and key people" in St. Louis MOWM "went into the NAACP, practically took it over."[6] Garfinkle recognized that, on a national level, MOWM's decline was attributable to "a complex of political, organizational and

leadership rivalry," but in St. Louis the individuals who drove MOWM to the city's forefront of protest slipped into other organizations and continued their struggle.[7]

Randolph's campaign for a permanent FEPC gathered national headlines, stirring debate and prompting a filibuster in Congress, but it was not an issue that ignited grassroots fervor the way that a proposed march on Washington did.[8] Randolph's prophecy that "Unless America enacts FEPC legislation, it is going to witness a series of devastating and destructive racial tensions and riots…which will make the race conflicts following World War I seem petty" incorrect, but his sense of urgency was not enough to convince a divided Democratic Party to adopt fair employment legislation.[9] With the fight for FEPC lost, the agency's St. Louis office permanently closed in April 1946, after only a year and a half of operations. Less than three months later, the FEPC completely disbanded. Eulogized as having "done more to advance the Negro in employment than any other legislation in the history of the country," the FEPC could not survive repeated cuts to its appropriations and the lack of urgency for defense production that accompanied peacetime industrial conversion.[10] FEPC's closure was "anti-climactic" because the agency effectively shut down weeks before official word was passed to the media.[11] With its dissolution went the most important national gain wrought by MOWM. Now MOWM's only remaining accomplishments consisted of intangibles such as the acquisition of leadership training for dozens of Black activists, temporarily increased incomes for African American war workers, and local alterations to racist practices such as the desegregation of lunch counters at a few select department stores in St. Louis.[12]

Even in the mid-twentieth century, the fulfillment of the planks in MOWM's 8-Point Program were seen by some as utopian "high sounding but empty platitudes" that amounted to little – a fact that was not lost on the NAACP, which charged that MOWM negligently tried to appropriate its program.[13] Elizabeth Grant certainly embellished her portrayal of MOWM's brief tenure in African American protest politics as "one of the most dramatic efforts of the American Negro to escape the limitations which, since his advent on this continent, have been imposed upon him," it is accurate to conclude that the organization filled a critical gap in the available cache of protest tactics available to African American activists during the mid-twentieth century and to argue that it served as a conduit for introducing and refining techniques that would ultimately overthrow *de jure* racial segregation in the United States within the next two decades.[14] MOWM is also representative of a brand of highly critical but deeply patriotic Black protest that dates to at least the eighteenth century abolitionist movement.[15] Similar to the mid-twentieth century NAACP, MOWM used militant rhetoric to espouse moderate reform measures, affirming that "an organization can be critical of its government's directive actions and yet remain patriotic and loyal."[16] Though somewhat intangible, MOWM's protests were part of a broad sweep of international events and rhetorical shifts that saw an increasing number of Americans come to believe that "racism was morally wrong," and realize that it was "an impediment to the war effort."[17]

In contrast to the national office, gains made by St. Louis MOWM are well documented in the organization's press releases and by the city's African American media. Though difficult to gauge, it is important to at least consider that less

tangible but still important changes were made in the minds of activists and African Americans living in places like St. Louis during the Second World War. The breadth of protest activity aiming to integrate African Americans into an economic upswing speaks to Robert C. Weaver's conclusion that even in crisis, "the color line gave way slowly and only after great resistance" could African American workers "gain a foothold in single-skilled jobs."[18] In addition to acquiring experience as activists and leaders, individuals who attended MOWM's weekly meetings and participated in direct action undoubtedly experienced a personal transformation when they stood up to the structures of White supremacy in their city and, as seen in some cases, created localized economic and political change. In the St. Louis Negro Grade Teachers Association's endorsement of MOWM's protests, the all-Black union identified a greater cognizance among White citizens that "the Negro population is deadly in earnest in their efforts to win for themselves industrial and political privileges due them as citizens of America," a realization that was finally reached because of "the employment of mass power as an effective weapon."[19] In an obviously more biased opinion, St. Louis MOWM's fundraising letter claimed responsibility for 8,000 new jobs for African Americans in war plants and lifting the general morale of Black people, while causing the nation to develop a "respect for the determination of the Negro people to fight for their rights."[20]

Randolph fell out of favor with the national Black press just as quickly as he shot to the headlines of those same media outlets in MOWM's early years. Reasons why he fell out of favor are uncertain, but even in St. Louis, a bastion of pro-Randolph MOWM supporters, news of his appearance at a rally supporting a

permanent FEPC was often buried deep in the pages of newspapers that gave MOWM prime coverage space just two years earlier.[21] If Randolph's ability to gauge the zeitgeist of Black America and lead MOWM was his greatest asset, his inability to develop sustainable protest that engaged and motivated the masses of African Americans was a major factor in his organization's downfall. Likewise, MOWM's activity was so specific that it imposed an artificial limitation on the organization's appeal. For instance, while St. Louis MOWM could claim credit for securing 8,000-14,000 jobs and acting as a clearinghouse for discrimination complaints filed with the FEPC, the Gateway City's NAACP publicized an impressive list of accomplishments and activities every year that crossed political ideologies and addressed issues such as education, industrial development, and public segregation.[22]

MOWM's rapid rise and disintegration in the national protest scene coincided with the total collapse of African American radicals' support for the Communist party and a period of unprecedented growth in the NAACP's membership.[23] This organization's eightfold increase was due, in part, to tireless recruiting efforts by fieldworkers like Ella Baker and Daisy Lampkin, to the increase of expendable income that African American war workers had during the temporary economic boom, and to a general "organizational upsurge in black America that was unprecedented in scale."[24] Another factor was that "the NAACP had overcome the sins of its past," and it redirected its focus on grassroots programs directed by African Americans.[25] MOWM appropriated a brand of militant direct action characterized by the Depression-era American Left and amalgamated it with a

pseudo-Garveyite style of Black nationalism to energize an undetermined but significant amount of African Americans. Its efforts led to an unprecedented gesture of Presidential support for equal opportunity. MOWM's tactics of using mass pressure to inspire federal action fits well within a scheme of mid-twentieth century African American protest politics, a style of democratic participation that dominated racial activism for the next two generations.[26] MOWM also revealed the limitations of grassroots pressure politics, for its effectiveness necessitates constant civic engagement. This is best illustrated in MOWM's failure to respond when Paul McNutt postponed FEPC's railroad hearings, despite Randolph's strong warnings otherwise. Randolph's reply as to why his organization did not react more strongly indicates that increasing momentum in some of its local chapters did not bolster MOWM's national credibility, making it, in Randolph's words, "utterly impossible to mobilize a March on Washington upon the issue of the postponement of the railroad hearings."[27]

The fact that considerable struggles over Civil Rights were needed nationally and in St. Louis speaks to the reality that MOWM did not completely shatter the structures of racism in St. Louis.[28] In summarizing the power of White supremacy, Walter White recognized near the end of the war that "the world has not yet learned the danger and folly of its racial greed and intransigence."[29] Many of the things that they fought for would take decades to completely mature and precious gains had to be zealously safeguarded lest the revolution go backwards.[30] As late as 1966, McNeal's bid for re-election as an incumbent to the Missouri Senate called for some of the same things that McNeal and MOWM members fought for decades ago: a state

Fair Employment Practices law enforced by the authority of the Board of Aldermen, a state law ensuring equality of public accommodations, and increased appointments of African Americans to various St. Louis municipal posts including the Board of Elections, Board of Police Commissioners, and Board of Education.[31]

Understanding that all mass movements have shortcomings and that the struggle against White supremacy and racial inequality is still ongoing, St. Louis MOWM stands out as that city's leading voice in the chorus of African American protest during the Second World War.[32] Their efforts gave credence to Horace Cayton's analysis on a St. Louis radio broadcast that "The war has broken down conventional race relations patterns," making it "impossible to maintain the old and established race etiquette."[33] Likewise, the success enjoyed by McNeal, Grant, and St. Louis MOWM demonstrates historian Barbara Ransby's point that "An organizer did not have to have the perfect political strategy but did have to have the respect and trust of those he or she struggled alongside."[34] In St. Louis, MOWM took advantage of pre-existing social networks that were typically deeply entrenched in many urban African American communities because of the need to insulate themselves from segregation. Herbert Garfinkle was correct when, in an epilogue to an expansion on his original study of MOWM, he recognized that "the multiplicity of leaders and organizations…provides a number of bases on which various strata of the population can be brought together" that outweighs the strain resulting from a "hidden competition for funds and programmatic priorities."[35] MOWM achieved public uniformity masking internal divisions in Black St. Louis because, according to David Grant, they used a "quarantine" to increase support for their agenda. "If we

found in our midst a traitor," he or she would be socially ostracized from the organizations and institutions in which one enjoyed membership. In other words, segregation created strong community ties and social pressure that could be wielded through various networks to encourage others to participate.[36]

A major issue facing MOWM is that the increase of African American workers in war industries was inevitably temporarily, as defense production could not possibly sustain such high output. St. Louis MOWM was cognizant of this flaw, and adjusted the focus of protests to emphasize lobbying for jobs in municipal utilities. Layoffs should have surprised no one. As early as January 1944, announcements for gradual reductions in the workforce of an explosives plant rippled through St. Louis.[37] Layle Lane identified another factor in MOWM's demise. In her analysis, a "slump in public support for the March is to be expected" because public enthusiasm for protracted civil rights struggles was fickle. Nevertheless, Lane was confident that organizational personnel and policy could mitigate this problem "with careful planning" around solvent issues that connected local problems to national affairs.[38]

MOWM's greatest failure was its inability to accomplish what may have been impossible: complete support from all of the country's newly integrated war-workers. Even though one account of St. Louis MOWM's brief history makes an unsubstantiated claim that the organization had 4,000 members by 1945, it is unlikely that this number indicates the amount of dues-paying supporters. This is because the organization constantly operated under desperate fiscal constraints, and the dues collected from four thousand members would have greatly enriched MOWM's coffers.[39] Jordan W. Chambers' tenure as treasurer of St. Louis MOWM is

wracked with "impassioned" pleas for the estimated 14,000 Black workers in St. Louis defense plants earning an estimated $450,000 per week to give his organization "100 per cent support."[40] As it was nationally, St. Louis MOWM's fundraising tactics were "a precarious way of raising money" because dependable revenue from dues was minimized.[41] Although this theoretically made it easier for the organization to increase its membership numbers, this policy left MOWM vulnerable to relying on charitable giving for its institutional sustenance. It is unlikely that MOWM's widely publicized efforts to integrate area defense plants were unknown to these newly employed defense workers. This leaves open the explanation that African Americans who gained lucrative but typically temporary jobs in defense plants either had little consciousness of their position in context of current events, or they simply had little desire to keep a protest organization fiscally solvent. A final explanation could be that these workers saw their upward employment mobility as the result of forces outside the St. Louis Black community. To them, new job opportunities were the result of shortages in available White labor and prodding from FEPC officials, not from Randolph's advocacy or McNeal's public demonstrations.[42] Although St. Louis MOWM could dominate headlines in the local Black media and "continue hammering relentlessly" on the structures of racial inequality, MOWM's own leadership admitted that it could not draw significant revenue from the people whom it helped the most.[43] This was, of course, a veritable deathblow for an organization operating on the premise that "The effectiveness of a movement such as this depends to a large extent upon the size of the base membership." Organizers like Charles Kennedy and Eugene Wood were

undoubtedly sincere in stating that "we are in this fight to stay, no matter what the future may bring in hardships, suffering, opposition or expense" they could not keep a local branch of a national organization relevant when the national office could not establish machinery to meet its operating expenses.[44]

In terms of membership, by the end of the war, St. Louis' NAACP greatly outpaced the city's MOWM branch. In part, this was because economic equality was the centerpiece of MOWM, and St. Louis' NAACP had a history of agitating for job opportunities that predated MOWM's arrival on the scene.[45] Another factor behind the inverse correlation between St. Louis' NAACP's rise and MOWM's demise during the mid 1940s is that NAACP's national office invested tremendous resources to increase membership in the city. In this case, resources translated directly to more effective organization and heightened membership. Thus, as Pauli Murray mentioned to Randolph in a brief note, there were more important things to be done besides condemning Communism, namely, addressing "our weakness" including the "lack of strong organization."[46]

The war's conclusion symbolized the end of MOWM's place in the constellation of Black protest groups shining in the dark sky of mid-twentieth century racial apartheid in the United States. MOWM's brief but fiery history provides a historical model for patriotic protest from a historically oppressed racial minority during a period of international crisis. As a study of organizational behavior, MOWM demonstrates that local branches of national groups involved in inspiring and steering grassroots struggle can expect an operational disjuncture that is not necessarily detrimental. To wit, St. Louis MOWM thrived through grassroots

civic engagement and pressure politics that often impacted the economic opportunities and civil rights of African Americans in that city. While the national office was calling policy conferences and formulating plans for protests, St. Louis MOWM responded to immediate local issues that resonated with the city's Black population. Public protest for increased employment opportunity with federal defense contractors mobilized Black St. Louis to such an extent that their activism for jobs caused a ripple effect throughout the city, resulting in a select number of jobs in public utilities, desegregation at a prominent area university and a professional baseball stadium, and a summer of sit-ins forcing the improvement of food service at some department stores. The legacy is one of local people engaged in direct action and protest politics that aimed at completing the New Deal's unfinished business resolving racial inequality.

Table 1
List of MOWM Chapters and Local Chairpersons

Washington, D.C.	Thurman Dodson, Eugene Davidson
Chicago	Charles W. Burton, Milton P. Webster
St. Louis	Sidney Redmond, T.D. McNeal**
New York City	Colden Brown
Jacksonville	S. Harper, Miss E.M. White
Tampa	Matthew Gregory**
Savannah	Mr. Johnson
Jersey City, NJ	Mrs. Lillian L. Williams, C.A. Johnson
Newark*	Harold A. Lett, Mrs. Georgia Boone
Trenton, NJ	Miss Susie Steele, Jasper Brown
Boston	Robert A. Williams**
Los Angeles	Philip Peterson, Oscar Soares**
Buffalo	Otis Thomas**
New Orleans	C.J. Pharr & Ollie Webb
Cincinnati	James Smith
Flint, Michigan*	Harrison Johnson
Cleveland	Sidney R. Williams, C.S. Wells**
Pittsburgh	Rev. R.H. Johnson
Salt Lake City	Henry Dumas**
Richmond, VA	Senora Lawson, Rev. Joseph T. Hill
Birmingham	Hartford Knight
Nashville	Mrs. Davie Della Phillips
Denver	Thelma Freeman & Barry Slater
Mobile	J.F. Gilcrease
Chattanooga	R.H. Craig
Montgomery	Edgar D. Nixon
Albany, NY	Mrs. J.B. (Wardell) Robinson
Atlanta, GA	William Y. Bell
Akron	Norman Gowens
Indianapolis	Mr. Butts
Macon, GA	A.L. Thomas
Kansas City, MO	Thomas A. Webster
Memphis, TN	L.J. Searcy
Milwaukee	William V. Kelley
Baltimore, MD	Edward Lewis
St. Paul, MN	N.A. Evans
Philadelphia, PA	G. James Fleming

Data compiled from "Lists of Locals and Chairmen," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; also found in "Local Units – March on Washington Movement," Revised May 24, 1943, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Negro-March-on-Washington-Committee Bulletin," Vol. 1, No. 1, May 22, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13

* Indicates that this city was not listed as a city with an active BSCP division

** Indicates that MOWM chairperson was also an Officer in BSCP as indicated in "Officers of the Local Divisions of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters: Train Porters and Colored Firemen," June, 1943, Reel 11, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 71 mentions a "short-lived" MOWM branch founded by William V. Kelley of the Milwaukee Urban League and James W. Dorsey of the city's NAACP; Akron MOMW is only documented in Norman Gowens to Dear Friend and Marcher, [n.d.], Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

A brief note of women's activism in Albany MOWM is found in *Chicago Defender*, February 12, 1944; correspondence between the branch and Randolph is found in Box 25, MOWM Correspondence, 1944, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Indianapolis MOWM officers are named in Priscilla Dean Lewis to Bennie Smith, June 14, 1943, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers; and a complete list of this chapter's members is in "March on Washington Movement: Indianapolis, Indiana 1941-1946," Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Macon, GA branch is mentioned in A.L. Thomas to A. Philip Randolph, February 2, 1944, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Fee Milo Manly resume, December 1946, Reel 15, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Mentions an organization called Philadelphia Committee for Equal Job Opportunity that morphed into the Philadelphia MOWM but I found no details of this branch.

Hill, *RACON*, p. 462-463 lists MOWM chapters but does not mention leadership of the branches. Meridian, Mississippi, Miami, Florida, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and West Medford, Massachusetts, are listed but there is no corroborating evidence that these branches existed beyond notation from this same source that J.A. Burns of Meridian and Rev. M.C. Strachen on MOWM's national committee.

Table 2
Approximate Racial Composition of Major St. Louis Defense Contractors

Company	Total Workforce	African American Employees (Women)	African Americans in Skilled Production	Percentage of African American Employees
Atlas Powder Company*	5,000	280	16	.056
Broderick and Bacon Wire Rope Company	700 (50 women)	1 (0 women)	0	.001
Carter Carburetor Corporation**	3,000 (1,000 women)	0	0	.000
Curtis Wright Corporation***	14,000-16,000 (33% women)	225-500 225-300 women	Yes	.016 - .031
Emerson Electric Company	10,000 (33% women)	>350	yes	> .035
Gaylord Container Corporation	1,000 (400 women)	0	0	.000
McDonald Air Craft Corporation	2,500 (33% women)	30-35	0	.014
McQuay – Norris Home Plant	2,000 (50% women)	14-15	0	.008
McQuay-Norris plant 1	3,500 (900 women)	300 (0 women)	0	.086
McQuay-Norris plant 2	3,000 – 4,000 (1,500 women)	400 (0 women)	0	.133 – .100
National Lead Company	700	160	Not Disclosed	.228
Robertson Air Craft Corporation	450	4-5	Not Disclosed	.011

St. Louis Air Craft Corporation	500	1 (0 women)	0	.002
Southwestern Bell Telephone	600	15 (0 women)	Not Disclosed	.025
Amertorp Corporation	3,500 – 4,000 (33% women)	165 (0 women)	Yes	.048 – .041
U.S. Cartridge****	20,000-30,000	600 (women not disclosed)-3500 (700 women)	Yes	.030 – .117

Figures compiled from:

“Untitled Document,” [n.d., 1942 likely because of surrounding documents in collection], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

“Job Situation For Women Here Serious,” [n.d., 1944 likely because sit-ins are mentioned], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor regarding

Fair Employment Practices, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

* Atlas Powder Company, 7 Point Letter, May 29, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers notes that as of October 1942 the company had 36 African Americans working on production, a number that fluctuated to zero at one point but rebounded to 16 when re-hiring was possible.

MOWM’s investigation revealed a dual wage scale, with White porters earning ninety cents per hour while African Americans doing the same work capped out at seventy-five cents per hour. This admittedly partisan investigation also revealed inequitable working conditions, with African Americans not having access to showers, lockers to store possessions, lunch breaks, and less sanitary toilet facilities. St. Louis MOWM never launched a full-fledged campaign against the company but it was antagonistic towards Atlas Powder.

“Skit read at meeting – Block Captains,” [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers documents a skit played at a MOWM meeting featured scenes from the daily lives of African Americans in St. Louis. One of these scenes features a son, age 21, with college experience in chemistry that cannot gain employment with Atlas Powder.

** *St. Louis Argus*, August 28, 1942.

*** Photographs of African American women working in this plant were published in *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, February 5, 1945.

**** High end figures from David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; lower figure is from *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 27, 1942; yet another statistic is from *St. Louis Argus,* June 20, 1942, which reports yet another of 23,500 workers, 8,000 of whom were women. African Americans on the payroll were limited to 300, none of whom were women and all of which were unskilled workers. A final figure from this plant is reported in *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942 reports 600 African Americans employed in the 20,000 person plant.

NOTES

Chapter 1

[1] John M. Thornton to Marvin E, Wolfgang, Reel 3, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[2] The low estimate of 10,000 marchers was from the initial call in early 1941. After this, the estimated number of attendees steadily increased. A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, March 18, 1941; "Plan to Mobilize 10,000 Negroes to March on Washington, D.C." [n.d.], Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13. For a chronology of this numerical increase see Benjamin Quarles, "A. Philip Randolph: Labor Leader at Large," in John Hope Franklin and August Meier (editors), *Black Leaders of the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), p. 155; Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1973* (New York: International Publishers, 1974), p. 240; Lucy G. Barber, *Marching on Washington: The Forging of an American Political Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 121.

[3] Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 109 writes, "Planned, but cancelled, the Negro March on Washington will always remain somewhat mysterious."

[4] Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), p. 132; Brailsford R. Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters: Its Origin and Development* (New York: Harper, 1946), p. 235.

[5] This problem is also influenced by the use of documentary sources from the 1940s emphasizing Randolph's uncompromising militancy and Roosevelt's benevolent pragmatism. See A. Philip Randolph, "The Negro and the War," *The Black Worker*, November 1941; A. Philip Randolph, "The Brotherhood Backs the War," *The Black Worker*, February 1942; A. Philip Randolph, "The March on Washington Movement and the War," *The Black Worker*, January 1943; Earl Brown and George R. Leighton, "The Negro and the War," Public Affairs Pamphlets, no. 71, Silver Burdett Company: New York, 1942; Chandler Owen, "Negroes and the War," Washington, DC: Office of War Information, 1943; Gerald Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century: Dissent, Discontent and Disinterest* (Ph.D. Dissertation), Howard University, Washington, DC, 1985, p. 561-565 points out that many readers thought that this pamphlet "oversold racial progress while downplaying discrimination and segregation."

[6] Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, p. 139.

[7] George Schuyler, "Views and Reviews," *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 1, 1942. Schuyler's ability to shape public opinion on MOWM was due largely to the *Courier's* weekly circulation of 250,000 – the largest of all Black media outlets during the war

years. By comparison, the *Baltimore Afro-American* was a distant second with 120,000 and the *Chicago Defender* third with 100,000. The *St. Louis Argus*, a newspaper that I regularly refer to in this study, circulated 15,053. For circulation figures circa 1943-1944 see "101 Best Newspapers in the Negro Group," Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Benjamin McLaurin sent a ten-page rebuttal to the *Courier* responding to Schuyler's unflattering editorial, charging it as "erroneous as it is malicious." In a war of words marked by vociferous name calling that went largely unpublished, McLaurin argued that recent rallies in New York and Chicago proved that MOWM was "essentially and fundamentally a mass movement." In true Schuyler fashion, he personally responded to McLaurin with a terse letter correcting some of McLaurin's finer and sometimes inconsequential points. See "To the Editors of the Pittsburgh Courier – Reply to George Schuyler by Benjamin McLaurin," [n.d.], George Schuyler to Benjamin McLaurin, August 8, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Pauli Murray, then a student leader in the NAACP, responded to Schuyler's editorial with a more tempered essay than McLaurin's. Murray acknowledged Randolph's shortcomings as an organizer but she used New York MOWM as an example of local activity proving the organization's grassroots support, see Pauli Murray to George Schuyler, July 31, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[8] *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 8, 1943. Moore also criticized NAACP for narrowing its activity to legal protest, thus diminishing its appeal among the masses of African Americans. Henry Winfield Wheeler, a MOWM member and managing editor of the *St. Louis American* called out Moore as "a wolf in sheep's clothing" comparable to infamous traitors such as Judas, Brutus, and Benedict Arnold, see *St. Louis American*, May 20, 1943. An undated and uncited clipping of an article by Horace Cayton also overlooked the depth of MOWM activity in some locales. Cayton remarked, "for whatever cause this movement stirred the souls of the black man on the street but failed to organize him," National Affairs Folder, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[9] Bayard Rustin, "The Negro and Nonviolence," in *Fellowship: The Journal of the Fellowship of Reconciliation*, October 1942 reprinted in C. Vann Woodward (editor), *Down the Line: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), p. 8-12.

[10] Lawrence Ervin, "Speech Delivered by Lawrence Ervin, Eastern Regional Director of the March on Washington Movement at the We Are Americans, Too Conference, Held at the Metropolitan Community Church, Chicago, Ill., June 30, 1943," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[11] Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 135.

[12] Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 108, 110.

[13] Herbert Garfinkle, *When Negroes March: The March on Washington Movement in the Organizational Politics for FEPC* (New York: Atheneum, 1973 – first published by the Free Press, 1959), p. 59.

[14] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 10.

[15] Evelyn Sell, "To Shake Up White America," *International Socialist Book Review*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Winter 1960) criticizes Garfinkle for overlooking contributions from working class leaders to MOWM who would have been analogous to E.D. Nixon and Robert F. Williams as components of the Civil Rights Movement. Sell, however, offers no names or other suggestions for unearthing the history of MOWM's local champions.

[16] William Harris, "A. Philip Randolph as a Charismatic Leader, 1925-1941," *Journal of Negro History*, Fall 1979, p. 301-315; LeRone Bennett, "The Day They Didn't March," *Ebony*, February 1977, p. 28-130, 132-134; Tony Martin, "March on Washington Movement," *Journal of Afro-American Affairs*, Spring 1979, p. 63-69.

[17] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 85.

[18] Toure Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity: The Urban League and the Politics of Racial Uplift, 1910-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), p. 139.

[19] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 133-134.

[20] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 97-124.

[21] Clarence Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936-1975* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), p. 43-68.

[22] Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 170-175.

[23] Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, vii.

[24] Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 3.

[25] Robert A. Hill (editor), *The FBI's RACON: Racial Conditions in the United States During World War II* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995), p. 26-27.

[26] John H. Bracey, Jr. & August Meier, "Allies or Adversaries?: The NAACP, A. Philip Randolph and the 1941 March on Washington," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. LXXV, No. 1, Spring 1991, p. 1-17; St. Claire Drake to A. Philip Randolph, August 7, 1948, Reel 12, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[27] "To All Branches," May 12, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[28] "Estimate for a National Budget," [n.d.], A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, June 2, 1941; A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, May 6, 1941; A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, April 10, 1942, "Contributions to the Negro March-on-Washington Committee," Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; also see Eardlie John to Walter White, April 17, 1942; A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, May 25, 1942; Walter White to A. Philip Randolph, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. An exception to this pattern is a report indicating that BSCP outspent NAACP $957.89 to $543 in 1941, see "Financial Report," 1941, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. BSCP had long contributed to the coffers of local African American institutions and churches, see Beth Tompkins Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), p. 63-86.

[29] At a 1941 Hampton Institute, Walter White voiced "Approval of the work of the March on Washington Committee …with the express purpose of securing from the President of the United States a statement with respect to Negroes in the armed forces of our country." An adept political leader, White forwarded a transcript of his speech to Eleanor Roosevelt. See Walter White to Eleanor Roosevelt, November 5, 1941, White House Correspondence, Box 754, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers; Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*, p. 234-234.

[30] "Suggested Statement for Consideration by Board on Relationship of NAACP to march-on-Washington Movement," September 14, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; Walter White to Daisy Lampkin, April 6, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[31] NAACP espoused a live and let live attitude towards MOWM. For instance, Walter White confessed to "a very strong personal aversion, which I know is shared by my associates, that we should not attempt any form of political maneuvering in the affairs of other organizations." See Walter White to Alfred Baker Lewis, September 21, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[32] Bracey, Jr. and Meier, "Allies or Adversaries?," p. 2.

[33] *Chicago Defender*, July 26, 1941; *Chicago Defender*, February 14, 1942; Eugenie Settles to A. Philip Randolph, November 10, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*, p. 235 mentions financial support from NAACP but offers no details. Lester Granger of the National Urban League was personally supportive of MOWM but reluctant to align his traditionally white-collar oriented organization with grassroots protest, see Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 141.

[34] Anna Arnold Hedgeman to A. Philip Randolph, September 25, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[35] Roy Wilkins to Walter White, June 24, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[36] "Tentative Proposal for a National Monthly Periodical to be sponsored by The Negro March on Washington Committee," July 11, 1941, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[37] "National March on Washington Movement: Policies and Directives – Local Units," [n.d.], Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Responsiveness to local needs and emphasis on cooperation was also a hallmark of CORE's activism in the mid-1940s. For examples see Folder: Non-Violent Direct Action Campaign Against Jim Crow, Reel 14, CORE Papers; "Plan to Mobilize 10,000 Negroes to march on Washington, D.C.," [n.d.], Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[38] This pattern began with the first book length scholarly appraisal of BSCP history, see Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*, p. 234-235 and persists in recent scholarship such as Eric Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color: Black Railroad Workers and the Struggle for Equality* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 188-191.

[39] Jack Santino, *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle: Stories of Black Pullman Porters* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Joseph F. Wilson (editor), *Tearing Down the Color Bar: A Documentary History and Analysis of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 188-191

[40] McNeal and McLaurin were praised by peers in BSCP as "indefatigable and able workers…They have stood the test. They have shown that they can measure up to a most exacting ordeal. They were with us when we were penniless and beaten down to the ground, but they always stood firm for their cause," see "Convention Joint Session," September 17, 1940, p. 50, Folder 7, Box 2, BSCP Collection.

[41] Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics*, p. 163-173; for a similar perspective on MOWM's all-Black membership policy see John B. Kirby, *Black Americans in the Roosevelt Era* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1980), p. 173.

[42] Mary McLeod Bethune, "Certain Unalienable Rights," in Rayford Logan (editor), *What the Negro Wants* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 255.

[43] Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks: The Emergence of Civil Rights as a National Issue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 314-325; Sullivan, *Days of Hope*, p. 7; Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics*, p. 148-174; Philip A. Klinker and Rogers M. Smith, *The Unsteady March: The Rise and Decline of Racial Equality in*

America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 154-160, 164-165, 199; Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, p. 239-242; John Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (New York: Knopf, 1994), p. 214-217; also see Larry Tye, *Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class* (New York: Henry Holt, 2004), p. 206-212; Kirby, *Black Americans in the Roosevelt Era*, p. 170-175; Nat Brandt, *Harlem at War : The Black Experience in WWII* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), p. 76-81; Neil A. Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1993), p. 42-48; Ronald Takaki, *Double Victory: A Multicultural History of America in World War II* (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 2000), p. 40-42.

[44] Recent exceptions include a brief reference to St. Louis MOWM in Doris A. Wesley, Wiley Price, and Ann Morris, *Lift Every Voice and Sing* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), p. 11-12 and recognition of Eugene Davidson's brief tenure as MOWM's assistant director in Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 108, 119-120.

[45] Melinda Chateauvert, *Marching Together: Women of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), p. 170.

[46] Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 163-187. *Chicago Defender*, April 11, 1942 reports on an "elaborate" Easter tea at the St. John A.M.E. church sponsored by women of Chicago MOWM. Milton Webster was a naysayer of the ability of women in Chicago to organize and sustain MOWM. In a letter to Randolph, he wrote "It is my candid and confidential opinion that in connection with this March on Washington meeting we are going to have a grand, A-1 mess up" because Irene Gaines got too many irresponsible individuals involved, see Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, April 10, 1942, Reel 8, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[47] *Chicago Defender*, February 1, 1941; *Chicago Defender*, February 8, 1941.

[48] *Chicago Defender*, February 15, 1941.

[49] *Chicago Defender*, June 7, 1941 lists members of the local march committee, which was headed by Neva Ryan and Irene Gaines. With the exception of the occasional reverend and local BSCP powerhouse Milton Webster, the names are nearly all female. Five years later, Gaines, then working for the Chicago Council of Negro Organizations, was at a 1,000 person strong demonstration converging on the Capitol in January 1946 to urge support for FEPC. For photographic documentation of her presence at this event see *Chicago Defender*, January 26, 1946.

[50] *Chicago Defender*, April 26, 1941.

[51] Comments on fragmentation and conflict in the Chicago unit, especially involving "workers" like Payne and BSCP men like Charles Wesley Burton are numerous, as

are Webster's dissatisfaction with programs being enthusiastically discussed but not implemented. BSCP felt entitled to control the organization because their finances kept the Chicago branch afloat. Webster alleged that maintaining MOWM cost his union $200 every day, see Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, August 25, 1942; Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, April 6, 1942; Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, August 27, 1942; Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, August 29, 1942, Reel 8, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[52] Cynthia Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph: The Religious Journey of an African American Labor Leader* (New York: New York University Press, 2006). Washington, D.C., was similar to Chicago in that it had a strong network of African American women who participated in activism within the confines of gendered dignity. For them, supporting MOWM was a reason to organize social events such as teas and receptions for movement leadership. See *Chicago Defender*, October 9, 1943. A common social fundraiser in Harlem was cocktail parties, see "Cocktail Sip Invitation," March 21, 1943; "The March on Washington Movement cordially invites you to a Tea," May 16, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[53] Andrew Edmund Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War: The FEPC in the Midwest, 1941-1946* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), p. 112-125. Factual problems in this otherwise excellent study include giving Unit 202 the wrong name, presuming that protest stickers for South Western Bell telephone were used in lieu of payment, and placing St. Louis MOWM's 1945 membership at 4,000. For useful tables on interaction between MOWM and FEPC refer to FEPC Financial Papers, Contributions, Reel 16, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Also of interest is Paul D. Moreno, *From Direct Action to Affirmative Action: Fair Employment Law and Policy in America, 1933-1972* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1997).

[54] Kenneth Stuart Jolly, *It Happened Here Too: The Black Liberation Movement in St. Louis, Missouri, 1964–1970* (Ph.D. Dissertation), University of Missouri, Columbia, 2003, p. 45-46 mentions MOWM as "a catalyst and model for African American agitation and liberation efforts in the decades following the war" but this dissertation, which focuses on Black Power struggles in the late 1960s, does not explore St. Louis MOWM's operations. Likewise, Debra Foster Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People: The St. Louis Argus Newspaper in the Twentieth Century* (Ph.D. Dissertation), University of Missouri, Columbia, 2003, p. 111, 138-139 recognizes MOWM's presence in the city within the context of a larger study of a Black-owner newspaper. A noticeable exception is Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 43-68.

[55] Lorenzo J. Greene, Gary R. Kremer, Antonio Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage: Revised Edition*, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993), p. 158-172. Jolly, *It Happened Here Too*, p. 7 notes that *Missouri's Black Heritage* overlooks important local manifestations of Black Power. This criticism is inherent in any review of a

massive single-volume narrative and it should not be interpreted as a marginalization of the monograph in question.

[56] Richard S. Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri: Volume V, 1919-1953* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986).

[57] Paula F. Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph: Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1990), p. 3, 84; Manning Marable, "A. Philip Randolph and the Foundations of Black American Socialism," *Radical America*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (March-April, 1980); also see Randolph's obituaries in *New York Times*, May 18, 1979; *New York Daily News*, May 18, 1979. *Daily News* quotes Benjamin Hooks, then president of the NAACP, praising Randolph because "for more than 40 years, he was a tower and a beacon of strength and hope for the entire black community." Also of interest is A. Philip Randolph, "March on Washington Movement Presents Program for the Negro," in Logan, *What the Negro Wants*, p. 133-162.

[58] Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 45-88.

[59] Andrew Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph: A Life in the Vanguard* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), p. 48, 58-59.

[60] William H. Harris, *Keeping the Faith: A. Philip Randolph, Milton P. Webster, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1925-1937* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977; Tye, *Rising From the Rails*; Santino, *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle*.

[61] Richard Dalfiume, "The Forgotten Years of the Negro Revolution," *Journal of American History*, 55 (June 1968).

[62] Sumner M. Rosen, "The CIO Era, 1935-1955," in Julius Jacobson (editor), *The Negro and the American Labor Movement* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1968), p. 189.

[63] Richard Dalfiume, "The Forgotten Years of the Negro Revolution," p. 106.

[64] Robert Korstad & Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *The Journal of American History*, Volume 75, Issue 3 (December 1988), p. 811.

[65] Beth Bates, "Double V for Victory Mobilizes Black Detroit, 1941-1946," in Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (editors), *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), p. 17-39; for a narrative of race relations in Detroit in the Roosevelt years and the status of African American workers in Ford plants see August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, *Black Detroit*

and the Rise of the UAW (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 34-107; for a report on MOWM activism in Flint see *The Militant*, October 24, 1942.

[66] John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (New York: Free Press, 2003), p. 59; Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, p. 47.

[67] Theoharis and Woodard, *Freedom North*; Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (editors), *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); Korstad and Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost," p. 786-811; Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91, (March 2005), p. 1233-1263; also see Patricia Sullivan, "Southern Reformers, the New Deal, and the Movement's Foundation," in Armstead L. Robinson and Patricia Sullivan (editors), *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1991), p. 82, 99 offers the tempered argument that the Roosevelt years witnessed "an accelerations of black protest and activism" creating a "foundation" for post-*Brown* civil rights campaigns.

[68] Theoharis, "Introduction," *Freedom North*, p. 11; Sundiata Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, "The Long Movement as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies," *The Journal of African American History*, Vol. 92, No. 2 (Spring 2007), p. 265.

[69] Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003) p. 16, 38-59, 79-97. The post-war years were also full of ferment in St. Louis, see Mary Kimbrough and Margaret W. Dagen, *Victory Without Violence: The First Ten Years of the St. Louis Committee of Racial Equality (CORE), 1947-1957* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), p. 41-69.

[70] Cha-Jua and Lang, "The Long Movement as Vampire," p. 266.

[71] Mark Robert Schneider, *We Return Fighting: The Civil Rights Movement in the Jazz Age* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), p. 3.

[72] Cha-Jua and Lang, "The Long Movement as Vampire," p. 269.

[73] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "Foreword," Theoharis and Woodard (eds.), *Freedom North*, p. xii.

[74] Sullivan, *Days of Hope*, p. 275 argues that "little, if any, memory of the New Deal years informed the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the activists of the earlier decades tilled the ground for future change."

[75] Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1981).

[76] William Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Equality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Robert J. Norrell, "Southern Reformers, the New Deal, and the Movement's Foundation," in Robinson and Sullivan (eds.), *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies*.

[77] Bernard Sternsher (ed.), *The Negro in Depression and War: Prelude to Revolution, 1930-1945* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), p. 3.

[78] *St. Louis American*, September 22, 1944. For a similar analysis of the war years as an opportunity to fulfill the New Deal see *St. Louis Argus*, August 25, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, September 18, 1943.

[79] Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell, *Black Workers and the New Unions* (College Park, MD: McGrath Publishing, 1969 – originally published in 1939 by University of North Carolina Press in Chapel Hill), p. ix-xii; Robert C. Weaver, *Negro Labor: A National Problem* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1946), p. 239; Sullivan, *Days of Hope*, p. 220; a rhetorical counter-point that the 1940's represented a "New Revolution over Civil Rights" see *Des Moines Sunday Register*, August 15, 1948, Reel 13, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[80] John M. Thornton to Marvin E, Wolfgang, March 15, 1974, Reel 3, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[81] W.E.B. Du Bois, "A Chronicle of Race Relations," *Phylon*, Vol. IV, No. 2, 2nd quarter 1943.

[82] Anna Arnold Hedgeman, "Honoring Mr. Randolph," *New York Age* [n.d. – sometime in January 1960], Folder 1, Box 4, BSCP Collection.

[83] Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 5, 15, 41-42. Kenneth Robert Janken, *Walter White: Mr. NAACP* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), p. 249 shares this appraisal, arguing that MOWM "led to some of the most tangible accomplishments of the New Deal era."

[84] A. Russell Buchanan, *Black Americans in World War II* (Santa Barbara, CA: Clio Books, 1977), p. 13. Counterpoints to Buchanan's perspective are Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks*, p. 328 argues that "little had changed in the concrete aspects of life for most blacks" during the New Deal." For other accounts with similar arguments as Buchanan see Kirby, *Black Americans in the Roosevelt Era*, p. 92; Sullivan, *Days of Hope*, p. 59.

Chapter 2

[1] "Interview: A. Philip Randolph & Richard Parrish," May 1, 1975, Box 1, Interviews, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

[2] Ted Potson, "From Shakespeare to FEPC," *New York Post*, February 13, 1946, clipping found in Box 1, Folder: Biographical Material, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL; Anna Arnold Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos: Decades of American Discontent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 58-59; Jervis Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph: A Biographical Portrait* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 248; Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, p. 206; "Joseph Gottlieb's Manuscript on Bayard Rustin and A. Philip Randolph," p. 22, Folder 7, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL.

[3] Oral History T-024, Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[4] Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, p. 178-179. This is not to say that other regions did not have a MOWM presence. In November 1943, for example, Randolph spent two days in Denver rallying support for that city's fledgling MOWM branch. For details of Randolph's visit to Denver see Hazel Alves to A. Philip Randolph, October 9, 1943, Reel 5, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[5] See Table 1 for a list of MOWM chapters with cross-references to BSCP leadership; for a table of BSCP chapters and enrollment figures see Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*, p. 221-222. Generally speaking, the history of each MOWM chapter is difficult to write because many of them left few documentary or manuscript sources behind.

[6] Negro-March-on-Washington-Committee Bulletin, May 22, 1941, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[7] T.T. Patterson to A. Philip Randolph, May 15, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[8] Nixon shared the pattern of organizational cross-affiliation that that many St. Louis MOWM members displayed. See Lewis Baldwin and Aprille Woodson, *Freedom is Never Free: A Biographical Portrait of Edgar Daniel Nixon* (Atlanta: A. Woodson, 1992).

[9] Margaret McLaurin to A. Philip Randolph (n.d. – 1942 likely because of surrounding papers), Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[10] For more on BSCP's early history see Preston Valien, "The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters," *Phylon*, 3rd Quarter 1940, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 224-238; Brazeal.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. More contemporary accounts include Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics*; Tye, *Rising From the Rails*.

[11] *St. Louis Argus*, June 6, 1940; *St. Louis Argus*, June 13, 1941. The idea that mass mobilization could fundamentally alter America's civil rights landscape also appeared in Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., *Marching Blacks: An Interpretive History of the Rise of the Black Common Man* (New York: Dial Press, 1945), p. 8.

[12] *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942.

[13] Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, p. 178-179; *Chicago Defender*, May 9, 1942; *The New Leader*, July 11, 1955 in Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 968-4, March on Washington Movement, 1941-1945: Chronology, 1943-1965, Schomburg Clipping File.

[14] Powell, Jr., *Marching Blacks*, p. 149; for the position that "blacks immediately recognized that the war provided a crisis in which rights could be fought for and won" see Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, p. 20.

[15] Louise Elizabeth Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement: A Study in the Sociology of Conflict* (M.A. Thesis), Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, 1944, p. 136-142; also see Stanley High, "How the Negro Fights for Freedom," *Reader's Digest*, XLI, (July, 1942), p. 113. Grant's analysis of the freedom struggle during World War II is contextualized y Randolph, who saw the problem of Black liberation in White supremacist capitalism as rooted in the need to finish "an uncompleted liberal bourgeoisie democratic revolution – commonly known as the Civil War" that left "the slave power broken, but the slave masters were not eliminated," see *Chicago Defender*, July 10, 1943.

[16] Walter White, *A Rising Wind* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1945), p. 81.

[17] "Mr. Randolph's Response at 80th Birthday Celebration," Box 1, Folder: 80th Birthday, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

[18] Hill, *The FBI's RACON*, p. 4.

[19] Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), p. 164.

[20] *The Black Worker*, June 1941.

[21] *The Black Worker*, July 1941.

[22] "Interview with Bayard Rustin," March 28, 1974, Folder, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL. Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color*, p. 190-191 corroborates Rustin's

appraisal, recognizing that MOWM sponsored "numerous rallies." Unfortunately, Arnesen reveals no details supporting or documenting this argument.

[23] *Washington Tribune*, June 7, 1941.

[24] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942; also see *St. Louis Argus*, November 7, 1941; verbatim press release in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 45. McNeal's analysis of fascism and totalitarianism as ideologically synonymous with racism was echoed by Dean William Pickens. At a speech in Greensboro, North Carolina the previous year, Pickens argued, "In spite of its political and social evils, America allows the freedom which is not enjoyed in other countries." Pickens affirmed Black citizenship, making a case that "there is nothing more American in American than its 15,000,000 Negroes." Pickens predicted that Nazi style Fascism, if it ever reached the United States, would see "the Jew at the bottom, but the Negro would be placed under the bottom." See "Call to Negro America," *The Black Worker*, May 1941.

[25] Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. vii, 15.

[26] Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. 18-20.

[27] James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (New York: Dell, 1964), p. 76**.** This is exactly what a committee from the Phelps-Stokes Fund feared when they wrote Stephen Early warning that recalcitrant racism in America's defense industries would bring about "frustration, destruction of morale, and the opening of the doors for subversive agitators opposed to the American way of life." See "National Defense and Negro Americans," March 29, 1941, OF 93 – Colored Matters, Folder January-May 1941, Box 3, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. The threat of low morale and racial conflagrations was echoed by James E. Shepard, President of North Carolina College for Negroes, who wrote Roosevelt that, on recent travels through "many of the large cities on the Atlantic coast" he found "very little enthusiasm among the people of my group concerning the present war." See James P. Shepard to Franklin D. Roosevelt, February 13, 1942, OF 93 – Colored Matters, Folder: January-February 1942, Box 4, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers; Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 258-293; Jennifer C. James, *A Freedom Bought With Blood: African American War Literature from the Civil War to World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), p. 187.

[28] "The March on Washington Movement and Non-Violent Civil Disobedience," February 23, 1943 (press release), Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[29] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 30. For more on the *Courier's* Double V campaign and the use of this slogan in Black protest during the war see Beth Bailey and David Farber, "The Double V Campaign in World War II Hawaii: African Americans, Racial Ideology, and Federal Power," *Journal of*

Social History, Vol. 26, No. 4 (1982), p. 817-843; Charles W. Eagles, "Two Double V's: Jonathan Daniels, FDR, and Race Relations During World War II," *North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (1982), p. 252-270; Kevin Mumford, "Double V in New Jersey: African American Civic Culture and Rising Consciousness Against Jim Crow, 1938-1966," *New Jersey History*, Vol. 119, No. 3-4 (2001), p. 22-56; Byron R. Skinner, "The Double V: The Impact of World War II on Black America," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkley, 1979); Joyce Thomas, "The Double V was for Victory: Black Soldiers, the Black Protest, and World War II," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1994); A.J. Stovall, "The Role of the African American Press in the Aborted 1941 March on Washington," *Griot*, Spring 1995, p. 3-9; for an analysis of Double V's impact on African American music see Guido Van Rijn, *Roosevelt's Blues: African American Blues and Gospel Songs on FDR* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997), p. 210-211.

[30] Klinker and Smith, *The Unsteady March*, p. 138.

[31] "The Acid Test of Democracy," October 1942, FSN Sc 003,420-1, Schomburg Center Clipping File; Caroline Singer, "Integration of the Negro Into American Life," March 15, 1942, FSN Sc 003,465-1, Schomburg Center Clipping File; also see Bethune's remarks that "We face a critical time in the history of our country and of the world" necessitating the mobilization of African American women to vote in the 1944 election in Mary McLeod Bethune, "Annual Report," October 15, 1943, FSN Sc 003,465-1, Schomburg Center Clipping File; "Address by Walter White, Executive Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, at closing meeting of Wartime Conference, Sunday, July 16, 1944, Washington Park, Chicago, Illinois," FSN Sc 003-437-2 Schomburg Center Clipping File, defines World War II as a critical moment in race relations. In White's words, race defined "a war to save the world from the military aggression and racial bigotry of Germany and Japan."

[32] *The Black Worker*, March 1941, p. 4.

[33] *Chicago Defender*, September 26, 1942. *Chicago Defender*, February 20, 1943 excerpts Randolph's speech, "America and Global Justice Now," at People's Church in which Randolph presenting a similar scenario in which "To save democracy at home, we must make democracy work at home for the total population." Gary Gerstle argues that "the confrontation with Nazism induced a shift in liberal sensibilities" that elevated issues of race and civil rights as issues of national import, giving birth to a contemporary liberalism that belabors "racial equality, minority rights, and expansive notions of individual freedom," see Gary Gerstle, "The Protean Character of American Liberalism," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 99, No. 4 (October, 1994), p. 1045, 1070.

[34] *Chicago Defender*, May 9, 1942.

[35] Minutes of Sub-Committee Meeting on March to Washington held in NAACP Office," April 10, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13: The NAACP and Labor, 1940-1955 - Series B: Cooperation with Organized Labor, 1940-1955.

[36] Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 57; Janken, *Walter White*, p. 255 writes that the threat of a violent response to the demonstration "endangered all the progress hitherto achieved under the New Deal."

[37] *Washington Tribune*, June 24, 1941; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 48-49. Randolph's penchant for control organizational operations extended beyond the initial march. In a widely circulated "Reply to my Critics" serial in the *Chicago Defender*, he urged "The demonstrators must not possess offensive deadly weapons such as knives, razors or guns of any kind." See *Chicago Defender*, July 3, 1943.

[38] Minutes of Sub-Committee Meeting on March to Washington held in NAACP Office," April 10, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[39] For remarks on African American womens' "respectability" and social responsibility in the first half of the twentieth century see Evelyn Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 186-229; Stephanie Shaw, *What A Woman Ought to Be and Do: Black Professional Women Workers During the Jim Crow Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 15, 23, 66, 206; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 147-175; Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 31-43; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 3-7, 21.

[40] Eardlie John to A. Philip Randolph, August 1, 1942, Reel 29, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[41] Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color*, p. 191 and Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 134 cite correspondence from New Dealer Mark Ethridge stating, "we have accomplished what the President wanted…we paralyzed any idea of a march on Washington and we have worked honestly for a better measure of justice for the negroes."

[42] William J. Thompkins to Edwin M. Stanton, January 23, 1941, OF 93 – Colored Matters, Box 3, Folder: January-May 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. For contemporary discussions of African-American morale see Horace Cayton, "Fighting for White Folks?" *The Nation*, September 26, 1942; Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops: Special Studies, The United States Army in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1966), p. 300-347; Arnold M. Rose, *The*

Negro's Morale: Group Identification and Protest (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1949).

[43] Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day*, p. 209.

[44] James Rorty, "Brother Jim Crow," January 18, 1943, p. 4 in Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers Papers. Rorty's pamphlet was endorsed by MOWM and published by the Post War World Council.

[45] Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 32-33; Francis D. Adams and Barry Sanders, *Alienable Rights: The Exclusion of African Americans in a White Man's Land, 1619-2000* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), p. 269.

[46] Wilson (ed.), *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, p. 346, 369; Studs Terkel, *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1984), p. 334-336. Merl Reed's organizational history of FEPC argues that even though the federal government had little power to coerce employers, the fledgling agency used negotiation and pragmatic suasion to settle 42% of the 12,000 cases that it handled, see, Merl E. Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement: The President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, 1941-1946* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), p. 330; also refer to Moreno, *From Direct Action to Affirmative Action*, p. 70; Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 2-5. For a different perspective that unenforceable fair employment practices laws "uniformly failed" because they lacked enforcement and the Roosevelt Administration never revoked a contract from recalcitrant employers see Raul F. Norgrent & Samuel Hill, *Toward Fair Employment* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 149-168. For a journalistic opinion that "It is a miracle that the FEPC has been able to accomplish as much as it has" see I.F. Stone, "Jim Crow Flies High," June 23, 1945 reprinted in Studs Terkel, *A Nonconformist History of our Times: The War Years, 1939-1945* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1988), p. 288.

[47] Terkel, *The Good War*, p. 334-336.

[48] *St. Louis Argus*, June 20, 1941; *St. Louis Argus*, June 27, 1941; *Washington Evening Star*, June 26, 1941.

[49] Albert Parker, "The Negro March on Washington," *Fourth International*, June 1941, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Parker had "sharp differences with Randolph," lending his highly critical support of the demonstration on the principle that all militant activity was "a part of our fight for full social, economic, and political equality for the Negroes."

[50] Walter White to John A. Singleton, June 12, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. Also see Benjamin Quarles, "A. Philip Randolph: A Labor Leader at

Large," in Franklin and Meier, *Black Leaders of the Twentieth Century*, p. 140; Terkel, *The Good War*, p. 334-336.

[51] "Proposals of the Negro March-on-Washington Committee to President Roosevelt for Urgent Consideration," May 1941, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers; duplicate copy found in "Proposals of the Negro March on Washington Committee" [n.d.], Aubrey Williams Personal File (1936-1942), GR 58, Box 3, Miscellaneous Files, Correspondence N-P General, Folder: Negro Marches on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers; proposals were publicized in *The Black Worker*, July 1941.

[52] Bracey, Jr. and Meier, "Allies or Adversaries?," p. 16. The logistical problem of getting several hundred African Americans to the Capitol from the NAACP's annual convention in Houston, Texas, was a limiting factor in the ability to stage a protest. The NAACP altered the dates for its annual conference to allow delegates sufficient time to make the lengthy trek by rail, see "Program from Thirty-Second Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Houston, Texas," June 24-28, 1941, FSN Sc 003,426-12, Schomburg Center Clipping File.

[53] *Chicago Defender*, February 1, 1941. Randolph wrote a reply to the *Defender*, confirming, "You are right when you say that even to get 2,000 Negroes to march on Washington would be a worthwhile accomplishment." Randolph also confirmed the paper's plan that even 2,000 African Americans could "startle the country and win the respect of the American people." See "The Randolph Plan," *Chicago Defender*, March 8, 1941. Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color*, p. 188; Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 140; Klinker and Smith, *The Unsteady March*, p. 155-159; Janken, *Walter White*, p. 255 also recognize Randolph's disparity in numbers of protestors; August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, *From Plantation to Ghetto* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), p. 268 inaccurately places Randolph's threat in the range of 50,000 to 100,000.

[54] *Chicago Defender*, June 21, 1941.

[55] Harvard Sitkoff, "The New Deal and Race Relations," in Harvard Sitkoff (editor), *Fifty Years Later: The New Deal Evaluated* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985), p. 96. MOWM unintentionally established a framework for opposition to its own program and ideology. Harlem MOWM organizer T.T. Patterson reported of a Reverend Harten "proposing a meeting at Yankee Stadium…whose intention is similar to that of the March" so that he could co-opt the enthusiasm of MOWM's members. See T.T. Patterson to A. Philip Randolph, May 5, 1942, Reel 7, The Papers of A. Philip Randolph. Patterson also wrote, "This reverend gentleman, whose face depicts duplicity in excellence, roared out vociferously as one of the March to Washington meetings, and promised cooperation to the extent of the entire universe, only to fall so suddenly like Lucifer."

[56] D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet*, p. 339; for other recent studies of Rustin see Daniel Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000); Jerald Podair, *Bayard Rustin: An American Dreamer* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009), p. 15-25; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 144-147.

[57] Quarles, "A. Philip Randolph: A Labor Leader at Large," p. 140; Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. xiii points out that the idea and practice of amassing in the Capitol was institutionalized 1963. Thus, Randolph's idea, while certainly not original, was certainly groundbreaking.

[58] Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America*, p. 153.

[59] Randolph was not so pragmatic when his validity as a leader was not at stake. At a speech in Cleveland, Randolph called on the entire Black Cabinet to follow William Hastie's example and resign in protest of segregation in the armed forces. See *St. Louis Argus*, March 7, 1943.

[60] *St. Louis Argus*, June 20, 1941.

[61] *St. Louis Argus*, June 27, 1941.

[62] Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 13.

[63] "A. Philip Randolph: Portrait of a Gentle Warrior," *New York Teacher*, October 13, 1974," Folder 1, Box 4, BSCP Collection.

[64] Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt – The Homefront in World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 161-189, p. 246-253; Meier and Rudwick, *From Plantation to Ghetto*, p. 259; Adams and Sanders, *Alienable Rights*, p. 258.

[65] *St. Louis Argus*, June 20, 1941.

[66] Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 244; Harvard Sitkoff, "The New Deal and Race Relations," p. 105 bestows the title "unofficial ombudsman for blacks" upon Eleanor Roosevelt. The First Lady's record of supporting anti-lynching legislation and longstanding criticism of segregation earned her a high level of respect among African Americans. The most poignant symbol of her esteem within the national Black community is that the NAACP chose her to present the Spingarn Award to Marian Anderson. Randolph played up to Eleanor Roosevelt's status as a White insider in Black politics. He once wrote her, "Just a word in these days of storm and stress to express my deep appreciation for the great service you are rendering in your own way to the cause of democracy in general, and justice for the Negro people…I need not tell you that there is a deep affection among the Negro people for you. I just wanted to send you this note, and I do not expect an answer." A. Philip

Randolph to Eleanor Roosevelt, August 3, 1942, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Klinker and Smith, *The Unsteady March*, p. 131.

[67] "Minutes of Local Unit of Negro March-on-Washington Committee," June 14, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[68] *New York Post*, March 6, 1941; Walter White to Lowell Mellett, March 11, 1941, Box 18, Lowell Mellett Papers. Mellett was Director of the Bureau of Motion Pictures.

[69] Roosevelt's secretary and good friend Grace Tully wrote Walter White on behalf of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Foundation to solicit White's reminisces of working with the former President. Tully told White that she sought his account "because of your friendship with the President and your historic first-hand knowledge." It is notable that there is no comparable correspondence addressed to A. Philip Randolph.

White's proximity to both Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt make it likely that if any Black leader was an architect of E.O. 8802, it was he. This does not marginalize Randolph's importance in the campaign for equal employment opportunity. Without his advocacy of pressure politics, White's vision for executive action to address inequality would have been fruitless. See Grace Tully to Walter White, September 19, 1947, FDR Memorial Foundation, Box 27, Folder IV: Walter White, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers; "Requests made to President Roosevelt by NAACP, 1932-1943," February 12, 1943, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. Janken, *Walter White*, p. 199-231 details White's relationship with Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt as part of NAACP's anti-lynching campaign. Though he access to the President, White's biographer does not intimate that this led to a close friendship.

[70] Walter White to Lowell Mellett, March 11, 1941, White House Correspondence, Box 18, Lowell Mellett Papers; also see Senate Resolution #75: Clippings, Press, Resolutions – 1941, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, p. 42.

[71] Walter White to A. Philip Randolph, March 20, 1941, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; for NAACP's lobbying efforts on behalf of this legislation see Folder: Senate Resolution No. 75 – Correspondence, General, 1941, Reel 24, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 71; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 45-46.

[72] Aubrey Williams to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 25, 1941, GR 58, Box 3, Miscellaneous Files, Correspondence N-P General, Folder: Negro Marches on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers.

[73] The cover of NAACP's journal, *Crisis*, July 1940, is a visually powerful example of this impulse. It features a photograph of two warplanes flying over an airfield with the caption, "WARPLANES – Negro Americans may not build them, repair them, or fly them, but they must help pay for them."

[74] "Minutes of Local Unit of Negro March-on-Washington Committee," June 14, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13: The NAACP and Labor, 1940-1955 - Series B: Cooperation with Organized Labor, 1940-1955.

[75] *Amsterdam News*, September 13, 1942; A. Philip Randolph, "The Negro's Fight for Democracy Now: Speech for Golden Gate Mass Meeting," September 11, 1942, Speeches, #47, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

[76] "Minutes of Local Unit of Negro March-on-Washington Committee," June 14, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 127.

[77] Bethune's public support for MOWM might have been tempered by a 1943 Dies Committee investigation, for more on this and evidence that New Dealers were targeted during the Red Scare see Ted Morgan*, Reds: McCarthyism in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Random House, 2003), p. 187-222; "List of Persons who sent letters to Congressman Kerr Re: Congressman Dies' changes against Mary McLeod Bethune," Reel 2, The Mary McLeod Bethune Papers.

[78] McCluskey and Smith (editors), *Mary McLeod Bethune: Building a Better World – Essays and Selected Documents* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. xii; for Bethune's support of MOWM see Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America*, p. 159-160; Kirby, *Black Americans in the Roosevelt Era*, p. 110-121.

[79] Mary McLeod Bethune to Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 26, 1941, White House Correspondence: Box 18, Lowell Mellett Papers. Three years later at Carnegie Hall, Bethune credited Randolph with transforming the consciousness of African Americans in the Deep South "that he must get up and stand upon his feet and organize and unitedly fight for his rightful place in the field of labor." See "Tribute to A. Philip Randolph, May 2, 1944, Reel 2, Part 1, The Mary McLeod Bethune Papers.

[80] A. Philip Randolph to Mary McLeod Bethune, June 8, 1942, quoted in Herbert Garfinkle to A. Philip Randolph, December 20, 1957, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[81] McCluskey and Smith, *Mary McLeod Bethune*, p. 6; for a summary of Bethune's life and work see B. Joyce Rose, "Mary McLeod Bethune and the National Youth Administration: A Case Study of Power Relationships in the Black Cabinet of Franklin D. Roosevelt," in Franklin and Meier, *Black Leaders of the Twentieth Century*, p. 191-219.

[82] A. Philip Randolph to Franklin D. Roosevelt, July 3, 1941, OF 93: Colored Matters, Box 3 (1940-1941), Folder: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. Randolph recommended Webster as the leading Black candidate with LaGuardia as chair of the committee. Randolph wanted a meeting between himself, White, and President Roosevelt to discuss African American nominees for FEPC but was denied. A. Philip Randolph to Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 30, 1941, Box 3: Marches on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers.

[83] Mary McLeod Bethune to Aubrey Williams, July 15, 1941, GR 8, Box 3, Folder: Negro March on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers. Also see Aubrey Williams to A. Philip Randolph, July 15, 1941, GR 58, Box 3, Miscellaneous Files, Folder: Negro Marches on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers. For Dickerson's reflections on his service with FEPC see Terkel, *The Good War*, p. 337-340; for Bethune's political influence through her friendship with Eleanor Roosevelt see Mary McLeod Bethune, "My Secret Talks With FDR," *Ebony*, April 1949, p. 42-51; Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time*, p. 162-163, 228, 447; Bettye Collier-Thomas, *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice: African American Women and Religion* (New York: Knopf, 2010), p. 380; Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 285.

[84] A. Philip Randolph to Walter White telegram, July 15, 1941, Reel 10, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13: The NAACP and Labor, 1940-1955, Series B: Cooperation with Organized Labor, 1940-1955; A. Philip Randolph to Walter White telegram, July 14, 1941, Reel 11, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13. Described by one historian as "A competent administrator with a sincere belief in the value of grassroots activism," Lester Granger initially supported MOWM but he gradually distanced himself from Randolph. Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 124, 141, 148.

[85] Oral History T-024, Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

[86] Walter White to Eleanor Roosevelt, March 13, 1941, White House Correspondence, 1933-1945: Personal Letters 1941 War-Wi, Folder – Walter White, Box 754, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers.

[87] Walter White to Franklin Roosevelt, March 13, 1941, White House Correspondence, 1933-1945: Personal Letters 1941 War-Wi, Folder – Walter White, Box 754, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers. A contingency to this interpretation is that a draft of E.O. 8802 is in Aubrey Williams' file with "6/24/41" hand scrawled across the top. Possibly post-dated, this still leaves open the conceivability that the Roosevelt Administration prepared to issue E.O. 8802 well before the law was drafted. Aubrey Williams, Gr. 58, Personal File, 1936-1942, Miscellaneous File, Correspondence N-P General, Box 3, Aubrey Williams Papers. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 49 argues "Roosevelt and his advisors had no idea whether Randolph

could mobilize thousands of black protestors, but the White House had reason to fear the worst."

[88] Stephen Early to Malvina Schneider, August 5, 1935, President Secretary's File, Subject: Walter White, Box 173, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers.

[89] FDR Day-By-Day, June 18, 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. Quote from *St. Louis Argus*, June 27, 1941; *Chicago Defender*, June 28, 1941. Secondary historical accounts of the meeting are found in Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 60; James Rorty, "Brother Jim Crow," pamphlet (New York: Post War World Council, 1943) found in Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, p. 241; Brazeal, *Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*, p. 234. Of all these accounts, the *Defender* is the only one that includes a summary of each attendee's case. According to this newspaper's account, Lane pointed out that the proposed march was part of a bigger question about the government's role in integrating African Americans into the nation's political and economic structures. It is important to recognize that all of the African Americans at this meeting had a history of working with Randolph.

Frank Crosswaith is probably the most overlooked even though his relationship with Randolph dates back to his service as a BSCP organizer in 1925-1928. During the 1940s, Crosswaith worked alongside Maida Springer as an organizer for the ILGWU. For more on Crosswaith see "Biographical Sketch of Frank R. Crosswaith," [n.d.], Box 1, Folder 1: Biographical Info, Frank Crosswaith Papers; "Oral History Program – Interview by Maida Springer," June 6, 1973, Box 1, Folder: Interviews, A, Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

Layle Lane also had a longstanding professional relationship with Randolph and he recognized her as a strongly influential figure in his personal development. Lane briefly worked as Randolph's secretary in MOWM but she shied away from accepting a permanent position with the organization, believing that her commitment to pacifism was incongruent with MOWM's unwavering support for the war. At that point in her career, Lane was undoubtedly the most qualified person for the position, and Randolph all but begged her to work for him full-time, "I wish you would serve as secretary…nobody will do the job as well as you will…forget what was said in the meeting about your war position. No one has done more for MOWM than you have." A. Philip Randolph to Layle Lane, September 24, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; *The Black Worker*, June 1944. For information on Lane's connections to Communism and her switching to a socialist ticket after the Nazi-Soviet pact see Mark Naison, *Communists in Harlem During the Great Depression* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1983), p. 232-233. For Lane's position on continuing racial protest during wartime "to make life uncomfortable for all those who have to be reminded of the meaning of our fundamental principles" see her article in *Chicago Defender*, April 19, 1941.

For an overview of Lane's life see *The Daily Intelligencer*, February 1, 1979, Box 1, Folder: Printer Material, 1942, 1944, n.d., Layle Lane Papers; Lauri Johnson, "A Generation of Women Activists: African American Female Educators in Harlem, 1930-1950," *Journal of African American History*, Vol. 89, No. 3 (Summer 2004),

p. 232-235; Shaw, *What a Woman Ought To Be and Do*, p. 200, 227.

[90] *St. Louis Argus*, June 27, 1941; Powell, *Marching Blacks*, p. 149; Oswald Garrison Villard, "Phylon Profile XIII: A Philip Randolph," *Phylon*, Vol. VIII, no. 3, 3rd quarter 1943, p. 227; Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 249-250; Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 130-133 lists the above members of the March on Washington Committee but does not explicitly state that they were present for any meetings at the White House.

[91] A. Philip Randolph, "The Negro's Fight For Democracy Now: Speech for Golden Gate Mass Meeting," September 11, 1942," Speeches: #47, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

[92] *St. Louis Argus*, June 27, 1941.

[93] A. Philip Randolph to The President, June 16, 1941 – telegram, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers.

[94] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 53-57; Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 61; Roy Wilkins, *Standing Fast: The Autobiography of Roy Wilkins*, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994 – originally published 1982), p. 180; Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 256-257; Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, p. 207-208; Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America*, p. 158-159; Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time*, p. 251; Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day*, p. 215-217; Janken, *Walter White*, p. 257.

[95] 6/18/1941, FDR: Day by Day – The Pare Lorentz Chronology, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers documents Roosevelt's meetings for the entire day. For text regarding LaGuardia see Stephen Early to Dear Wayne, June 6, 1941, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers; also see Quarles, "A. Philip Randolph," p. 156.

[96] Stephen Early to Dear Wayne, June 6, 1941, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. Some accounts portray LaGuardia and Randolph as close friends, see *New York Post*, February 13, 1946, clipping in Box 1, Folder: Biographical Material, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL; "Interview: A. Philip Randolph & Richard Parrish," May 1, 1975, Folder: Interviews, Box 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL, in which Randolph says, "LaGuardia and myself were good friends."

[97] Wayne Coy to Stephen Early, June 12, 1941, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers.

[98] Allan Morrison, "The Secret Papers of FDR," *Negro Digest* IX, January 1951, p. 3-13 reprinted in Sternsher, *The Negro in Depression and War*, p. 66-77 argues that Roosevelt went to great lengths to appease his party's Southern bloc.

[99] Edwin Stanton to Memorandum for the President, June 14, 1941, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. A different account emphasizing Eleanor Roosevelt's role in negotiating with Randolph is found in *American Labor*, August 1968, p. 53, Box 4, Folder 1: A. Philip Randolph Biographical Information and Testimonials, BSCP Papers, NYPL. Citing personal discussions with Randolph as a source, this article claims that Eleanor Roosevelt came because the President "asked me to talk to you about the March on Washington. I suppose I need not tell you that the White House is stirred up about it. There is great fear that some one will be killed or injured if such a march takes place."

[100] Wayne Coy to Stephen Early, June 12, 1941, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers.

[101] Sidney Hillman, "To All Holders of Defense Contracts," April 11, 1941, OF 93 – Colored Matters, Box 3, Folder January-May 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers; Franklin D. Roosevelt to Walter White, June 2, 1941, Aubrey Williams Personal File (1936-1942), GR 58, Box 3, Miscellaneous Files, Correspondence N-P General, Folder: Negro Marches on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers. Hillman warned that "The Office of Production Management expects defense contractors to use <u>all</u> available local labor sources" including African Americans. Grounded in pragmatism, Hillman's urging of employers to desist "practices" that were "extremely wasteful" offered no punitive measures and did not hint at the prospects of follow up with employers. Roosevelt's letter recognized the work of Black organizations in calling his attention to maintain efforts at keeping African American morale high by ensuring "every available source of labor" was fully utilized in the war effort.

[102] Wayne Coy to Memorandum for the President, June 16, 1941, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. Coy pushed this message on Aubrey Williams as well; informing him that inroads to civilian employment with defense contractors was "as much as they could hope to accomplish by a march on Washington at this time." Wayne Coy to Aubrey Williams, June 11, 1941, Aubrey Williams Personal File (1936-1942), GR 58, Box 3, Miscellaneous Files, Correspondence N-P General, Folder: Negro Marches on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers.

[103] S. Res. 75, February 19, 1941, OF 391: Marches on Washington, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. Looking at E.O. 8802 as the executive version of failed legislation that over-relied on investigation is markedly different from the interpretation of Roosevelt's order as what *Pittsburgh Courier* President Ira Lewis called "an Economic Emancipation Proclamation." Ira F. Lewis to My dear Mr. Roosevelt, June 28, 1941, OF 93: Colored Matters, Franklin D. Papers. Lewis was less congenial to Randolph, and criticized MOWM's proposed demonstration as "foolish and

inopportune." Ira F. Lewis to Dear Mr. Randolph, June 9, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[104] F.H. LaGuardia, "Memorandum for the President," June 19, 1941, and F.H. LaGuardia to My dear Aubrey, June 19, 1941, OF 93: Colored Matters, Box 3, Folder: Marches on Washington, Aubrey Williams Papers.

[105] Robert P. Patterson and James V. Forrestal, "Memorandum to the President," June 24, 1941, OF 93, Box 4, Folder: June-July 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers.

[106] Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 71; Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 135 argues, "Anyone who compared the original demands of the Negro March Committee with the executive order could understand the ambivalence." Most obviously, military segregation remained unchecked, there were no specific penalties in place to punish racially exclusive hiring policies, and companies with existing contracts were exempt from the equal opportunity policy.

[107] Adams and Sanders, *Alienable Rights*, p. 267.

[108] Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color*, p. 190. New Dealers represented a departure from Progressives because they de-emphasized morality in favor of addressing political and economic arrangements, see Richard Hofstader, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), p. 303, 316-317. For a counter argument see Gerstle, "The Protean Character of American Liberalism," p. 1043-1073.

[109] A. Philip Randolph to Milton Webster, April 10, 1942, Reel 8, The Papers of A. Philip Randolph indicates that Randolph's discussions with Ickes regarding use of the Lincoln Memorial for a MOWM rally were unsuccessful. In lieu of this monument, Randolph recommended Griffith Stadium, home of the Washington Senators baseball club, as an alternate site. According to Randolph, Ickes was hesitant to allow the symbolically important monument to be a site of protest because it "has never been used for a controversial question."

Ickes was a former president of Chicago's NAACP branch; see Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 51.

[110] *St. Louis Argus*, June 19, 1942; Raymond Arsenault, *The Sound of Freedom: Marian Anderson, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Concert That Awakened America* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009).

[111] Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, p. 12; Walter White, *A Man Called White* (New York, 1948), p. 187-188; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*; Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks*, p. 303-307; Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 140; Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 112; Janken, *Walter White*, p. 253. NAACP records indicate that attendees included Walter White, A. Philip Randolph, Franklin

Roosevelt, Frank Knox (Sec. of Navy), Robert Patterson (Asst. Sec. of War), T. Arnold Hill, and Mary McLeod Bethune. "Conference at the White House: September 27, 1940," Reel 25, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13. A daily record of Roosevelt's affairs maintained by the White House Usher's Diary and Secretary Grace Tully's Appointment Diary does not mention this meeting on September 27, 1940, see 9/27/1940, FDR: Day by Day: The Pare Lorentz Chronology, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers.

[112] "Negro Leaders Deny on Segregated Regiments in Army," Press Release, October 10, 1940, "White House Charged with Trickery in Announcing Jim Crow Policy of Army," press release October 11, 1940, Reel 25, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13; "F.D.R. Regrets that Army Policy was Misinterpreted," Press Release, October 26, Reel 25, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[113] "Memorandum as suggested basis of conference on alleged discrimination against Negroes in the armed forces – White House, September 27, 1940," Reel 25, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[114] "Conference at the White House," September 27, 1940, Reel 25, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[115] Quarles, "A. Philip Randolph," p. 156.

[116] Hill, *RACON*, p. 34.

[117] "List of Organization Submitting Resolutions on Integrating Negroes into the National Defense.," [n.d., 1940 likely], Reel 25, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13 shows a geographic spread of VFW, American Legion, and military camps.

[118] *Chicago Defender*, September 5, 1942. Long before this, White hounded Roosevelt to prevent "further lowering of the already tragically low morale" of African Americans because "sincere and strenuous efforts" by the FEPC resulted in an insignificant increase in jobs available to African Americans workers, see Walter White to Franklin Roosevelt, December 31, 1941, Box 77, General Correspondence, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers.

[119] *Chicago Defender*, January 30, 1942.

[120] NY file No. 100-19194 by John J. Manning, p. 4, Bureau File No. 100-55616, Section 1: September 22-March 1963, FBI File on A. Philip Randolph; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 55-56 argues that MOWM's membership policy was "both a matter of realpolitik and ideology." Jolly, *It Happened Here Too*, p. 45 argues that MOWM's all-Black membership policy was a model for later Black Power groups in St. Louis like the Black Defenders. It is important to note that there is no concrete

evidence linking consciousness of MOWM's wartime protest with Black Power struggles in St. Louis exists.

[121] *Daily Worker*, June 10, 1941; Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks*, p. 318.

[122] A. Philip Randolph, "March on Washington Movement Presents Program for the Negro," in Rayford Logan (editor), *What the Negro Wants*, p. 148; Hill, *RACON*, p. 26-28, 460, 495-497, and 550-580 gives an overview of how the FBI understood the relationship between African Americans and the Communist Party.

[123] Albert Parker, "The March on Washington: One Year After," June 1942, March on Washington Movement, 1941-1945: Chronology, 1942, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 968-2, Schomburg Clipping File.

[124] NY file No. 100-19194 by John J. Manning, p. 7, 18, Bureau File No. 100-55616, Section 1: September 22-March 1963, FBI File on A. Philip Randolph. Walter White sought out J. Edgar Hoover to get the FBI to cease investigating MOWM, he presented clippings from the *Daily Worker* that attacked MOWM as evidence that this organization was not a threat to national security. Walter White to J. Edgar Hoover, June 18, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; also see Herbert Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 42-53; Merl E. Reed, "The FBI, MOWM, and CORE, 1941-1946," *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (June 1991), p. 465-479. It is likely that Randolph overestimated the Communist threat to his organization, as throughout the Roosevelt years the party had only 3,000-4,000 members, see Kenneth O'Reilly, *"Racial Matters": The FBI's Secret File on Black America, 1960-1972* (New York: Free Press, 1989), p. 44.

[125] For example, St. Paul NNC chairperson Reginald Harris criticized Randolph's "dictatorial action" and alleged he "sold out the race," see "Hits Dictator Action in Calling off March," [n.d.], Box 5 – March on Washington, BSCP Collection. Randolph was also criticized because calling off the march "let down" some of the event's more ardent supporters. See "Postponed," July 5, 1941, Box 5, BSCP Collection, Schomburg NYPL.

[126] *The Black Worker*, May 1940; Hill, *RACON*, p. 459; Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 230-239; Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, p. 239 for a discussion on Randolph's work with the NNC and his subsequent departure. Randolph's assessment of the American Communist Party changed dramatically between the Depression and the Second World War. In 1936, he was quoted saying, "Communists are not criminals. The Communist Party is a legitimate political party and has city, state, and national tickets like Republicans and Democrats." *Chicago Defender*, February 29, 1936. By the end of the war, Randolph argued that "Negroes as Socialists or Communists are helpless…It is silly and suicidal for Negroes to add to the handicap of being *Black*, another handicap of being *Red*." A. Philip Randolph, "March on Washington Movement Presents Program for the Negro," in Logan (ed.),

What the Negro Wants, p. 146, 148; for more on animosity between Randolph and NNC see Mark Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity: Communists and African Americans, 1917-1936*, (Oxford: University of Mississippi Press, 1998), p. 234-237, 301-304.

[127] *St. Louis Argus*, July 4, 1941.

[128] As late as 1950, NNC President Edgar G. Brown told the *Defender* that his organization called for 100,000 African Americans to arrive in the Capitol on May 1 and encamp there until FEPC legislation made it to the Senate floor. *Chicago Defender*, April 22, 1950.

[129] *Amsterdam News*, June 21, 1941; *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 21, 1941, Box 5, BSCP Collection. Randolph's crusade against Communism carried over into the pages of *The Black Worker*, see A. Philip Randolph, "The Communists and the Negro," *The Black Worker*, July 1942; "Communists: A Menace to Black America," *The Black Worker*, November 1945. In a planning session for the demonstration, Crosswaith was apprehensive that a highly visible cadre of "some left wing groups" would cause the march to "lose its force and be smeared as communist." Minutes of Sub-Committee Meeting on March to Washington held in NAACP Office," April 10, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[130] Henry Pelham, "On to Washington for Negro Rights," Box 5, BSCP Collection.

[131] D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet*, p. 58; Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 63; Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America,* p. 162.

[132] "Everett Thomas, Hope Williams, and Richard Parrish to Dear Sir," June 28, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; Walter White to New York Youth Division, July 14, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 67-69.

[133] As a member of the NAACP's Youth Work Committee, Randolph was aware that young activists were a wellspring of future leadership who brought tremendous energy and uncompromising values into institutional operations. Randolph had this in mind at Morehouse College's commencement address, when he identified the "great challenge to the young Negro of today" as developing a mass power base through which ordinary African Americans could obtain and wield power in America's democratic system, see *California Eagle*, [n.d. – early 1940s likely due to other clippings in file], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[134] Randolph provoked MOWM's Youth Division, expressing doubt that they did any significant organizing among African American youth and questioning if they could have even brought twenty-five youth to the Capitols, see A. Philip Randolph to NY Youth Division, July 18, 1941, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[135] Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 259;Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 50; Richard Parrish to A. Philip Randolph, June 28, 1941, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Parrish advised, "It is essential to prevent the Negro Masses from thinking that they have been sold out and that we must build our organization." In St. Louis, a similar attitude was expressed about the march being cancelled. They demanded, and actually received, a refund for the March on Washington that they purchased and enthusiastically displayed in the summer of 1941, see T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, September 15, 1941, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People*, p. 133-134 indicated that St. Louis' most widely circulated African American newspaper supported Randolph's decision because a gain was made without a risky march actually taking place.

[136] D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet*, p. 60.

[137] For details of letters exchanged between Wilkins, White, Houston, and Randolph about this subject see Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 57-58. While others accused Randolph of blatant chauvinism, Walter White outlined the issue's chief problem as losing political capitol among supporters after he cancelled the first demonstration. Even though sheer numbers were important, White told Randolph that defectors from the cause were "motivated either by disloyalty, envy or ignorance." Walter White to Dear Philip, April 28, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13. Also refer to Janken, *Walter White*, p. 254-255.

[138] Jerry Gershenhorn, "Double V in North Carolina: The *Carolina Times* and the Struggle for Racial Equality during World War II," *Journalism History*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Fall 2006), p. 160-163.

[139] *California Eagle*, July 15, 1943; *Amsterdam News*, July 17, 1943; *Daily Worker*, July 17, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, July 17, 1943; *Kansas City Call*, July 16, 1943. Clippings critical of MOWM's reiteration of excluding Whites in 1943 can be found in March on Washington Convention, 1942-43, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[140] *Chicago Defender*, June 26, 1943.

[141] George McCray, "March-on-Washington Hampers Total War Effort," *The Railroad Review*, August 1942, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[142] *Chicago Sun*, July 5, 1943. The same tone resonated in Robert Vann's *Courier*, which also criticized the proposed civil disobedience campaign.

[143] *Washington Tribune*, July 12, 1941, Box 5, BSCP Collection.

[144] Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 165; Louis Ruchames, *Race, Jobs, and Politics: The Story of FEPC* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), p. 164; also see *Chicago Defender*, June 28, 1941; *Chicago Defender*, July 5, 1941.

[145] "Randolph's Speech Explains Why He Called off March," [n.d.], Box 5, BSCP Collection; A. Philip Randolph, "How and Why the March Was Postponed," *The Black Worker*, August 1941; Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 60.

[146] Metz Lochard, editor of the *Defender*, urged Randolph to submit his articles "without delay." Lochard hoped that publishing Randolph's defense of MOWM's civil disobedience program "would arouse considerable readership interest." Metz Lochard to A. Philip Randolph, April 28, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Charley Cherokee, a weekly op-ed columnist for the *Defender* who was notable for his dry humor, was very supportive of MOWM. In one column, Cherokee pointed out that "A. Phil. Randolph, nettled, is explaining the hell out of March on Washington (Relax, chum)." *Chicago Defender*, June 26, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 8, 1943.

[147] "Call to Negro America," [n.d.], Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; "Report of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice: Confidential," May 1943, Reel 10, The Papers of the NAACP Part 13; for a synopsis of divergent responses from the African American press to the march's cancelation see Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 62. Also refer to note 41 in this chapter.

[148] *Chicago Defender*, June 12, 1943; J.A. Rogers was concerned about "little men," as well. He feared that cancelling the march set a dangerous precedent that made African Americans less inclined towards joining a similar movement the next time one was needed, see "Rogers Says," [n.d.], Box 5, BSCP Collection.

[149] African American groups in Harlem called events a "Monster Mass Meeting" since at least 1921, when the Virgin Islands Protective League used the phrase on two occasions where Frank Crosswaith spoke, see "Monster Mass Meeting," December 2, 1921, "Monster Mass Meeting," June 4, 1922, Folder 1, Box 5, Frank Crosswaith Papers. It is possible that Crosswaith directly influenced MOWM's publicity material but no documentary evidence backs this plausibility.

[150] March on Washington Movement Mass Meeting: Madison Square Garden (program), June 16, 1942, Folder 19, Box 1, Lorenzo Tucker Papers; *The People's Voice* June 20, 1942; *Interracial Review*, (July 1942), Vol. XV, No. 7 found in Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers. *Interracial Review* was a progressive Catholic monthly that dedicated its July 1942 issue to coverage of this event. Most importantly, this includes presumably accurate transcripts of speeches by Lawrence Ervin, A. Philip Randolph, Channing Tobias, Walter White, Mary McLeod Bethune, John LaFarge, Lester Granger, and Frank Crosswaith. This periodical's record of White's speech is consistent with the transcript that Walter White sent to Eleanor Roosevelt, see Walter White to Eleanor Roosevelt, June 18, 1942, Box 775, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers.

For a discussion of MOWM rallies as theatrical protest that built community bonds see Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 134; for commentary on the functional importance of rallies as public symbols "of militant protest in the midst of a nation at war" and the argument that these rallies appealed to a largely "lower-class" audience see Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 77-96.

1942 Chicago was also the site Congress of Racial Equality sit-ins. Bernice Fisher, George Houser, and Jim Farmer participated in this protest. In 1947, Fisher went to St. Louis to help found a CORE chapter. Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 1.

[151] To the Editors of the Pittsburgh Courier – Reply to George Schuyler by Benjamin McLaurin," [n.d.], Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[152] Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 58; Pauli Murray, *Song in a Weary Throat: An American Pilgrimage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), p. 170; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 52-54. Though he did not speak that evening, a transcript what would have been his address is found in A. Philip Randolph, "Government Sets Pattern of Jim Crow," *Interracial Review*, (July 1942), Vol. XV, No. 7, found in Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers; also see *The Militant*, June 20, 1942.

Elmer Carter must have been furious, for the long-winded speakers went against his first recommendation that "brilliant and powerful speeches" should be around ten but no more than fifteen minutes in duration, see Elmer Carter, "Suggestions to Program Committee of march on Washington," [n.d., 1941-1942 likely], Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[153] Mass Meeting Program: Golden Gate Auditorium, Folder 19, Box 1, Lorenzo Tucker Papers; Layle Lane to A. Philip Randolph, June 14, 1942; Layle Lane to A. Philip Randolph, June 17, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. This did not cause Randolph's stature among attendees to decline. They feverishly applauded his introduction and sang Union Army battle songs as he approached the stage accompanied by 100 uniformed BSCP members who gave the event "a decidedly working class atmosphere." *Interracial Review*, July 1942; Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 59. The *Daily Worker*, June 18, 1942 criticized Campbell's skit as "insidious poison of the Trotskyites, Norman Thomasites, and Lovestoneites."

A. Philip Randolph to Lorenzo Tucker, May 12, 1942, L.M. Ervin to Lorenzo Tucker, June 18, 1942, Folder 19, Box 1, Lorenzo Tucker Papers. Tucker, known as the "Black Valentino" for his acting in the previous two decades, supported MOWM until he enlisted in the army as an Entertainment Specialist. For information on Tucker's career see Lorenzo Tucker, Actor [n.d.], Folder 1, Box 1; *Vineyard Gazette*, June 8, 1976, *The Black American*, February 8-14, 1976, Folder 2, Box 1; "Enlisted Record and Report of Separation: Honorable Discharge," Folder 4, Box 2, Lorenzo Tucker Papers. Campbell was a producer, director, and manager with the USO during World War II, see *Big Red News*, January 12, 1985, Folder 12, Box 8A, Anna Arnold Hedgeman Papers.

[154] L.M. Ervin to Lorenzo Tucker, June 18, 1942, Folder 19, Box 1, Lorenzo Tucker Papers. Powell's upstaging of this event advance his political career and the fact that he went well the allotted five minutes is not mentioned in his account of the proceedings, see Powell, *Marching Blacks*, p. 158-159; "Winning Democracy for the Negro is Winning the War for Democracy," schedule [n.d.], Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. Powell was not the only orator who exceeded his time allotment that evening. Frank Crosswaith delivered an address at least twice as long as his scheduled time of five minutes. One of Harlem's most famous street speakers, Crosswaith knew that he had a time limit. He publicly defied Lane's planning, informing the audience, "Frank Crosswaith is utterly unable to disclose the corners of his soul in five minutes." Frank Crosswaith, "A New Day," *Interracial Review* (July 1942), Vol. XV, No. 7, found in Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[155] *Chicago Defender*, June 27, 1942.

[156] Randolph quoted in "Memorandum to Mr. White From Mr. Wilkins," September 1, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[157] Walter White to A. Philip Randolph, September 2, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[158] Randolph's assurances that "it is not the intention of this movement to carry on any work that is a duplication of that which is being done by the NAACP or the National Urban League" failed to convince national NAACP officials, see A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, September 9, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13. To Wilkins, the only difference between his organization and MOWM was that "they believe in mass action whereas they say we are not a mass organization." "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins," July 7, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[159] "Memorandum on the National Policy Conference of the March on Washington Movement," [n.d., 1942], Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13. For a summary of proceedings see Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America*, p. 167-171.

[160] "Memorandum on the National Policy Conference of the March on Washington Movement," September 26-27, 1942," Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; *Chicago Defender*, September 19, 1942; *Chicago Defender*, October 10, 1942. Another account indicates that only 37 delegates from six chapters attended the conference, see "Report on March on Washington Policy Conference, Lucy Thurman YWCA, Detroit, Mich., Sept. 26-27, 1942," Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; Hill, *RACON*, p. 464 reports that 66 delegates attended.

[161] For complete proceedings see "Report on March on Washington Policy Conference, Lucy Thurman YWCA, Detroit, Mich., Sept. 26-27, 1942," Reel 23, Papers

of the NAACP Part 13; "Proceedings of Conference Held in Detroit, September 26-27, 1942," booklet; Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; resolutions reprinted in Hill (ed.), *RACON*, p. 465-466.

[162] *St. Louis Argus*, October 2, 1942; *Chicago Defender*, October 10, 1942. The idea that membership and funding for MOWM should come from an exclusively Black base was reiterated the following year in Chicago, see "National Program of Action: March on Washington Movement – August 1943 to July 31, 1944," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; *Chicago Sun*, July 4, 1943. MOWM's national directors delineated racial parameters for protest several months before the organization publicly prohibited Whites. From the beginning, keeping it a "strictly Negro march" was seen as necessary to minimize the possibility of Communist co-option and to generate consciousness of racial solidarity, see Minutes of Sub-Committee Meeting on March to Washington held in NAACP Office," April 10, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[163] *St. Louis Argus*, October 2, 1942 lists the seven St. Louis delegates but another account only enumerates six registered delegates from the city, see "Report on March on Washington Policy Conference, Lucy Thurman YWCA, Detroit, Mich., Sept. 26-27, 1942," Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[164] "Minutes of the Board of Directors," September 14, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; "Plans for Permanent Organization of March on Washington Committee," [n.d.], Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; for a copy of the eight-point program see "March on Washington Movement Action Conference" program, February 13, 1943, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[165] Morris Milgram to Walter White, December 1, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[166] "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins," July 7, 1943; "Memorandum from Mr. White to Mr. Wilkins," July 8, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

Chapter 3

[1] *The Militant*, July 10, 1943.

[2] Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 545-560.

[3] *Chicago Defender*, May 29, 1943.

[4] *Chicago Defender*, July 17, 1943.

[5] Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 131-132

[6] Bennie Smith to A. Philip Randolph, October 10, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[7] A. Philip Randolph, "Keynote Address to the Policy Conference of the March on Washington Movement," reprinted in Francis Broderick and August Meier (editors), *Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 201-210; Klinker and Smith, *The Unsteady March*, p. 156.

[8] "The Negro and Nonviolence," *Fellowship: The Journal of the Fellowship of Reconciliation*, October 1942.

[9] *Chicago Defender*, September 4, 1943. Hughes may not have been aware that the Detroit MOWM branch accepted a heterosexual white couple as members. Like Randolph, both were Socialists and one of them edited *Socialist Call*.

[10] Charles H. Houston to A. Philip Randolph, May 20, 1941, Reel 22, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[11] Bennie Smith to A. Philip Randolph, October 10, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers**.**

[12] Hill, *RACON*, p. 474-480 has a summary of meetings, attendees, and topics of discussion, also see Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America*, p. 171-172.

"We, Too, Are Americans" was the proposed title of a radio program about African American contributions to the nation. Intended for "white and Negro students and teachers in particular, and all socially minded citizens in general," the series ultimately aired on NBC radio under the name "Freedom's People." Ambroase Caliver developed the prospectus for this program in October 1940 but there is no documentary evidence linking this to the name of MOWM's 1943 Chicago conference, for more on this aborted radio program refer to Barbara Dianne Savage, *Broadcasting Freedom: Radio, War, and the Politics of Race, 1938-1948*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p. 67-87.

[13] Program for Emergency Conference on the Status of the Negro in the War for Freedom, June 3-6, 1943, NAACP Conventions - Chronology, FSN Sc 003,426-12, Schomburg Center Clipping File; "34th Annual National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Chicago, Illinois," program, July 12-16, 1944, NAACP – Wartime Conference, July 12-16, 1944, FSN Sc 003-437-2, Schomburg Center Clipping File indicates that the conference focused on post-war employment, increasing African American homeownership, and party loyalty in American democracy, also see "Resolutions Adopted at the War-Time Conference, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Chicago, Illinois," July 12-16,

NAACP – Wartime Conference, July 12-16, 1944, FSN Sc 003-437-2, Schomburg Center Clipping File; the nine resolutions and nine demands are reprinted in Hill, *RACON*, p. 460-462. Documents of the planning and program of the We Are Americans, Too Conference can be found in Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[14] Joe R. Feagin, *Racist America: Roots, Current Realities, and Future Reparations* (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 99-100.

[15] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 133-147; *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, June 19, 1943; A. Philip Randolph, "Non-Violent Civil Disobedience: A Method of Attack upon Jim Crow," (speech transcript) June 30-July 4 in Chicago, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL. The program was originally billed as "I am an American, too," but a letter to Randolph from William Bell of the Atlanta Urban League convinced him to switch "I" for "We." William Bell to A. Philip Randolph, January 14, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Papers.

[16] "MOWM Establishes Permanent Organization," July 9, 1943, March on Washington Movement Press Releases, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 967-1, Schomburg Clipping File.

[17] *Chicago Defender*, June 19, 1943. For full text of Randolph's address at the conference see "Address by A. Philip Randolph – National Director, March on Washington Movement, in the Chicago Coliseum, June 26, 1942," Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[18] *The March*, [n.d., 1943 likely], Vol. 1, No. 3, Folder: March on Washington 1943, Box 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL; *Amsterdam News*, September 13, 1941. Randolph's most gaudy call for a million African Americans to join his organization seems unreasonable but is understandable. Randolph experienced the urbanization and modernization of American life. In a world where wars, schools, and labor unions were all larger than anyone ever imagined they would be back in the early twentieth century, Randolph believed that "Negroes must no longer think of little units, or small maneuvers." Therefore, Randolph thought that MOWM had to act on a large scale to enlist "a million Negroes" and "shake America."

[19] Rustin and Holmes were acting during the "golden age" of FOR. In 1943, this largely midwestern organization claimed 14,000 members and 450 local chapters. D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet*, p. 39-40.

[20] J. Holmes Smith to A.J. Muste, July 8, 1943, Folder 12, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL. Enthusiasm for nonviolent direct action was probably influenced by CORE's strong presence in Chicago. Members of this organization attended the conference because they wanted to introduce African American workers to Ghandian techniques, see August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 4; D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet*, p. 56; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 145; for documents about Chicago

CORE's activity after the war years refer to Annual Report: Chicago and Chi-CORE News, No. 9, July 17, 1948, Reel 8, CORE Papers.

[21] Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 166. This opinion is consistent with that of Lance Hill, who argues that "African Americans in the South had never been disposed to pacifism," and that this ideal was imposed on Black Southerners by well-funded and highly organized northern liberals and leftists. Hill also argues that MOWM's adoption of non-violence is not directly connected to the use of civil disobedience in the fight for civil rights that occurred in late 1950s. Lance Hill, *The Deacons For Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), p. 236, 325 n. 6.

[22] *Chicago Defender*, June 26, 1943.

[23] "Executive Committee Statement on March on Washington – Non-Violent Action Proposals," 1943, Folder: March on Washington 1943, Box 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL. This was probably not how T.D. McNeal, who repudiated civil rights activists for disobeying a restraining order, felt about civil disobedience, see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 171.

[24] Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. x-xiii.

[25] "Minutes of Non-Violent Action Committee Meeting: The Fellowship of Reconciliation," January 25, 1943, Folder 12, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL. This document indicates that FOR members Bayard Rustin, James Farmer, and J. Holmes Smith were drafting a pamphlet on non-violent civil disobedience for MOWM and that FOR "should help in the training and disciplining of the MOW mass base."

[26] *Chicago Defender*, July 3, 1943; Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 138-139. Webster's inability to work alongside women as equal partners caused Ella Baker and Daisy Lampkin to complain about him. Baker noted that Webster "seems quite bitter to the N.A.A.C.P…he not only gave all credit for the March on Washington to the to Brotherhood, but spoke heatedly about those who collect thousands of dollars from the people under the guise of saving the race." Daisy Lampkin to Walter White, April 7, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; Walter White to A. Philip Randolph, April 9, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; Ella J. Baker to Roy Wilkins, March 11, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[27] Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 167; Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 138-139. Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 115-116 mentions disunity in Chicago MOWM. A list of 25 personal thank-you letters to Chicago organizers from a campaign in 1942 indicates that 9 of the event's principal organizers were women, see "Chicago Meeting Thank You Notes," July 7, 1942, Reel 25, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Morris

Milgram offers a more chauvinistic reading of gender relations in organizations ran by Randolph. He commented, "Phil is extremely attractive to women, which results in his getting some of them to work like Trojans in the causes which he heads. But his work schedule scarcely gives him time to pay attention to 'em, which often causes injured feelings." Morris Milgram to Daniel James, January 16, 1949, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[28] *Washington Post*, May 26, 1982, Folder: Printed Matter, Box 1, Rosina Tucker Papers, NYPL.

[29] Roy Wilkins to Walter White, July 1, 1943, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 54-55.

[30] Roy Wilkins to Walter White, July 1, 1943, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins," July 7, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[31] "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins: Supplementary Report on the March on Washington Convention," July 8, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[32] "Report of Committee on Resolutions to We Are American – Too Conference," June 30-July 4, 1943, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Some of these resolutions expand upon the issues outlined in "Call to We Are Americans, Too Conference," April 21, 1943, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[33] *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 19, 1943; *The Militant*, June 26, 1943 warned that delegates at the Chicago had to develop a program that appealed to the masses of the organization would fade from national prominence. In private correspondence with Randolph, Walter White warned, "Negroes throughout the country would never understand after a second time a demonstration of protest not going through." Walter White to Dear Philip, April 28, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[34] "Minutes of National Executive Committee Meeting," May 14-15, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[35] "Mammoth Mass Meeting," (flyer) July 4, 1943 lists speakers at Du Sable High School Auditorium as A. Philip Randolph, Milton P. Webster, and E. Stanley Jones; for a discussion on the network of activists in Chicago's African American organizations Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 136-138; for notes on Jones' speech see "E. Stanley Jones Expounds Non-Violent Technique at MOWM Conference," (press release) July 9, 1943, March on Washington Movement Press Releases, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 967-1, Schomburg Clipping File; for text of Randolph's keynote see A. Philip Randolph, "Are Negroes American Citizens?" July 4, 1943, March on Washington

Movement, 1941-1945: Chronology, 1943-1965, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 968-4, Schomburg Clipping File, 1925-1974.

[36] Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, April 6, 1942, Reel 8, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[37] Irene Gaines, one of Chicago's outstanding clubwomen, organized meatpackers during the 1920s. With community credibility built through nearly two decades of activism, Gaines played a key role in Chicago MOWM, for more on Gaines see Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 44-45, 86. For insight into daily operations and personal divisions within Chicago MOWM refer to correspondence between Neva Ryan and A. Philip Randolph as well as Ethyl Payne and A. Philip Randolph, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. For a third-person summary of conflict between local activists and BSCP members in Chicago MOWM refer to correspondence between David Wilburn and A. Philip Randolph, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Ethyl Payne to A. Philip Randolph, April 15, 1942, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Hill (ed.), *RACON*, p. 466 suggests that division in Chicago and Detroit MOWM were the product of those branches having members "who are either sympathizers or members of the [Communist] Party." This appraisal is supported by Janken, *Walter White*, p. 177, which comments on a strong Communist presence in 1930s Chicago. *Chicago Defender*, October 4, 1941 remarks that MOWM's popularity in the Windy City was also bolstered by the enthusiasm of what one reporter called "fashionably attired…young people" who regularly came out for rallies and events.

[38] *St. Louis American*, July 8, 1943 lists St. Louis MOWM delegates: Marie Pace, David Grant, T.D. McNeal, Thelma Grant, Harold Ross, Frank Townsend, B.T. Washington, Leyton Weston, Ethel Haywood, Rosie Johnson, Nita Blackwell, and Clarice Ross. Grant and McNeal were members of NNC in the 1930s but they abandoned the organization when Randolph fled. Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 36 indicates that some prominent African Americans from St. Louis were, for a time, involved with NNC included Democrat James McLemore, former NAACP president Harold D. Espy, Urban Leaguer Sidney R. Williams, and porter Leyton Weston. This demonstrates that African Americans in St. Louis were inclined to affiliating with national efforts to agitate against White supremacy.

[39] *St. Louis Argus*, July 9, 1943; "We Are Americans Too Conference Opens at Chicago with A. Philip Randolph Presiding," n.d., (press release), Reel 1, T. D. McNeal Papers. Another reporter remarked on "The large attendance and high enthusiasm…is real proof that the Negro masses are awake and vitally interested in obtaining their full and unadulterated rights." See *St. Louis American*, July 9, 1943; *St. Louis American*, August 5, 1943.

[40] For a survey and analysis of African American churches in Chicago see St. Claire Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993 – originally published 1945), p. 412-

429. Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, p. 5 succinctly argues that African American churches were the backbone of self-help efforts and racial uplift. Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 27-36 argues that Randolph's Atheist leanings expressed during his young twenties in the pages of *Messenger* were refined into a Christian humanism during his adulthood. Taylor's conclusion is corroborated by Randolph's close friend and biographer Jervis Anderson, who characterized Randolph's vision of the Black church as more of a social institution than a religious one, see Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 26; for a counter argument see Surgue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 44. *St. Louis American*, May 11, 1944 offers full text of Randolph's acceptance speech for an award from the Worker's Defense League in which he cites "a rigid Christian parental guidance" as one of the "fundamental forces" that shaped his life.

[41] E. Pauline Myers to T.D. McNeal, March 1, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "The March on Washington Movement and Non-Violent Civil Disobedience," press release, February 23, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[42] *St. Louis Argus*, July 9, 1943 and "We Are Americans Too Conference Opens at Chicago with A. Philip Randolph Presiding," 1943 (press release), Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, lists topics addressed by committees. These include the future of the FEPC, coordinating national efforts to abolish segregation, uses and applications of Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action, abolishing military segregation, and "The Negro in Post-War Planning."

[43] Other discussants included Milton Webster, Earl Dickerson, Thurman Dodson, Layle Lane, Melville Herskovits, James Farmer, Bayard Rustin, David Grant, Norman Thomas, Ira De Reid, Archibald Carey, Channing Tobias, and Pauline Myers. Reddick's involvement in MOWM was limited and short-lived, largely because Layle Lane advised Randolph that "everyone here knows he is a fellow traveler if not a CP member." Layle Lane to A. Philip Randolph, June 20, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. For a transcript of Reddick's address at MOWM's 1943 We Are Americans, Too conference see L.D. Reddick, "World Aspect of the Negro Struggle," March on Washington Movement, 1941-1945: Chronology, 1942, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 968-3, Schomburg Clipping File.

[44] J. Holmes Smith to A.J. Muste, July 8 1943, Folder 12, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL. Jones' speech in front of 2,100 people at DuSable High School was so long-winded that it drove an already irritated Roy Wilkins off, see "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins," July 7, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13.

[45] Hill, *RACON*, p. 27; August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1968* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973, p. 14-15.

[46] For a lively account of life as a mid-twentieth century pacifist see James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement*, (New York: Arbor Hours, 1985).

[47] "The March on Washington Movement and Non-Violent Civil Disobedience," (press release) February 23, 1943, Reel 1, 1943. Myers spoke alongside Bayard Rustin at several events in the Midwest that were hosted by FOR in 1943. Although she represented MOWM, FOR paid her traveling expenses during this period. "Notes: Bayard Rustin Papers," Folder 2, Box 59, August Meier Papers, NYPL; Hill, *RACON*, p. 470.

Mary Bethune, whom Myers said "fought me like a dog on the March" even though Bethune rarely spoke or appeared at MOWM rallies, opposed Myers' advocacy of staging an actual march and launching a nation-wide campaign of non-violent civil disobedience. Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 165; also see A. Philip Randolph's introduction in George Houser, *Erasing the Color Line* (New York: Fellowship Publications, 1951); Richard Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence: 2nd Revised Edition* (New York: Schoken Books, 1966).

[48] "National Program of Action: March on Washington Movement – August 1943 to July 31, 1944," Reel 2, T. D. McNeal Papers; *Chicago Sun*, July 4, 1943. It is unclear why discussion and planning for an actual march on Washington stopped after the conference, especially considering that David Grant was the chairman of a committee planning this national protest and Randolph is on record saying, "I believe we will have to march."

Grant's record as an organizer indicates that he wholly agreed with advice from the national office that MOWM members should stage "local marches on city halls." Benjamin Davis, Jr. opposed to resurrecting the proposed campaign on grounds that "it could have no other consequence than to disrupt the war effort, spread national disunity, and set back the whole struggle for Negro rights." Ben Davis, Jr., "The Enemy Sets a Trap," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. Trotskyite Albert Parker was more supportive of the idea, attacking any Stalinist as "a fool or a knave" if he or she opposed "non-violent civil disobedience" that was "only a fancy name for a peaceful protest designed to publicize the opposition of Negro people to the many discriminatory practices and laws that bar them from equality." Albert Parker, "The Negro Struggle," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[49] A. Philip Randolph, "The Negro's Fight for Democracy Now: Speech for Golden Gate Mass Meeting," September 11, 1942, Speeches: #47, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL; "Address by A. Philip Randolph – National Director, March on Washington Movement, in the Chicago Coliseum, June 26, 1942," Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13. In an open letter drafted at the conclusion of "We Are Americans, Too," MOWM emphasized that African American defense workers and soldiers exemplified a "demonstration of patriotism and loyalty to his country." "A Manifesto and Open Letter to the President," July 4, 1943, Folder: March on Washington Movement, 1943, Box 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL. Literary scholar Jennifer James interprets African American soldiering in the segregated military as "a definitive argument for black citizenship rights." James, *A Freedom Bought With Blood*, p. 2.

[50] The March on Washington Movement and Non-Violent Civil Disobedience," (press release), February 23, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. In a speech for her AFL-affiliated teacher's union, Layle Lane expressed a similar sensibility that "We Negroes reject the advice to wait, first, because of the bitter disillusionment after the last war to make the world safe for democracy." Layle Lane, "The Negro and War Activities," Folder: Printed Material, 1942, n.d., Box 1, Layle Lane Papers.

[51] Rorty, "Brother Jim Crow," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. This trend anticipated Myrdal's assessment that "white prejudice can change as a result of an increased general knowledge about biology…If this is accomplished it will in some degree censor the hostile and derogatory" ideology that reinforced America's racial caste system, see *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, August 20, 1944; also see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 59-60.

[52] The March on Washington Movement and Non-Violent Civil Disobedience," (press release) February 23, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[53] "The March on Washington Movement and Non-Violent Civil Disobedience," (press release) February 23, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Even among politically active progressives Non-Violent Goodwill Direct Action took time to enter discussions about social change. For instance, the American Missionary Association's Institute of Race Relations did not even mention the tactic in its course on "Methods, techniques and community planning." "Announcement of the first Institute of Race Relations at the Fisk University Social Science Institute," July 3rd-21st, 1944, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[54] "We Are Americans, Too: Resolutions," July 4, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. Randolph's experience with the NNC convinced him that "wherever you get your money, you get your policies and ideas." Quoted by Ralph Bunche in "Joseph Gottlieb's Manuscript on Bayard Rustin and A. Philip Randolph," p. 6, Folder 7, Box 58, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

[55] Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 2 argues "Collective self-help, or racial uplift, had been a major facet of black liberation projects since the dawn of the nineteenth century." Barber, *Marching on Washington*, p. 117 argues that this was an example of African Americans "working in their own interests" through Randolph's justification that "If we have White persons in the March, we are certain to have trouble with the communists."

[56] A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal, December 30, 1942, Reel 6, The Papers of A. Philip Randolph.

[57] *Chicago Defender*, July 3, 1943.

[58] "We Are Americans, Too: Resolutions," July 4, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; *The Militant*, July 10, 1943 quotes McNeal: "If present conditions continue, we will have to march on Washington whether we like it or not. The majority resolution wishes to make it clear that there should be no impression…that no matter what they do to us we will not march."

[59] "We Are Americans, Too: Resolutions," July 4, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; *Chicago Defender*, June 26, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 8, 1943.

[60] *Labor Action*, July 1943.

[61] According Adam Clayton Powell, inaction by MOWM's national office doomed the organization. He traced MOWM's decline into obscurity as the inevitable result of "an organization with a name that it doesn't live up to, an announced program that it doesn't stick to, and a philosophy contrary to the mood of the times." Powell, *Marching Blacks*, p. 159.

[62] "Conference Call to a National Non-Partisan Political Conference for Negroes," June 25-26, 1944; "For Non-Partisan Political Conference for Negro Workers by the March on Washington Movement," (press release), April 18, 1944; "MOWM Plans a National Negro Non-Partisan Political Conference," (press release) January 7, 1944, March on Washington Movement Press Releases, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 967-1, Schomburg Clipping File; *Chicago Defender*, June 24, 1944.

[63] A. Philip Randolph to Benjamin McLaurin, May 25, 1944, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[64] Tentative Program, Non-Partisan Political Conference, June 25-26, 1944, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; *Chicago Defender*, June 24, 1944.

[65] *Chicago Defender*, July 17, 1943. Randolph's series of columns in American's most widely circulated Black newspaper contradict Morris Milgram's opinion that Randolph's "lack of an adequate publicity apparatus made it impossible for him" to explain MOWM's "strategic retreat," leaving the leader vulnerable to critics. Morris Milgram to Daniel James, January 16, 1949, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[66] *Chicago Defender*, July 1, 1944.

[67] *The Militant*, July 10, 1943.

[68] Eugenie Settles to A. Philip Randolph, March 3, 1943, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers exemplifies the disorder of MOWM's affairs. Settles asked Randolph to explain standard operating procedures and streamline MOWM's affairs. "I am almost convinced that you do not realize that if you had an effectively operated office, your work would be simplified and could be completed in a much shorter

space of time," which, according to Settles, could solidify Randolph's stature among colleagues who "would be confident that all matter concerning them but controlled by you would be promptly and efficiently taken care of."

For the opinion of a male coworker about Randolph's underdeveloped managerial skills and his inability to raise money see "Interview with Bayard Rustin," March 28, 1974, Folder 4, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL.

[69] Quarles, "A. Philip Randolph," p. 149; Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 117-118.

[70] Hedgeman remained a co-worker and friend of Randolph throughout his life. Their respect for each other is highlighted in a testimonial at his memorial service. *New York Voice*, June 2, 1979, Timeline, Box 1, Anna Arnold Hedgeman Papers, NYPL. For an account of Hedgeman's contributions to civil rights see Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 3-9, 21-22, 26-31, 92-94. Also of interest in Collier-Thomas, *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice*, p. 383-387. In Bayard Rustin's appraisal, the FEPC rift occurred because Hedgeman "spent money like mad but wasn't raising it herself." For more on Hedgeman's tenure in the Committee for a Permanent FEPC and MOWM see Interview with Bayard Rustin, March 28, 1974, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL.

[71] E. Pauline Myers to T.D. McNeal, n.d., (1943 likely because of surrounding documents in file and her start date for working in the organization was January 2, 1943), Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *Chicago Defender*, December 26, 1942.

[72] "March to get New Executive," December 14, 1942, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[73] For a photograph and account of the event refer to *The People's Voice*, August 1, 1942, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Randolph's delegation of tasks to others in this instance is probably not attributable to patriarchal attitudes towards women because he behaved similarly towards male colleagues, some of who were arguably more accomplished than him. For example, less than two months before the planned demonstration Randolph wrote Walter White with a list of tasks for the NAACP secretary to carry out while "I shall be in the South on an organization trip for a couple of weeks." A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, May 6, 1941, Reel 23, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, June 11, 1941, Reel 23, A. Philip Randolph, 1941, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

The image of Randolph as an original thinker, outstanding orator, and poor organizer is in contrast to the image him as prone to "autocratic leadership" that impaired MOWM's ability to harness energy from local activists that is portrayed in Mark Newman, *The Civil Rights Movement* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p. 35.

[74] "Call Meeting of the March on Washington Movement," July 7, 1942, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; March on Washington Movement Meeting, July 22, 1942, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Anne Firar Scott (ed.), *Pauline Murray and*

Caroline Ware: Forty Years of Letters in Black and White (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), p. 51-91 provides an intimate glimpse of Murray's prodigious intellectual understanding of civil rights and race relations.

[75] Pauli Murray to A. Philip Randolph, July 15, 1942, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Ashley Totten to A. Philip Randolph, July 15, 1942, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph papers. For an overview of the event see "Plans for Protest Parade Against the Execution of Odell Waller and the Poll Tax," July 25, 1942, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[76] *Chicago Defender*, July 25, 1942.

[77] *Chicago Defender*, February 3, 1940.

[78] Eugenie Settles to A. Philip Randolph, July 17, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[79] Pete Daniels, *Lost Revolutions: The South in the 1950s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), p. 12; Julie A. Gallagher, *Women of Action, In Action: The New Politics of Black Women in New York City, 1944-1974* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 2003), p. 102-106; Johnson, "A Generation of Women Activists: African American Female Educators in Harlem, 1930-1950," p. 223-240; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 7-9 argues that YWCA was one of the few White-led organizations that hired African Americans on equal footing. Also of interest is Collier-Thomas, *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice*, p. 370, which argues, "By 1940 there was a well-organized web of women's networks and contacts ready to spring into action and respond to any crisis in the society."

[80] "Plans for Protest Parade Against the Execution of Odell Waller and the Poll Tax," July 25, 1942, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Murray, *Song in a Weary Throat*, p. 174; Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 160; Yevette Richards, *Maida Springer: Pan-Africanist and International Labor Leader* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000) argues that "Randolph's appointment of Pauline Myers and Anne Hedgeman to national leadership positions …encouraged other women to participate," but Pauli Murray's experience working with him demonstrates that she was frustrated with Randolph's disorganization and penchant for taking credit when events went well.

These facts should not detract from Randolph's understanding that young activists needed nurturing and support from existing organizations engaged in the struggle. Randolph paid for Murray's travel expenses to MOWM's Detroit Policy Conference when she was a student at Howard University. Pauli Murray to A. Philip Randolph, May 13, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; A. Philip Randolph to Pauli Murray, May 17, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. For anecdotes on Randolph's collaborations with radical African American women refer to Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 177; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 78.

[81] Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, p. 67-75; Gallagher, *Women of Action, In Action*, p. 82-94; Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*, p. 38-59.

[82] *Chicago Defender*, October 22, 1949; Yevette Richards, "Race, Gender, and Anticommunism in the International Labor Movement: The Pan-African Connections of Maida Springer," *Journal of Women's History* 11, No. 2 (1999), p. 35-59.

[83] Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, p. 106. The role of women in organizing MOWM's protest of Odell Waller's execution and the presence of Pauline Myers, Layle Lane, and Senora Lawson on MOWM's Executive Committee suggests that, like the NAACP, MOWM relied on Black women's activism. August Meier and John H. Bracey, Jr., "The NAACP as a Reform Movement: 'To Reach the Conscience of America,'" *The Journal of Southern History* 59, No. 1 (February 1993), p. 19; *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 1943.

[84] B.F. McLaurin to A. Philip Randolph, April 27, 1942, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[85] E. Pauline Myers to A. Philip Randolph, October 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[86] E. Pauline Myers to A. Philip Randolph, October 30, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[87] E. Pauline Myers to A. Philip Randolph, December 2, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[88] Jesse Taylor to A. Philip Randolph, December 9, 1943, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Interestingly, Randolph's reply one week later made no mention of Myers' departure from the organization.

[89] "Hints for setting up uniform local units – March on Washington Movement," (n.d.), Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[90] I found no evidence of any MOWM locals running with the idea of a subdivided Executive Board addressing the Winfred Lynn Case or the Western Hemispheric Conference of Free Negroes. Enthusiasm for these issues was isolated to the national office, which "resolved that the March on Washington Movement take the initiative in securing the cooperation of Negro and white citizens and organizations to call upon President Roosevelt…to enforce the non-discriminatory provision of the Draft Law." "Resolution on Democracy in the Army," April 22, 1943, Reel 12, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 205-207 argues that the prevailing response towards Lynn was "hostile."

[91] B.F. McLaurin to A. Philip Randolph, April 27, 1942, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[92] B.F. McLaurin to A. Philip Randolph, October 11, 1943, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[93] B.F. McLaurin to A. Philip Randolph, November 18, 1943, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[94] B.F. McLaurin to A. Philip Randolph, February 3, 1944, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[95] E. Pauline Myers to A. Philip Randolph, December 2, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[96] *Chicago Defender*, September 30, 1944.

[97] E. Pauline Myers to A. Philip Randolph, September 1947, Reel 15, A. Philip Randolph papers. As evidenced by J. Finley Wilson's presence at high-profile MOWM events and large donations, the Elks were quiet but steady supporters of racially progressive legislation. J. Finley Wilson to A. Philip Randolph, July 8, 1947, Reel 17, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[98] Pauli Murray to Herbert Garfinkel, August 16, 1955, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Strangely, a copy of Myers' 1956 resume does not mention her experience with this organization, see E. Pauline Myers Resume, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers; E. Pauline Myers to A. Philip Randolph, August 10, 1956, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[99] Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 66-68.

[100] "Pauline Myers, MOWM Secretary, Ill in Hospital," press release, June 2, 1942, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. *Chicago Defender*, June 19, 1943. All press releases and media accounts of Myers' absence do not specify her infirmity but private documents indicate that the high stress level at work wore her down. E. Pauline Myers to A. Philip Randolph, Reel 3, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Helena Carrington to A. Philip Randolph, June 4, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[101] The MacDonalds also charged Myers with being unable to develop strong local branches, an allegation that was largely true but must be balanced by the fact that MOWM did not have paid field secretaries and that the organization did have vibrant chapters in St. Louis, Harlem, and Chicago.

[102] For an assessment of McLaurin's ability and personality see Anna Arnold Hedgeman, *The Trumpet Sounds: A Memoir of Negro Leadership* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), p. 132; Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, p. 2.

[103] Benjamin McLaurin and MOWM Steering Committee to A. Philip Randolph, November 10, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph; Benjamin McLaurin to Leyton Weston, November 10, 1943, Reel 2 T.D. McNeal Papers.

[104] "March Movement to get New Executive," December 14, 1942, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers gives information on Myers' background including recognition of her role as a leader amongst Howard University's student body from 1927-1931 as well as her work in Chicago's adult educational programs and Richmond's YWCA.

[105] A. Philip Randolph, Benjamin McLaurin, Rev. Paul Turner, and Aldrich Turner led the way in private donations, each giving one hundred dollars. "Minutes of National Executive Committee Meeting," May 14-15, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; Aldrich Turner to National Executive Committee, November 11, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal. By November 1943, MOWM accrued over two thousand dollars in unpaid bills. Money was owed for office equipment purchased in July 1942, printing expenses from the "We Are Americans, Too" conference, accountant's fees, rent, and window signs. "Financial Report of March on Washington Movement – National Office," November 11, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[106] "Minutes of National Executive Committee Meeting," May 14, 15, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[107] "March on Washington Movement: Financial Report of the National Committee, Schedule 2&3," (July 1943), Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[108] Gertrude Stone to Walter White, May 9, 1941, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; Walter White to Dear Gertrude, May 13, 1941, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; John Lovell to Thurman Dodson, May 7, 1941, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13; A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, May 11, 1941, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13. If we can take Randolph at his word that anti-Communism was the driving force behind MOWM's exclusion of Whites, DC MOWM is yet another example of the Red Scare tearing the American Left apart, creating what Walter White called "a very unfortunate situation" in the Capitol just weeks before the demonstration. Also see Janken, *Walter White*, p. 254; also of interest is Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 91-96.

[109] Thurman Dodson to A. Philip Randolph, March 1, 1947, Reel 15, A. Philip Randolph. Dodson continues, "the NAACP has always used the camel-in-the-tent technique – they first stick their heads in – then inch by inch they force the Arab out."

[110] Walter White to James K. Scott, April 2, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[111] Hill, *RACON*, p. 494. Hill, *The Deacons For Defense*, p. 54 argues that calculating membership totals "in the fluid world of social movements" is frought with inaccuracy because "a person might be regarded as a member for simply expressing support." Moreover, "an organization may have small formal membership but be capable of commanding a large number of supporters."

[112] "Washington Committee on Negro Protest Against Defense Discrimination," May 6, 1941, Box 5, BSCP Collection, NYPL.

[113] "Washington Committee on Negro Protest Against Defense Discrimination," May 6, 1941, Box 5, BSCP Collection, NYPL. The Registration Committee tripled the initial plan for 5,000. Headed by Dodson, this committee took the liberty of asking each quadrant to triple its membership output. "Respectfully Submitted," May 14, 1941, Box 5, BSCP Collection, NYPL.

[114] Thurman Dodson to A. Philip Randolph, November 21, 1942, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[115] Myrtle Facey to A. Philip Randolph, November 24, 1942, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[116] A. Philip Randolph to Herbert Garfinkle, November 28, 1955, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[117] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 61 mentions a poorly attended reception cheering the Executive Order.

[118] "Program: Victory Rally – Watergate Theatre," July 1, 1941, Box 5, BSCP Collection, NYPL.

[119] "The Little Flower Says Fights Has Just Begun," [n.d.]; "Wrong of Long Standing Has Been Recognized," July 5, 1941; "Laud FDR at March Victory Meeting," [n.d.]; "Watergate Theatre Ideal Setting for March on Washington Rally," [n.d.], and other clippings in, Box 5, BSCP Collection, NYPL. Symbolism of the event was not lost on the commentators listed above, many of whom noted the Watergate's proximity to the Lincoln Memorial steps on which Marian Anderson recently to a crowd of 50,000.

[120] Denver: A. Philip Randolph to Barry Slater, Box 25, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Chapter 4

[1] MOWM slogan as seen on souvenir program Kiel Auditorium Rally and various organizational letterhead, "March on Washington Movement Mass Meeting," program August 14, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; A. Philip Randolph and Eardlie John to Dear Friend, April 21, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[2] "Constitution and By Laws: St. Louis Unit, March on Washington Movement," October 28, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Extensive archival research failed to uncover a comprehensive list of St. Louis MOWM's membership even though the national office wrote requesting one, see B.F. McLaurin to T.D. McNeal, February 21, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. "Little band of Spartans," from *St. Louis American*, January 6, 1944; Kinkendall, *A History of Missouri*, p. 6 mentions Chambers, Vaughn, and McNeal as "champions of reform in race relations." If the above-mentioned list exists, it is probably in the un-catalogued Benjamin McLaurin Papers at the New York Public Library's Schomburg Collection.

[3] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, p. xix portrays middle class male and female African Americans in the same manner.

[4] George Schuyler, "Views and Reviews," *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 1, 1942.

[5] *St. Louis American*, May 13, 1943; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 47 argues that this tendency of "protest and publicity" was typical of that generations style of activism. For a useful analysis of African American newspapers during World War II see Lee Finkle, *Forum for Protest: The Black Press During World War II* (Rutherford, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1975).

[6] St. Louis Unit Constitution, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[7] *St. Louis American*, July 27, 1944.

[8] *St. Louis Argus*, April 17, 1942 features a strong visual reminder that consciousness of racial inequality and organized attempts to confront discrimination in a cartoon featuring an African American male walking towards the "Much-Promised Land of Economic Equality" crossing over rivers labeled "Navy Discrimination," "Biased Marine Corp," and "Discrimination in Defense Industry." The strident legs of this "Colored American" are each labeled "NAACP" and "Negro Press," both strong forces in St. Louis prior to MOWM's arrival on the city's protest scene the following month. *Argus* owner Joseph E. Mitchell was a NAACP leader and MOWM member, Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People*, p. 111, 133-134.

[9] Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 172.

[10] *St. Louis American*, January 30, 1942.

[11] Chandler Owen, "Negroes and the War," [n.d.] United States Office of War Information; Earl Brown and George R. Leighton, "The Negro and the War," Public Affairs Pamphlets, no. 71 (Silver Burdett Company: New York, 1942). Brown was a correspondent for the *New York Herald-Tribune* and Leighton was an associate editor of *Harper's*. William Y. Bell, "The Threat to Negro Soldier Morale," October 1943, Reel 12, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Bell, a porter and BSCP member, presented a 27-page account of racial inequality, violence targeting African American soldiers, and discrimination within the armed forces that concludes, almost surprisingly given the content of the document, that "The Negro is loyal to America. He wants America to be loyal to him." In 1948, Bell became a member of the Executive Committee in the League for Non-Violent Civil Disobedience Against Military Segregation, an organization headed by Randolph that also included Layle Lane, David Grant, Morris Milgram.

[12] For a discussion of White Supremacy as a political system see Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 1-33.

[13] Lawrence Ervin, "Speech Delivered by Lawrence Ervin, Eastern Regional Director of the March on Washington Movement at the We Are Americans, Too Conference, Held at the Metropolitan Community Church, Chicago, Ill., June 30, 1943," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[14] Hill, *RACON*, p. 493-494 indicates that the three most active MOWM locales were New York, St. Louis, and Chicago.

[15] Maida Springer Kemp to A. Philip Randolph, November 13, 1969, Reel 2, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[16] Brazeal, *Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*, p. 221-222 indicates that in 1941, the year MOWM began, Chicago led all cities with a BSCP membership with 1,950, while St. Louis had 253 members. St. Louis' low figure is a statistical outlier as this city usually had approximately 400 BSCP members, an explanation for low membership in the year MOWM launched was not found in resources consulted for this study.

[17] Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 20. For more on racial uplift through political participation see Gaines, *Uplifting the Race*, p. 31-43; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. xxv.

[18] *St. Louis Argus*, January 5, 1940.

[19] "MOWM Drive Off to a Good Start," [n.d., 1944 likely], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Bradley was a member of MOWM but his career as a porter and lifetime of work

with the BSCP prevented him from contributing much to his hometown MOWM chapter. For a counter position see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 47.

[20] Earl Brown and George R. Leighton, “The Negro and the War,” p. 7.

[21] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 1. Elizabeth Grant, wife of David Grant, was a member of St. Louis MOWM. Her thesis is useful as a primary source for understanding St. Louis MOWM because she was a participant in and witness of the movement gives scholars insights and information not found elsewhere.

[22] Walter White to Daisy Lampkin, April 2, 1942, Reel 22, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[23] Hill, *RACON*, p. 237.

[24] “The McNeal Story,” April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[25] Moreno, *From Direct Action to Affirmative Action*, p. 4-5, 65.

[26] Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 134; Norgrent and Hill, *Toward Fair Employment*, p. 65-6, Table 4.3 demonstrates that “gains in the occupational status of Negroes are most likely to occur when there are labor shortages” as there was during the defense mobilization. This study’s authors acknowledge that FEPC “played some part” in advances made by Black workers during the war but they overlook the impact of local activism by organizations like MOWM. Data from this study is useful, and it indicates that the “withdrawal of millions” into the military “created a manpower gap” that underemployed African Americans temporarily filled.

[27] Layle Lane, “The Negro and the War,” (speech), Folder: Printed Material, 1942, 1944, n.d., Box 1, Layle Lane Papers.

[28] *St. Louis American*, August 24, 1944 features Pauli Murray’s article “…Half-Negro, Half-American: How You Can Help Dissolve Segregation,” which admonished readers to “See yourself as an American…and act upon this assumption in all public and private situations.”

[29] “Conference Call to a National Non-Partisan Political Conference for Negroes,” Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[30] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942.

[31] "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 83 affirms St. Louis MOWM's reputation as "consistently the most militant" branch of the organization.

[32] Hill, *RACON*, p. 237-238.

[33] For more on workplace subculture, social mores, and upward mobility of porters see Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, p. 169-198; Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 160; for a summary of the argument that segregated institutions inculcated solidarity among African Americans see Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 17.

[34] *St. Louis Argus*, June 6, 1941; Sidney R. Redmond to Walter White, May 14, 1941, May 22, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. Interestingly, the Harvard-educated Redmond was a grandson of Hiram Revels, a prolific Reconstruction-era Black U.S. Senator from Mississippi, see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 39.

[35] *St. Louis Argus*, December 5, 1941 reports that the Urban League sponsored a rally coinciding with FEPC member Earl Dickerson's arrival in town. For a brief overview of St. Louis Urban League's history see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 17.

[36] Clark's involvement with Urban League dates back to 1924, his lengthy tenure certainly merits greater study. It is uncertain why Clark relinquished his position in MOWM. Documentation of his official role with MOWM is found in "Negro-March-on-Washington-Committee: Bulletin," Vol. 1, No. 1, May 22, 1941, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[37] William Senter, Vice President, United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers (CIO), "Statement Before FEPC reprinted in *St. Louis American*, September 26, 1944; a similar demographic trend is depicted in *St. Louis American*, September 8, 1943.

[38] *St. Louis Argus*, June 4, 1942. McNeal recognized that military necessity advanced industrial productivity, and he was concerned that African Americans "will be further handicapped by being completely ignorant of production methods" in the inevitable return to a peacetime economy.

[39] Walter White to Francis Biddle, October 10, 1941, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[40] *Chicago Defender*, October 2, 1943 reports, "while there has been some criticism of the movement in other areas, the St. Louis branch of the undertaking appears to be well deserving of commendation. Their efforts…have born fruit in a degree unmatched elsewhere." This is corroborated by FBI reports that "the most active Negro organization in the City of St. Louis is the March on Washington Movement." Hill, *RACON*, p. 237.

[41] *St. Louis Star-Times*, July 20, 1944.

[42] Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 112; for more on demographic change in the South during the Second World War see Morton Sonsa, "Introduction," in Neil R. McMillen (editor), *Remaking Dixie: The Impact of World War II on the American South* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997), p. xv.

[43] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, July 9, 1943. Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 89, 319 praises this newspaper's reputation as "one of the nation's best" in the mid twentieth century.

[44] *Chicago Defender*, August 1, 1942.

[45] *St. Louis American*, August 13, 1942. Clarence Lang aptly called this pattern in which public libraries and conveyances were unrestricted but theatres, hotels, swimming pools, hospitals, and restaurants were racially separate as "the peculiarities of a city that was curiously both midwestern and southern," see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. vii, 8, 10. By the end of the war, segregation largely an unwritten phenomenon, with marriage and schools the only institutions legislatively separated, see Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 29.

[46] David Grant's assessment that "St. Louis had all of the Jim Crow and discrimination of the deepest part of Mississippi" is historically inaccurate but it demonstrates his strong emotional response to racial inequality. See John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), p. 41-69; Nan Elizabeth Woodruff, *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle in the Delta* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 190-237; and Stokely Carmichael with Ekwueme Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael [Kwame Ture]*, (New York: Scribner, 2003), p. 277-296. The difference between racism in Missouri and Mississippi is best seen in the Magnolia State's widespread *de jure* segregation and the state Democratic Party's rooster emblem boosting "White Supremacy." Conversely, in Missouri, Grant said, "The only two lawful Jim Crows were separate schools and marriage." David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, (SL 552, Folder 9), Oral History Program, Afro-American Studies at St. Louis University, p. 2.

[47] *St. Louis Argus*, December 27, 1940 reports on the AFL and CIO being joined by 58 African American organizations under the banner of the National Negro Defense Committee. Together, they discussed racial segregation in the military, federal government, and in defense plants. G.L. Vaughn and N.A. Sweet were active in this early movement and later participated in MOWM. Vaughn was also a player in the city's Democratic Party, running for Alderman in 1941.

[48] 1940 census figures indicating that African American were 13.3% of the city are reprinted in Hill, *RACON*, p. 237; Nancy J. Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 182; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 88; U.S. Census Bureau, *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, vol. 2, pt. 4, p. 850. Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 294 documents White flight in the mid-twentieth century. In 1940, White residents of St. Louis numbered 706,794 but by 1950 that number decreased to 702,400. Likewise, the amount of African Americans calling St. Louis home rose by 1950 to 154,000.

[49] Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis*, p. 174-213, 379-398; R.N. Dutton, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two addresses delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions held as Central Baptist Church, April 9-11, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Jolly, *It Happened Here Too*, p. 26-27 reports that in 1942, St. Louis had 378 restrictive covenants.

[50] R.N. Dutton, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two addresses delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions held as Central Baptist Church, April 9-11, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[51] *St. Louis Argus*, June 20, 1941; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 264; Greene, Kremer, and Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*, p. 160. For a photograph of T.D. McNeal and James Cook standing alongside Mayor Becker at a Jefferson Barracks parade see *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, December 19, 1942.

In 1941-1942, African Americans comprised 16.1% of volunteers in the armed service and were an estimated 9.8% of America's total population, see A. Philip Randolph and Norman Thomas, "Must Race Tension Divide America?" radio address transcript, June 13, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

There are many studies of African Americans in United States armed forces during World War II. Among the most useful are Ulysses Lee, *United States Army in World War II – Special Studies: The Employment of Negro Troops* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1966); Charles C. Moskos, Jr., "Racial Integration in the Armed Forces," *The American Journal of Sociology* 72, No. 2 (September 1966), p. 132-148; Phillip McGuire, *Taps for a Jim Crow Army: Letters from Black Soldiers in World War II* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983).

African American soldiers during this era were frequently used as literary metaphors of the illogic driving American racism and the powerful symbolism of their service in a segregated military. For examples of this trend see Langston Hughes, "Private Jim Crow," *Negro Story*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (May-June 1945), p. 3-9; Georgia Douglas Johnson, "Black Recruit," *Ebony Rhythm*, 1943 and Cora Ball Moten, "Negro Mother to Her Son," *Opportunity*, April 1943. These examples are conveniently reprinted in Maureen Honey (editor), *Bitter Fruit: African American Women in World War II* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), p. 136, 285. Also see David Lundberg, "The American Literature of War: The Civil War. World

War I, and World War II," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (1984) p. 373-388; James, *A Freedom Bought With Blood*, p. 232-278; Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks*, p. 210-215; Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, p. 79-98.

[52] Hill, *RACON*, p. 240; for a survey of civilian attacks on African American enlisted men see Lee, *United States Army in World War*, p. 348-380; James Albert Burran, "Racial Violence in the South During World War II," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1977; for an analysis of attacks on African American soldiers in context of racial violence on the home front see Herbert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), p. 301-347.

[53] St. Louis MOWM never made advocating for military desegregation a major issue but the national office spent considerable energy fighting for this cause. In the words of Executive Secretary E. Pauline Myers, "the organization demands the abolition of Jim Crow in the arm, the navy, and the air corps. Who can fight for democracy in a Jim Crow outfit? The very existence of caste is anti-democratic – and anti-American." E. Pauline Myers to T.D. McNeal, April 17, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; "National Program of Action, August 1943 to July 31, 1944," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

McNeal never dedicated resources from St. Louis MOWM to fighting military segregation but he did write a confrontational letter to Secretary of War Henry Stimson. This was in response to Stimson's argument that segregation was necessary because of "Negro illiteracy." McNeal condemned Stimson's choice of words as an "insidious calamity." T.D. McNeal to Henry Stimson, March 9, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Harrison Gerhardt to T.D. McNeal, March 13, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[54] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, December 19, 1942; *St. Louis Star-Times*, December 19, 1942. Under Cook's leadership, the Pine Street YMCA eclipsed Harlem for the distinction of having the largest enrollment of African American members. *St. Louis Argus*, February 28, 1941; for more on St. Louis YMCA in this era see Doris A. Wesley, Wiley Price, and Ann Morris, *Lift Every Voice and Sing* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), p. 6-7.

[55] Dalfiume, "The Forgotten Years of the Negro Revolution," p. 92.

[56] Lewis H. Fenderson, "The Negro Press as a Social Instrument," *Journal of Negro Education* 20, No. 2 (Spring 1951), p. 181-188. For an excellent longitudinal study of one African American newspaper in St. Louis see Debra Foster Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People: The St. Louis Argus Newspaper in the Twentieth Century,* Ph.D. Dissertation, (University of Missouri, Columbia, 2003) with special emphasis on p. 110-153.

[57] Roscoe MeCrary to T.D. McNeal, [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[58] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. There was a cultural schism between members of established African American communities and recent Black migrants from rural southern areas "who have added to the congestion and brought many of those not adjusted to urban living." R.N. Dutton, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two addresses delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions held as Central Baptist Church, April 9-11, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. George Lipsitz, *A Life in Struggle: Ivory Perry and the Culture of Opposition* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), p. 67 argues that wartime migrants arrived in a city that had a "vibrant cultural life, and a tradition of civil rights."

[59] *St. Louis Argus*, March 7, 1944. Charles H. Thompson, "The American Negro and National Defense," *Journal of Negro Education*, IX (October 1940), p. 547-552; Robert C. Weaver, "Racial Employment Trends in National Defense," *Phylon*, (4th Quarter, 1941), p. 337-358 suggest that the situation in St. Louis mirrored that of the United States.

[60] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942.

[61] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, April 10, 1943; MOWM's national office had a similar analysis that "The Negro people must organize and fight for their democratic rights NOW, during the war, and not wait until the conflict is over, for then it may be too late." See "The March," Vol. 1, No. 1, October 17, 1942, March on Washington Movement, 1941-1945 Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 968-3, Schomburg Clipping File.

[62] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942. McNeal explained the plight of the Black middle class of "doctors, lawyers, and preachers" as professionals with "low income because their clients, the Negro workers, have low income – and sometimes, no income." This is not to say that African Americans were uninterested in business ownership. In 1943, the St. Louis directory listed 636 businesses owned and operated by African Americans with a cumulative of one million dollars in capital. The problem was, according to one contemporary observer, that "The average Negro businessman has comparatively little capital and not a great deal of banking credit," thus, Black businesses were confined to restaurants, beauty and barber shops, and funeral parlors. R.N. Dutton, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two addresses delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions held at Central Baptist Church, April 9-11, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[63] Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 260.

[64] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 260. Lang,

Grassroots at the Gateway, p. 45 reports that by November 1941, St. Louis businesses enjoyed approximately 60,000 defense contracts.

[65] St. *Louis American*, June 4, 1942; *St. Louis* Argus, July 5, 1940; *St. Louis Argus*, June 5, 1942.

[66] Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. 79-87; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 43 reports that in the early 1940s, 20 percent of St. Louis' African American workforce was unemployed, while 11 percent of this demographic was employed through WPA projects. In sum, nearly one third of St. Louis' African Americans were unemployed.

[67] *St. Louis Argus*, June 11, 1942. In a speech at Hampton Institute, Randolph presented a similar argument about the capacity of mass organization to successfully challenge the status quo. A. Philip Randolph, "The Negro's Struggle for Power: Address at Hampton Institute," October 19, 1942, Speeches #46, A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

[68] "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. This performance exemplifies these twin ideals by framing the struggle, "We're not fighting the government. We're fighting discrimination."

[69] The National Negro Congress foresaw this problem, denouncing E.O. 8802 as "meaningless" because it could not ensure that "thousands of workers who have been brutally shut out of defense industries" will have their predicament alleviated Commentary found in *St. Louis Argus*, July 4, 1941.

[70] Takaki, *Double Victory*, p. 5.

[71] *St. Louis Argus*, November 29, 1940; *St. Louis Argus*, December 13, 1940; *St. Louis Argus*, December 20 1940.

[72] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942 editorialized that "there has grown in America the idea of the white man's job…for instance, in the railroad industry the Negro may be a porter but not a conductor – he may be a fireman, but not an engineer." Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 65, 247 argues that while the *Argus* vigorously opposed Randolph's organizational drive with BSCP, the newspaper was very supportive of MOWM activity.

A 1944 study of African American representation in the industrial workforce indicates that employment conditions in wartime St. Louis reflected that of the United States. National Urban League, "A Summary Report of the Industrial Relations Laboratory: Part 1 – Performance of Negro Workers in Three Hundred War Plants," June 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

For a scholarly assessment of systematic underemployment in a various industries see Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell, *Black Workers and the New*

Unions (College Park, MD: McGrath Publishing, 1969 – originally published in 1939 by University of North Carolina Press in Chapel Hill), p. 19-22.

[73] *St. Louis Argus*, June 7, 1940.

[74] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, July 9, 1943; In David Grant's 1944 testimony to the House Committee on Labor, committee chairperson Mary Norton's estimate of 25% effectively doubled the proportion of African Americans in St. Louis. Grant corrected her and conceded that his figure of 12.4% might perhaps hover a tenth of a percentage higher to 12.5%. In this city of roundly one million residents, African Americans numbered about 110,000. Figures are from David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; also see David Roediger, *Colored White: Transcending the Racial Past* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 10-11.

[75] *St. Louis Argus*, July 18, 1941.

[76] David Grant, "St. Louis Negroes and the War Effort," in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 136-142 argues that racial conditions in St. Louis and throughout the United States generally "do not make for the conduct of a total war. They do not inspire an all-out effort. They give aid and comfort to the enemy." As St. Louis NAACP president later in his career, Grant prided himself on preventing a Communist takeover of the branch, see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 88.

[77] *St. Louis Argus*, July 4, 1941. Availability and visibility of opportunities for professional development at Washington Vocational High School's War Training Center improved as the war progressed. Courses included welding, industrial sewing, blueprint reading, and engine lathe operation. U.S. Employment Service advertisement in *St. Louis Argus*, November 26, 1943.

For a summary of racial discrimination in training for war work see Earl Brown and George R. Leighton, "The Negro and the War," p. 14-15; Megan Taylor Shockley, "Working for Democracy: Working-Class African-American Women, Citizenship, and Civil Rights in Detroit, 1940-1954," *The Michigan Historical Review*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Fall 2003), p. 125-157**.** Also see Karen Tucker Anderson, "Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women Workers during World War II," *Journal of American History* 69 (June 1982); Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, p. 134; for fictional representations of the difficulties African American women had securing and succeeding in defense industries see Shirley Graham, "Tar," *Negro Story*, March-April, 1945 reprinted in Honey, *Bitter Fruit*, p. 49-54.

[78] "A Summary Report of the Industrial Relations Laboratory: Part 1 – Performance of Negro Workers in Three Hundred War Plants," June 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[79] Ray Marshall, *The Negro and Organized Labor* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1965), p. 134.

[80] Statistics from "Analysis of St. Louis Employment," [n.d] and "Job Situation for Women Here Serious" [n.d, 1944 likely], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. *St. Louis Argus*, February 20, 1942 reprints 1940 Census figures that place Missouri's Black population at 244,386, almost half of whom lived in St. Louis. *Chicago Defender*, May 6, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, June 25, 1943 reports that 17,949 (8.3%) of Missouri's 364,124 African Americans held defense jobs. *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 15, 1943 reports that 17,949 African Americans were employed in defense industries throughout Seventh Service Command Region (Wyoming, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, and Colorado). They comprised 2.4% of the aggregate population in those states and made up 3.4% of the workers who built new defense plants. Numbers were even higher for those working in defense manufacturing, with 8.4% (364,124) employed in that sector. Figures for National Lead Company found in *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, July 28, 1944. Layle Lane mentioned this newspaper alongside the *Louisville Courier* and *Richmond Times-Dispatch* as "liberal Southern papers," see Layle Lane to A. Philip Randolph, June 14, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[81] The National Urban League and St. Louis MOWM both saw full employment of African American workers as the most important domestic issue facing America during the war.

[82] T.D. McNeal to Fellow Negro Citizens, March 25, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[83] Moreno, *From Direct Action to Affirmative Action*, p. 70.

[84] T.D. McNeal to Beula Harris, December 29, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[85] *St. Louis American*, May 29, 1942.

[86] *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 13, 1943. Sidney Redmond, St. Louis NAACP chairman, frequently cooperated with McNeal and the local MOWM unit.

[87] Jacksonville, Florida, offers another instance of productive cross-membership between NAACP, BSCP, and MOWM. This was a place where " the majority of the members in the NAACP are Brotherhood members and they are enthusiastic Association workers." Randolph unsuccessfully tried to use this experience as part of a broader argument for a closer long-term working relationship between MOWM and NAACP. A. Philip Randolph to Walter White, April 17, 1942, Reel 22, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[88] *St. Louis Argus*, July 18, 1941.

[89] A. Philip Randolph, "Government Sets a Pattern of Jim Crow," *Interracial Review* (July 1942), Vol. XV, No. 7, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers; also see A. Philip Randolph, "Are Communists a Threat to Democratic Organizations?" [n.d.], Speeches [n.d.], A. Philip Randolph Papers, NYPL.

[90] Mary McLeod Bethune, "The New Negro," *Interracial Review* (July 1942), Vol. XV, No. 7, Box 27, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[91] "Constitution of the March on Washington Movement," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Article 11 of this document reads, "The locals or branches shall pattern their organization after the National Organization." While St. Louis MOWM 's activity focused on conducting sit-ins and coordinating pickets outside local utility companies and defense contractors, the national office wanted branches to emphasize the Winfred Lynn case, advocate for military desegregation, sloganeer about a Free Africa and Caribbean, and transform African Americans into a national non-partisan voting bloc.

Hill, *RACON,* p. 237, indicates that St. Louis MOWM "followed the policies laid down by the national organization but it has stressed considerably the obtaining of additional jobs for Negroes and advocating nonsegregation."

[92] "National Program of Action: August 1943 to July 31, 1944," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[93] This was the case at the May 1942 meeting called by Randolph and Milton Webster where the two leaders proposed that a local MOWM unit be established. Those present at the YWCA that day included George Vaughn, Guy Ruffin, Gladys Gunnell, David Grant and Thelma Grant, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Ross, Nits Blackwell, Leyton Weston, T.D. McNeal, Mr. and Mrs. A. Parham, Frank Casey, John Rhoden, Mabel Curtis, Sidney Redmond, James Cook, Mrs. C.H. Lee, Carl Miller, N.A. Sweet, C. Sullivan Carr, and Mrs. Norris. For further details see *St. Louis American*, May 14, 1942.

[94] "A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal," August 20, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. "A. Philip Randolph and T.D. McNeal to Mohandas Gandhi" cablegram, August 20, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; duplicate of cablegram in Reel 3, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Full text of this document reads: "The March on Washington Movement hails the struggle on India for independence. We pledge you our moral support for freedom and the victory of the United Nations. Negro people of America are also fighting for their democratic rights. Winning democracy for India and the Negro is winning the war for democracy." McNeal released a resolution to St. Louis' African American press declaring "That the March on Washington Movement in mass meeting assembled at St. Louis, Missouri, backs the fight of the Indian people for independence, and calls upon President Roosevelt to urge Prime Minister Churchill to put an end to the terrorism and mass murder of the Indian people, and grant their

freedom, since the denial of independence to India is inconsistent with the fight of the United Nations for a free world." Also see "Resolution: India and the Negro," [n.d], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[95] *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, August 15, 1942; Pittsburgh *Courier*, August 22, 1942.

[96] *Chicago Defender*, September 26, 1942, Randolph continues, "The forms of oppression may be more subtle in one country than another or in different sections of the same country…the oppression of a people or a class does not materially differ in kind or degree." In Randolph's mind, the twin pillars of oppression were "racism" and "monopoly capitalism." MOWM's national office issued a resolution condemning colonialism and calling for a self-ruled Africa in the absence of Italian intervention, see "MOWM calls for Freedom and Independence of Africa," press release October 22, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[97] Pauli Murray to A. Philip Randolph, August 9, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[98] E. Pauline Myers to T.D. McNeal, April 17, 1943 demonstrates that campaigns initiated by the national office sometimes were not necessarily supported by MOWM's local branches. Myers urged McNeal and the St. Louis branch to support Winfred Lynn's fight "for the abolition of Jim Crow in the army."

[99] St. Louis MOWM corresponded closely with the branch in Chicago. United by geography and personal familiarity between members, these two branches wrote each other with news of their progress. This kind of solidarity meant that St. Louis MOWM was never isolated, and that its campaigns were encouraged by the belief that it was one component of a larger machine that was disassembling America's racial status quo.

In one such example, they wrote the Chicago branch "to bring a particle of encouraging news from the banks of the Mississippi River," describing recent efforts to integrate the workforce at U.S. Cartridge. "Statement to the Chicago Unit of the March-on-Washington Committee," June 20, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[100] A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal (telegram), January 22, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers calls for the St. Louis unit to picket outside the Wartime Manpower Commission's office on the days that the Railroad Hearings were scheduled. Another telegram dated that same day inexplicably advises McNeal to "Hold up plans for picketing until further notice." Local responses to the cancelled Railroad hearings was more decisive, see Petition from Atlanta Life Insurance Company, St. Louis Office, to Franklin Roosevelt, January 26, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[101] Theoharis and Woodard, *Groundwork*, p. 1.

[102] Hill, *RACON*, p. 471.

[103] David Grant to Layle Lane, July 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[104] Pamphlet distributed by solicitors, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. New members to the ranks of local Black leadership flocked to MOWM in Harlem as well. According to a report by Roy Wilkins, New York MOWM claimed 4,500 members. Even if this figure is embellished, there is little doubt that there was remarkable and prolonged excitement for MOWM among individuals who resided in flourishing Black communities but remained on the margins of African American organizational life. In New York, for example, MOWM was noticeably driven by retail working "girls at the perfume counter" and over 200 men serving at ushers during a recent event. Roy Wilkins to Walter White, June 24, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13, Series B.

[105] "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins," July 7, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13, Series B.

[106] Alternatively, it could be the case that Parham accepted the prevailing gendered division of labor and willingly stepped into the organization's background, see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 50. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 8-9 argues that typical African American YWCA officials emphasized "decorum, restraint, and caution that distanced them from the masses." Darlene Clark Hine, "Black Professionals and Race Consciousness: Origins of the Civil Rights Movement, 1890-1950," *The Journal of American History* 89, No. 4 (March 2003), p. 1280 argues that advocacy of professional integration was common among African American nurses in World War II.

[107] *St. Louis American*, February 4, 1943.

[108] MOWM and the NAACP took utilized space at the Pine Street YMCA. St. Louis' recent history of racial activism indicates that the organization's members were familiar with using this institution as a meeting space. Pine Street YMCA hosted a four-day meeting of the Midwestern Labor Conference in 1940. The program included future MOWM stalwarts A. Philip Randolph, T.D. McNeal, David Grant, and Leyton Weston. *St. Louis Argus*, March 29, 1940.

[109] This description of MOWM's weekly meetings draws on columns in the contemporary African American press but a different account of attendees at weekly MOWM meetings is found in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 54. Grant argues that "The meetings were amply attended by an irate group of Negro citizens; discharged porters, disgruntled former defense work applicants, interested professionals, civic leaders, common laborers, and the general

run of the unemployed." Also see Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, August 27, 1942, Reel 8, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[110] *St. Louis American*, March 5, 1943; *St. Louis* American, May 11, 1944; St. *Louis American*, January 1, 1943; Hill, *RACON*, p. 238.

[111] *St. Louis American*, February 11, 1943.

[112] *St. Louis American*, May 11, 1944.

[113] Additional research is required to trace the path of Blackwell's activism in Los Angeles. An examination of the *California Eagle* from 1943-1945 offers few clues of her activities on the west coast.

[114] *St. Louis Argus*, September 17, 1943; *St. Louis American*, October 21, 1943; *St. Louis American*, August 26, 1943 praised Blackwell's brief tenure with MOWM as "genius." One can speculate whether Blackwell was the other person who joined George Haynes to speak up against MOWM's all-Black membership criteria at the We Are Americans, Too conference. Roy Wilkins reported that Haynes was joined by "a young woman from Los Angeles, California" who comprised the other half of a 55-2 minority on this issue. "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins," July 7, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13, Series B.

[115] *St. Louis American*, October 21, 1943; *St. Louis American*, May 4, 1944; *The Black Worker*, May 1944.

[116] *Chicago Defender*, October 18, 1941.

[117] *St. Louis American*, February 4, 1943. T.D. McNeal to Pauline Myers, June 25, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers documents McNeal's position as a delegate at the We Are Americans, Too conference in Chicago.

[118] Randolph respected McNeal as a "militant who organized for jobs and led demonstrations," see "Pink note card from Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans," [n.d.], Folder 2, Box 4, BSCP Collection, NYPL; also see Larry Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, p. 194-195; Greene, Kremer, and Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*, p. 186.

[119] Oral History T-024, Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri – St. Louis. Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 58 remarks that BSCP members like McNeal "were not only leaders in their labor movement but in most instances were prominent in their home towns."

[120] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 16, 1942; "Estimate for National Budget," [n.d.], Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13, Series B. BSCP gave financial and organizational

support for all of Randolph's forays into politics. Randolph's associate Anna Arnold Hedgeman remarked, "The Pullman Porters deserve a whole book about the support they have given Randolph" throughout his career, see Hedgeman, *The Trumpet Sounds*, p. 94.

[121] Reporting from the We Are Americans, Too convention, Wilkins noted that "The St. Louis group" stood in contrast to the Chicago chapter because it "seems to be very strong and well organized and exerts a major influence." See "Memorandum to Mr. White from Mr. Wilkins: Supplementary Report on the March on Washington Convention," July 8, 1943, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP Part 13, Series B.

[122] Oral History T-024, Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri – St. Louis.

[123] Oral History T-343, Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison, May 20, 1974, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri - St. Louis.

[124] "The McNeal Story," published by Citizen's Committee for Senator McNeal, April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 120 points out that McNeal's ascendency in Missouri politics signaled, "that the era of Irish political control in St. Louis was at an end."

[125] Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 134.

[126] "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[127] "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[128] *St. Louis American*, July 27, 1944; "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[129] "Statement made by Mr. McNeal, Emancipation Proclamation, 9-22-43: Special to St. Louis American," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, continues "America cannot assume such leadership until it becomes a democracy in fact and in truth; and America cannot be a true democracy as long as it permits and encourages discrimination against any of its citizens because of race, color, religion, or national origin."

[130] "Statement made by Mr. McNeal, Emancipation Proclamation, 9-22-43: Special to St. Louis American," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[131] *St. Louis American*, May 15, 1943.

[132] McNeal remained in the Missouri Senate for ten years, for an account of his service see Oral History T-343, Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison,

May 20, 1974, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri - St. Louis.

[133] Authors of hate mail were hardly the "practical idealists" that Gunnar Myrdal characterized as the prevailing impulse of mainstream American thought, see Gunnar Myrdal, Richard Sterner, and Arnold Rose, *American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), p. XLII; for a summary of Mydral's study that situates his conclusions within ideological context see Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 59-63.

[134] "Anonymous Letter," August 20, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. This handwritten letter expressed concern that street cars would soon be integrated: "In street cars 12 niggers all know one an other [sic] will not sit together each will take single seats," forcing "white people to sit with a stinken nigger."

McNeal seemed undisturbed by hostile correspondence, and coolly turned it in to the Post Office, "not that I expect them to do anything about it." T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, August 22, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. For an account of the post-World War I riot see Charles L. Lumpkins, *American Pogrom: The East St. Louis Race Riot and Black Politics* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), p. 109-142.

[135] Vigilantes Inc. to T.D. McNeal [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. This group believed in "Justice to all races, but SEGREGATION AT CRUCIAL POINTS WHERE NECESSARY!" This reactionary organization believed that "Jim-Crow laws are necessary for the safety of our country, and the safety of its people, both white and black. The better negroes want this - and true, white Americans want this."

[136] Hill, *RACON*, p. 238; Oral History T-024, Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri – St. Louis.

[137] Oral History T-024, Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri – St. Louis; Oral History T-343, Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison, May 20, 1974, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri - St. Louis.

[138] See Oral History T-343, Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison, May 20, 1974, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri - St. Louis.

[139] *St. Louis Argus*, May 9, 1942. This particular competition occurred just four months after a lynching nearby in Sikeston, Missouri, see Domenic J. Capeci, Jr., "The Lynching of Cleo Wright: Federal Protection of Constitutional Rights during World

War II," *Journal of American History* 72 (1986), p. 859-887; Greene, Kremer, and Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*, p. 158-159.

[140] T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, January 8, 1943, Reel 6, The Papers of A. Philip Randolph; Oral History T-343, Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison, May 20, 1974, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri - St. Louis.

[141] "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers reveals that McNeal's campaign director is Ernest Calloway, "former NAACP director," is joined by Citizen's Committee vice-chairman David Grant. A "self-described socialist," Calloway's radicalism was palatable because, like Randolph, he vociferously repudiated communism. For more on Calloway's muted radicalism see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 101.

[142] *Jefferson City News*, July 11, 1965.

[143] "Comments from Senator McNeal," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[144] "Convention Joint Session," September 17, 1940, p. 198-199, Folder 7, Box 2, BSCP Collection, NYPL. Further evidence of this is found in "Comments from Senator McNeal," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, which states, "the Civil Rights-Labor alliance is not a one-way street. Rather, these two groups are bound together in a coalition of mutual interests." For better or worse, this analysis reinforced a prevailing sentiment among "white Americans," who "rarely distinguished between the black middle classes and lower classes." Shaw, *What a Woman Ought To Be and To Do*, p. 167.

[145] "Statement made by Mr. McNeal, Emancipation Proclamation, 9-22-43: Special to St. Louis American," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[146] S*t. Louis American*, May 13, 1943.

[147] *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942; David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Oral History Transcript, SL 552, p. 77, David Grant Papers. Comments in this interview explicitly denote Grant's exceptional public speaking ability.

[148] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942; "David Marshall Grant: 1961 Memoir Draft," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers; Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln*, p. 91; Wesley, Price, and Morris, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, p. 9; Richard S. Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri: Volume V, 1919-1953* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), p. 169-172.

[149] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942; "The NAACP Honor Guard," June 22, 1960, FSN Sc 003,431-1, NAACP – Life Membership, Schomburg Center Clipping File. For a useful

description of "race man" see Houston Baker, Jr., *Betrayal: How Black Intellectuals Have Abandoned the Ideals of the Civil Rights Era*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), p. 9. According to Baker, "a race man or race woman is one who dedicates his or her life and work to countering the lies, ideological evasions, and pretentions…that prop up America's deeply embedded, systematic, and institutionalized racism."

[150] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 68, David Grant Papers.

[151] Grant, like many African American lawyers of his generation, who "moved back and forth between between the larger white society and the parallel institutions" built and maintained by African Americans in the Jim Crow era. Darlene Cark Hine, "Black Professionals and Race Consciousness," p. 1280; also see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 24.

[152] *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942.

[153] "David Marshall Grant: 1961 Memoir Draft," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers; David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 2, David Grant Papers.

[154] *St. Louis American*, September 13, 1930.

[155] "David Marshall Grant: 1961 Memoir Draft," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

[156] Donald Gunn to David Grant, August 30, 1983, Folder 4, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

[157] *Chicago Defender*, March 29, 1941, recognizes St. Louis MOWM member Jordan Chambers' function as a "boss" in Missouri's Democratic politics, a view verified by Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 172; Mary Weleck, "Jordan Chambers: Black Politician and Boss," *Journal of Negro History* 57 (1972), p. 352-369; Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People*, p. 110.

[158] In his elderly years, Earl Brown remembered that Grant's "greatest characteristic" was his "inborn self-effacement" that allowed him to do "hard work for others with no thought of [himself]." Brown, certainly in no mood for unnecessary praise because of illness ("I can't drive to the race track damn emphysema…Climbing a flight of steps is like climbing the Jungfrau.") had nothing but praise for Grant's "perpetual political battles for us brothers over the years." Earl Brown to David Grant, August 29, 1975, Folder 4, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

[159] Moreno, *From Direct Action to Affirmative Action*, p. 30.

[160] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 60. Grant's predicament exemplified what *Phylon* described as "The most serious condition that faces American Negroes today is the merging of the race problem into a problem of economic class as determined by racial prejudices." Refer to "A Chronicle of Race Relations," *Phylon*, 1st quarter 1941, No. 1, Vol. II, p. 87. Grant offers a male-oriented example of what Stephanie Shaw calls "socially responsible individualism," see Shaw, *What a Woman Ought To Be and To Do*, p. ix, 66.

[161] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 4-8, 15, 62, David Grant Papers details the work of Grant and others towards shifting voting patterns in his city; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 73, 172; Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln*, p. 91-92, 209-235.

[162] Negro Central Democratic Organization to David Grant, April 23, 1936, Folder 4, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

[163] David Grant, "Commencement Address, Stowe Teachers College," June 12, 1944, David Grant Papers. Grant believed that Nazi Germany's racial extremism was intellectually discrediting racial discrimination in the United States. "The haughty Hitlerian theory of hereditary superiority of one race or strain over the other," Grant said, "exploded among enlightened people."

[164] David Grant, "Commencement Address, Stowe Teachers College," June 12, 1944, David Grant Papers. Grant frequently used history to interpret current events. His historical knowledge included an understanding of race relations in St. Louis, a city whose racial past was "full of unusual paradoxes." Among these was the Dred Scott decision and Charleton Tandy's successful single-handed fight against segregated public transportation. David Grant, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two Addresses Delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

Also see David Grant to Newsweek, October 7, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers, in which Grant cancels his subscription because of the publication's use of a racially offensive photograph. To him, Newsweek committed a "typical cracker stunt," that offended African Americans who were already having "a discouragingly tough enough time of it as it is, supporting this 4-freedomed war for white supremacy."

[165] David Grant, "Commencement Address, Stowe Teachers College," June 12, 1944, David Grant Papers. A more favorable assessment of E.O. 8802 called Roosevelt's edict "the most significant gain ever made by Negroes under their own power." Powell, Jr., *Marching Blacks*, p. 150. Powell's book was heavily criticized by Frank Crosswaith, who alleged that Powell "utilizes and tries to claim credit for every achievement and every slogan long familiar to pioneering Negro radicals and

liberals in Harlem," making the book full of "inaccuracies and misrepresentations." *The Black Worker*, February 1946.

[166] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552.

[167] "David Marshall Grant: 1961 Memoir Draft," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers indicates that Grant's first public protest in St. Louis occurred in 1930, when he picketed the newly built Woolworth's to obtain jobs for African American clerks.

[168] "Commencement Address, Stowe Teachers College," June 12, 1944, David Grant Papers. David Grant to A. Philip Randolph, November 18, 1955, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers hints at Grant's sensitivity to suffering. In private correspondence, Grant remarked that "ever since leaving Memphis I have been haunted by the close-up knowledge I gained of the plight of the Mississippi farmer," and he worked to establish a trust fund for alleviating their economic depravity.

[169]*St. Louis American*, June 1, 1944 documents Grant's twenty-five dollar contribution to MOWM. Contributions of this sort were not uncommon, as T.D. McNeal, E.J. Bradley, and Leyton Weston often made large donations from St. Louis, while C.L. Dellums did the same from Oakland. All of these individuals were BSCP members who made personal contributions that reinforced money given to MOWM directly from the union.

[170] For a summary of Grant's role in this successful case, which resulted in substantial raises for several African American teachers see "Addendum to Vita," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers. Grant was not working on any high profile cases during St. Louis MOWM's heyday but he was an accomplished lawyer who was on the Supreme Court Bar by 1948 and a Senior Counselor of the Missouri Bar, the state's highest honor for the legal profession, see "Missouri Bar Certificate," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

[171] *St. Louis Argus*, August 20, 1943.

[172] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 61, David Grant Papers.

[173] *St. Louis Argus*, September 12, 1941; a similar analysis is found in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 32. Grant correctly argued "The great bulk of Negroes are laborers…and their difficulty in becoming affiliated with the labor unions effectively excludes them from opportunities to work."

[174] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[175] David Grant, "Why Not a Negro Fifth Column?" *St. Louis Argus*, May 31, 1940; *St. Louis Argus*, September 20, 1940; *St. Louis Argus*, September 27, 1940 reports Grant delivering a similar message of supporting Black-owned businesses to civic groups in the area.

[176] In one particularly belligerent two-page hand-written letter, the word "nigger" was used fifteen times by an anonymous author who condemned African American workers for failing to perform their duties when the inspector was away. This charge directly attacked Grant's work to economically integrate African American workers into the mainstream of industrial St. Louis. According to this writer, "The only good nigger is the one that has a trace chain around his neck and hanging from the limb of as tree."

Threats to the lives of African Americans often corresponded with attacks on their work ethic, morality, and biology. Presumably writing with estimated figures, the author of another anonymous letter attacked African Americans for having syphilis, being "100% liars, 100% thieves…98% adulterers including bucks and wenches." Grant also received encouragement from sympathizers and followers including a social studies teacher who congratulated Grant on a recent oration and requested a copy for pedagogical purposes. "Con," [n.d.] and "Pro," May 4, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[177] This is evidenced by the fact that Grant was a sought after orator during the 1940s, appearing at events ranging from political rallies to meetings of the Barbers and Beauticians Association. See *St. Louis Argus*, March 12, 1943; "David Marshall Grant: 1961 Memoir Draft," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

[178] "David Marshall Grant: 1961 Memoir Draft," Folder 1, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

[179] *St. Louis American*, September 18, 1975; Kirkendall, *A History of Missouri*, p. 73. The professionals working in People's Finance building were the kind of people Grant wanted to have at St. Louis MOWM events, and he worked to ensure that there were "as many prominent Negroes as possible in line." David Grant to Layle Lane, July 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Wesley, Price, and Morris, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, p. 7; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 23, 47. Ironically, People's Finance was built by White contractors who refused to hire African American tradesmen, see Jolly, *It Happened Here Too*, p. 39-40. The financial institution for which this business was named collapsed during the 1930s; see Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People*, p. 117-119.

Eminent historian Darlene Clark Hine argues the type of men and women who worked in People's Finance were "Uniquely positioned by virtue of their education, respectability, and expertise and the authority that they enjoyed in the black community, only the professionals could open the crack in the edifice of white supremacy that the black community later poured through during the 1950s and 1960s." Hine, "Black Professionals and Race Consciousness," p. 128. Stephanie

Shaw argues that professionals such as Vaughn and Grant were also bound by an understanding that they were held in high esteem among the city's Black population but that individuals from outside this community had little or no regard for them, see Shaw, *What a Woman Ought To Be and To Do*, p. 213.

For more on *Gaines* refer to Daniel T. Kelleher, "The Case of Lloyd Lionel Gaines: The Demise of Separate But Equal Doctrine," *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 62 (1977), p. 262-271; Robert McLaren Sawyer, *The Gaines Case: Its Background and Influence on the University of Missouri and Lincoln University, 1936-1950*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Missouri, Columbia, 1966); Greene, Kremer, and Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*, p. 155-156.

Vaughn was an archetypical "race man," who championed improving the conditions of segregated schools during the 1920s, a campaign that ultimately led to St. Louis constructing Vashon High School in 1927. After the war, Vaughn argued the on the landmark Supreme Court case *Shelley v. Kraemer*, which legally smashed the walls retaining African Americans in urban ghettos. He was also brother of Arthur N. Vaughn, president of National Medical Association, an organization that led the push to desegregate medical departments in the U.S. armed forces. Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 15; Peter Irons, *Courage of Their Convictions: Sixteen Americans Who Fought Their Way to the Supreme Court*, (New York: Penguin, 1990), p. 65-79; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 106; Hine, "Black Professionals and Race Consciousness, p. 1283.

[180] "March on Washington opens 1944 Financial Drive," May 12, 1944, press release, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, June 25, 1944; *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944 reprinted this release verbatim.

[181] *St. Louis Argus*, May 29, 1942; St*. Louis American*, June 4, 1942.

[182] Fraser M. Ottanelli, *The Communist Party of the United States: From the Depression to World War II* (New Brunswick, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 44-45 argues that a similar arrangement contributed to the Communist Party's low enrollment even though single issue campaigns that it sponsored were wildly popular.

[183] Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, p. 9; Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 105-108; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 70; Bert Spector, "Early Interracial Protests: St. Louis Congress of Racial Equality, 1948-1955," *Community College Social Science Quarterly* 2 (1974), p. 14-17.

[184] "How to Organize a Unit March on Washington Movement," [n.d., likely 1942 because Pauline Myers is listed as national secretary], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. This pamphlet lists MOWM's objectives as "(1) To crystallize the mass consciousness of grievances and injustices against Negroes and project it into a Cause for which Negroes themselves will gladly and willingly suffer and sacrifice," (2) "To re-educate white America on the question of equality for Negroes," (3) "To

enlist the support of liberal and Christian white America in an all-out struggle for unadulterated democracy at home as well as abroad," (4) "To operate by means of mass maneuvers and demonstrations."

[185] "How to Organize a Unit March on Washington Movement," [n.d., likely 1942 because Pauline Myers is listed as national secretary], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Note that NAACP is not explicitly mentioned but can be included under the heading "community organizations that are in sympathy with the objectives of the movement."

[186] "Hints for Setting up Uniform Local Units," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[187] "Hints for Setting up Uniform Local Units," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. The potential for MOWM to solicit NAACP branches understandably irked NAACP officials. By summer 1943 MOWM's dues rose to one dollar per person, which was only half of what NAACP asked. Many branches had difficulty gathering dues, especially after the fee was raised tenfold; "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; T.D. McNeal to Wade L. Childress, November 16, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; "National Program of Action: March on Washington Movement – August 1943 to July 31, 1944," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; A. Philip Randolph and Charles Wesley Burton to Dear Friend, November 10, 1944, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[188] "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; Bennie Smith to A. Philip Randolph, October 10, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[189] *St. Louis American*, June 4, 1942.

[190] Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, p. 26.

[191] *St. Louis American*, June 11, 1942.

[192] "Constitution and By Laws: St. Louis Unit, March on Washington Movement," Adopted October 28, 1942m Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "Certificate of Social Action," membership card [n.d.], Box 5, BSCP Collection, NYPL.

[193] St. Louis MOWM's income was supplemented by voluntary contributions from the generosity of members, many of who made donations that were tenfold or more than membership dues.

[194] "Constitution and By Laws: St. Louis Unit, March on Washington Movement," Adopted October 28, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers**;** James Cone, *For My People: Black Theology and the Black Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1984).

[195] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 16, 1942, McNeal announced that there were no immediate plans to march the capitol but "we keep the name because it is known and respected in Washington."

[196] *St. Louis Argus*, June 11, 1942.

[197] "Statement made by Mr. McNeal, Emancipation Proclamation, 9-22-43: Special to St. Louis American," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[198] A "large American flag" was always carried at the head of a demonstration followed immediately by the local director. In back of him were demonstrators carrying "appropriate signs and placards." These symbols communicated a message of critical patriotism that was common throughout the organization's campaigns. David Grant to Layle Lane, July 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 146 writes that MOMW's use of the stars and stripes was "simultaneously an embrace and a rebuke."

[199] *St. Louis American*, April 8, 1943. Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 29 and Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People*, p. 138 and Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 57 list Wheeler's occupation as a postman.

[200] *Crisis*, July 1918, reprinted in David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995), p. 697; also see David Levering Lewis, W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919 (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993), p. 555-557.

[201] "Statement made by Mr. McNeal, Emancipation Proclamation, 9-22-43: Special to St. Louis American," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[202] A. Philip Randolph, "Keynote Address to the Policy Conference of the March on Washington Movement," reprinted in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 126; also reprinted in John H. Bracey, Jr., August Meier, and Elliot Rudwick (editors), *Black Nationalism in America* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1970), p. 391-396.

[203] *St. Louis American*, May 11, 1944.

[204] "Statement made by Mr. McNeal, Emancipation Proclamation, 9-22-43: Special to St. Louis American," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[205] "Full Text of Timely Speech Delivered By Hon. W.H. Hastie at Emancipation Celebration," September 22, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, September 23, 1943.

[206] "March on Washington Opens 1944 Financial Drive," press release May 12, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944. Nationally, wages earned by African American nearly quadrupled during the war from $457 annually to $1976. In comparison, data for White workers over the same period indicates that their annual wages rose from $1,064 to $2600. For this and more economic data refer to Newman, *The Civil Rights Movement*, p. 35.

[207] *St. Louis Argus*, May 19, 1944; a useful comparison to MOWM's fundraising is a 1940 NAACP fundraiser for a community center that brought in over $1,800, *St. Louis Argus*, April 12, 1940.

[208] T.D. McNeal to Beulah Harris, December 29, 1942, T.D. McNeal Papers; E.J. Bradley to A. Philip Randolph, January 4, 1943, Reel 5, A. Philip Randolph Papers indicate that Randolph asked Bradley, Grant, McNeal, and Weston to donate at least five dollars every month to keep MOWM solvent. These smaller donations from African American laborers could not sustain the organization's expenses but they indicate that blue-collar Black workers supported the organization.

[209] *St. Louis American*, May 11, 1944; Charles Kennedy and Eugene Wood, Letter Sent to all March Members, April 1, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers argues that "every informed colored person who is racially conscious and wants the respect of his fellow Americans" should donate to MOWM. I take the conception of African American media outlets being reflective of, and responsive to, the Black communities that supported them from Steven F. Lawson, *Running for Freedom: Civil Rights and Black Politics in America since 1941* 2nd edition (New York: McGraw Hill, 1997), p. 7.

[210] T.D. McNeal to Fellow Negro Citizens, March 25, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers summarizes the situation in mid-war St. Louis and MOWM's campaigns: "Twenty thousand Negroes still anxiously await calls for placement, while white workers are culled over and over again. The war effort is being impeded by refusal to utilize the willing hands of black workers. Public utilities in St. Louis refuse to hire Negroes for skilled and semi-skilled jobs, notwithstanding existing shortages of needed labor, and at the same time wax fat on the patronage of the Negro public. Jim Crow rides rampant in the saddle at Jefferson Barracks where our boys are preparing to fight for democracy. These are but a few of the many deplorable conditions existing which must be eliminated."

[211] T.D. McNeal to Fellow Negro Citizens, March 25, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Pamphlet distributed by solicitors, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[212] Bracy and Goins were active in the St. Louis County NAACP and they brought their experience in membership drives to MOWM. The "team" concept was extremely effective in NAACP's record-setting wartime membership drives, see *St. Louis Argus*, May 30, 1941; *St. Louis Argus*, February 11, 1944.

[213] *St. Louis Argus*, June 25, 1943; "March on Washington Opens 1944 Financial Drive," press release May 12, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[214] A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal, April 25, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, July 6, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, January 14, 1944. As a figure that accrued political capitol through the labor movement, Randolph was probably aware of the CIO's push to form union members into an unattached voting block, *The Militant*, June 26, 1943. It is debatable whether creating a non-partisan voting block of African Americans was practicable but contemporary evidence and historical monographs suggest that Randolph's proposal was out of touch with an African American electorate that was overwhelmingly Democratic midway through Roosevelt's second term. As early as 1940, the Black media reported on a Gallup Poll indicating Roosevelt's popularity and predicting that this would be translated into loyalty to the Democratic Party. *St. Louis Argus*, February 9, 1940; African American intellectuals made cases for Roosevelt and Dewey, refer to essays by Channing Tobias and C.B. Powell in *St. Louis Argus*, September 1, 1944.

The Republican Party's case against Roosevelt and four more years of a Democratic White House was summarized in an advertisement featuring African Americans fighting and dying overseas while racial violence and segregation persisted in the United States. The Democratic party countered with amore positive campaign, using photo collages of African American men and women at work in defense industries with a bold caption reading "Would you vote against this? A vote for Roosevelt is a vote for jobs." *St. Louis Argus*, October 13, 1944. Political historian Kari Frederickson notes that MOWM's push for a non-partisan voting bloc reflects the organization's bias towards activism in the north because non-partisan politics were inconceivable in the mono-party South. Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

For studies of shifting partisan support among African Americans locally and nationally see Gerald H. Gamm, *The Making of New Deal Democrats: Voting Behavior and Realignment in Boston, 1920-1940* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989), p. 91-104; John M. Allswang, "The Chicago Negro Voter and the Democratic Consensus: A Case Study, 1918-1936," *Journal of Illinois State Historical Society*, LX (Summer 1967), p. 145-175 reprinted in Sternsher, *The Negro in Depression and War*, p. 234-256; Ernest M. Collins, "Cincinnati Negroes and Presidential Politics," *Journal of Negro History*, XLI (April 1956), p. 131-137 reprinted in Sternsher, *The Negro in Depression and War*, p. 258-263; Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln*, 209-235; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 25.

[215] T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, December 29, 1944, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers indicates that a $700 check sent to the national office care of Randolph. The figure of 1,400 members is reached by presuming that dues, which were $2 by now, were split evenly by the national office and local chapter. This figure represents a maximum amount of members because it does not factor in

larger individual donations, consolidated giving from social groups such as the Elks, or corporate sponsorships from Black-owned businesses in the area.

[216] *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944 reports that even though the war was waning, pickets were expected to "develop into the all-out stage…now that the weather is pleasant and it is possible to engage in actual marches on these plants."

[217] "March on Washington Opens 1944 Financial Drive," press release May 12, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, June 1, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944; "MOWM Drive Off to a Good Start," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[218] "March on Washington Opens 1944 Financial Drive," press release May 12, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944; *St. Louis American*, June 1, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, May 19, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944; "MOWM Drive Off to a Good Start," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. In comparison, MOWM's national office had a $16,000 budget for operating expenses in fiscal year 1943-1944, certainly a factor in annual dues multiplying tenfold from a dime to a dollar. "National Program of Action: March on Washington Movement – August 1943 to July 31, 1944," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[219] Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, p. 137-142; Joanne Grant, *Ella Baker: Freedom Bound* (New York: Wiley, 1998); Enda Chappell McKenzie, "Daisy Limpkin," in Darlene Clark Hine, Elsa Markley Brown, and Rosalyn Tarboro-Penn (editors), *Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, Volume 1 (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1993), p. 690-693.

[220] *St. Louis American*, June 1, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944; "MOWM Drive Off to a Good Start," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers indicate that more than $400 came in combined contributions from the local BSCP and Dining Car Employees Local 354; "Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters Contributes $1000 to Help Memphis Church Where Randolph Spoke and Boss Crump Condemned," press release, June 1, 1944, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers demonstrates that MOWM was not the only African American institution financially assisted by the BSCP.

[221] E.J. Bradley to A. Philip Randolph, January 4, 1943, Reel 5, A. Philip Randolph Papers; E.J. Bradley to A. Philip Randolph, April 17, 1943, Reel 5, A. Philip Randolph Papers. This was around the same time BSCP stalwart C.L. Dellums made a ten-dollar contribution to MOWM and advised Randolph to solicit the entire BSCP Oakland division for funds to support the upcoming Chicago conference. C.L. Dellums to A. Philip Randolph, February 2, 1943; C.L. Dellums to A. Philip Randolph May 31, 1943; A. Philip Randolph to C.L. Dellums, July 11, 1943, E.J. Bradley to A. Philip Randolph, January 4, 1943, Reel 5, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[222] *St. Louis Argus*, June 15, 1944, David Grant and Milton Webster shared the stage with Randolph that evening. Randolph discussed "a broad picture of the present

status of Negroes in America with specific emphasis on matters concerning employment, our status in the armed forces, and the present fight for freedom throughout the nation." Webster talked about "the current fight for equal job opportunities in war industries and governmental agencies" and David Grant reported on his recent trip to the Capitol, where he testified on behalf of the Dawson-Scanlin-LaFollettee bill for a Permanent FEPC. Randolph missed the fundraiser's opening rally because he was working in the American west for May and most of June. A.P. Randolph to T.D. McNeal, April 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[223] *St. Louis American*, June 1, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944; "MOWM Drive Off to a Good Start," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

Chapter 5

[1] Hill, *RACON*, p. 467.

[2] Hill, *RACON*, p. 491 reports that St. Louis MOWM had a $940.00 budget.

[3] Harold Ross and T.D. McNeal, "Letter Sent to Negro Organizations," July 8, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 249.

[4] W.E.B. Du Bois, "Of the Training of Black Men," *Atlantic Monthly* 90 (September 1902), p. 296; W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Talented Tenth: A Memorial Address," *Boule Journal* 15 (October 1948) reprinted in Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader*, p. 347-353; W.EB. Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk* (1903), reprinted in Eric J. Sundquist (editor), *The Oxford W.E.B. Du Bois Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 155; Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: Bantam Books, 1984), p. 95-102.

[5] *St. Louis American*, August 13, 1942. Report of mass meeting for an anti-lynching bill in Sikeston's aftermath found in *St. Louis Argus*, January 30, 1942. Sidney Redmond led the NAACP's campaign for anti-lynching legislation. He used the Black press to summarize an article in the Washington University Law Quarterly about a "Federal Right Not to Be Lynched," *St. Louis Argus*, March 7, 1943.

[6] St. Louis MOWM often used Kiel Auditorium, a municipally owned property, at a cost of $450. In this instance, the BSCP fronted a deposit with the expectation that the money would be repaid through collections at the rally. T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, June 29, 1942; T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, July 14, 1942, Reel 6, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Program for March on Washington Movement Mass Meeting" August 14, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[7] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 4 calls the mass layoff as the "crystallizing event" for St. Louis MOWM.

[8] "Wake Up Negro America!" August 14, 1942 (handbill), Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[9] *St. Louis Argus*, July 3, 1942; "Wake Up Negro America!" August 14, 1942 (handbill), Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. The figure of 25,000 is clearly exaggerated because Kiel Municipal Auditorium's capacity was 15,000. Harold Ross and T.D. McNeal, "Letter Sent to Negro Organizations," July 8, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Overstating the size of a necessary critical mass was one of McNeal's tendencies as an organizer, a fault that was regularly cited by White newspapers when pointing out the obvious disparity between MOWM handbills and actual attendance. This was done to downplay St. Louis' MOWM's appeal and marginalize the organization's threat in the minds of a predominantly White readership.

[10] "Wake Up Negro America!" August 14, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers lists "1. Jim-Crow St. Louis labor unions and war plants, 2. Lynchings at Sikeston and Texarcana, 3. Mobbing and shooting or boys in Uncle Sam's uniform, 4. Violation of Pres. Roosevelt's Order No. 8802, 5. Jim-Crow policy of the Navy, Army, and U.S. Marines, 6. Insult of the Red Cross segregating Negro blood."

[11] Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, Oral History T-024, Western Historical Manuscript Collection. The ability of St. Louis MOWM to secure appropriate permits and be protected by federal authority demonstrates that St. Louis was not a closed society that forbade discussion of or protest against racial discrimination.

[12] *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942; "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. In Chicago, the vehicle parade for publicity of MOWM events was even more dramatic because they occurred in the evening and used torches to draw attention. *Chicago Defender*, September 20, 1941.

[13] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 6 reports that "The Executive Committee and members of the Movement felt elated over the success which the advertisement had brought."

[14] "Program for March on Washington Movement Mass Meeting," August 14, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. It is worth noting that St. Louis MOWM Treasurer Jordan Chambers was a nightclub owner known for a "large bankroll, expensive cigars, and diamond ring," Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 25; Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People*, p. 110.

[15] Hill, *RACON*, p. 492.

[16] Hine, "Black Professionals and Race Consciousness," p. 1280.

[17] *Chicago Defender*, August 22, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942; St*. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942; low estimate of 9,000 from *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 15, 1942 and 8,000 from Hill, *RACON*, p. 238. The auditorium held 15,000, see Harold Ross and T.D. McNeal, "Letter Sent to Negro Organizations," July 8, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[18] For full text of Walter White's speech see "Speech of Walter White delivered at St. Louis Municipal Auditorium," August 14, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[19] *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942 reports that other speakers included E.J. Bradley, Miss Ollie Miller, C. Hayden Wilson of the Negro Musician's Association, and actor Kenneth Spencer. *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942 reports White charged Southern Congressmen with sabotaging national interest to White supremacy and said "We are here to let the world know that we Negroes are tired of being dominated and exploited and we want something done about it." This account indicates McNeal's message was that "We pledge ourselves to fight against the Axis powers and at the same time dedicate our efforts to burying Jim-crowism."

[20] "Wake Up Negro America" August 14, 1942 handbill, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, July 3, 1942; *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 15, 1942 reports that William Smith, Jr., played the lead role well "with well-delivered lines telling how reluctant he was to 'join an army that send you down south in Jim Crow coaches.'" Plays and skits were an important outlet for MOWM to broadcast its tactics, ideology, and accomplishments. Also see "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. Randolph called Campbell's playlet "the highlight of our Madison Square Garden meeting" see A. Philip Randolph to Dick Campbell, June 23, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[21] A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal, August 18, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Randolph requested that press accounts of the rally in St. Louis be distributed to the national office and MOWM units in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and Chicago. Spreading this information implied that the tactics and message seen in St. Louis should be emulated elsewhere.

[22] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 51.

[23] A. Philip Randolph, "March on Washington Movement Presents Program for the Negro," in Rayford Logan (editor), *What the Negro Wants* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 154-155.

[24] *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942.

[25] *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942.

[26] *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 15, 1942; Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day*, p. 134-167; Sullivan, *Days of Hope*, p. 133-168; Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks*, p. 244-267.

[27] "Program for March on Washington Movement Mass Meeting," August 14, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[28] "Verbatim Transcript: Conference on Scope and Powers of Committee on Fair Employment Practice reported by Office of Emergency Management," February 19, 1943, p. 10-13, Reel 14, A. Philip Randolph Papers offers a more secular variant of critical patriotism is seen in a meeting between Secretary of War Paul McNutt and heads of a dozen racial and ethnic organizations. At this meeting, Randolph articulated a similar strand of critical patriotism that affirmed his organization's commitment to democratic principles while locating African Americans "in the position of having to fight their own government, and that is a very frank statement of the issue, because the government today is the primary factor in this country in propagating discrimination against Negroes." A summary of the aim and scope of the meeting can be found in Paul McNutt to A. Philip Randolph, February 11, 1943, Reel 14, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Sacred cultural forms appearing in secular political protest among African Americans in St. Louis dates back at least to a Depression-era pecan nut-sheller strike see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 29-31.

[29] *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, August 15, 1942; *Chicago Defender*, August 22, 1942. A transcript of Grant's address entitles his oration "St. Louis Negroes and the March," refer to Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 136-142.

[30] *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, August 15, 1942; Grant, "St. Louis Negroes and the War Effort," in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 136-142.

[31] *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 15, 1942.

[32] *Chicago Defender*, August 22, 1942; David Grant, "St. Louis Negroes and the War Effort," Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 136-142. Use of "new Negro" to designate those who thought that the Second World War was an opportune moment to shatter racial inequality through mass mobilization was common at the time, for a discussion of the term in a 1940s context see Powell, *Marching Blacks*, p. 5-7.

[33] *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942; Grant, "St. Louis Negroes and the War Effort," in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 136-142; Elliot Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982 – originally published 1964).

[34] Randolph's critical patriotism is best encapsulated in his call to march on the Capitol, when he denounced "all dictatorships, Fascist, Nazi, Communist. We are patriotic Americans all." See "Call to Negro America," in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 45. Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, p. 28-29 argues that Randolph's anti-Communism and hyper-patriotism gave him "more credibility with the political establishment."

[35] Grant, "St. Louis Negroes and the War Effort," in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 136-142, also see p. 28-30. Grant gives an interpretation of African American civic identity that was uncompromisingly patriotic and maintained a strong racial consciousness. Like David Grant, she sets up a dialectic of patriotism and loyalty that juxtaposes an affirmation of duty to country with resentment of racial inequality in civic, political, and economic spheres.

A similar understanding of this duality is in Pauli Murray, *Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 273-276 in which Murray uses the United States flag as a symbol of hope and hatred when reminiscing about planting an American flag on the grave of her Civil War veteran grandfather's grave every Memorial Day. Murray contrasts this personal moment with the historical reality of longstanding racial violence and inequality that is illustrated by the metaphor of George Washington as both a patriot and a slave owner.

[36] *Chicago Defender*, August 15, 1942; *Chicago Defender*, August 22, 1942; African American women who dedicated their careers or volunteered their time to protest organizations tended to work as secretary, a position that, according to one African American newspaper that was very supportive of MOWM, demanded relatively little time or skill. St. Louis MOWM's secretary Nita Blackwell read an "interesting and marvelous report of the accomplishments" in a voice that was "par excellent-an unusual accomplishment for a secretary." *St. Louis American*, January 28, 1943.

[37] *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942. The only public information about women's roles in the Kiel Auditorium rally is buried in a column by T.D. McNeal thanking individuals who supported and planned the event. In the final paragraph, "Special thanks" were extended to "the fine group of young women" including Ollie Miller, Fannie Pitts, and Fannie Torian "who made the meeting possible through hard and intensive work in the financial drive to raise money with which to finance the affair."

[38] *Chicago Defender*, August 22, 1942.

[39] *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942.

[40] *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, August 15, 1942; St*. Louis Star-Times*, August 15, 1942; Walter White could not be blamed for the program running unexpectedly late.

In Du Boisian tradition, White closely followed his own script and was known for rigidly adhering to self-imposed time limits. In fact, White remarked in a postscript of a letter to McNeal that "I have received your telegram that I am to speak for thirty minutes, but I will only take 20 minutes to deliver my talk." Walter White to T.D. McNeal, August 11, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[41] *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, August 15, 1942; *St Louis Star-Times*, August 15, 1942; Pittsburgh *Courier*, August 22, 1942. Randolph alerted the crowd that another rally was scheduled at Griffith Park, home of the Washington Senators' baseball club. This location was chosen because MOWM could not secure a permit to demonstrate at the Lincoln Memorial. In the end, Randolph probably regretted announcing this event so brazenly because it was later cancelled.

Griffith Stadium was booked last minute, and Randolph was concerned that "It is going to take a whole lot of high-powered propaganda and advertising to get 25,000 Negroes" to arrive on short notice for the September 4th event. Randolph thought that failure to have a successful rally in the Capitol "will do more harm than good" and he recognized that there was not enough money to pay for the stadium. Additionally, Randolph thought that the threat of Communist influence during an active FBI investigation for sedition could give MOWM "unnecessary trouble." For documents pertaining to MOWM's intent to use Griffith Stadium see A. Philip Randolph to Thurman Dodson, June 19, 1942; A. Philip Randolph to Thurman Dodson, August 23, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[42] "We join in a PROTEST BLACKOUT for Negro Rights – August 14, 9:00 to 9:15 pm – Attend Protest Meeting, Municipal Auditorium, Aug. 14, 7pm" handbill, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 15, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942; *Chicago Defender*, August 1, 1942; *Chicago Defender*, August 15, 1942; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 50-52 and Klinker and Smith, *The Unsteady March*, p. 165 note blackouts in Chicago and Harlem but overlook this occurrence in St. Louis. Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 252 reports that the Citizens Defense Corps coordinated blackouts in Missouri cities. Kirkendalll does not make a connection between Missourians seeing themselves under siege and MOWM's suggestive appropriation of this activity.

[43] Eugenie Settles to A. Philip Randolph, July 23, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[44] Randolph to Burton, June 9, 1942, Reel 1, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Calling all Negro Chicago to Join All Out Blackout," flyer, June 26, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[45] O'Reilly, *Racial Matters*, p. 8-19 indicates that FBI officials exaggerated MOWM's threat as a subversive threat to secutity.

[46] *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 22, 1942, McNeal knew that federal investigators tailed him during the Second World War, Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, T-024, Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

[47] T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, August 22, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[48] St. Louis MOWM distanced itself from "foreign agents" in the PMEW by emphasizing its patriotism and loyalty to the United States government. In a skit used at one of MOWM'S Block Captain meetings, one character ties the organization to the PMEW. The actor-block captain Miss Adams dismisses these rumors as the work of "people who don't want the Negro to fight for his rights" and who fail to recognize that "we are fighting for the opportunity for the Negro to participate equally in every phase of American life – and that will make our country stronger and better." See "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; for additional MOWM criticism of pro-Japanese movements among African Americans see "Report on Committee on Resolutions to National Policy Conference," reprinted in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 115.

For notes on the trial of "Black Hitler" and PMEW leader Robert Jordan see *St. Louis Argus*, January 22, 1943. For Black American media reactions in other cities to pro-Japanese groups see cartoon in *California Eagle*, October 1, 1942, which depicts Tojo as a grotesque caricature with bloody knife in hand and the caption "The savior of the darker races."

For scholarly inquiry of pro-Japanese sentiment among African Americans in Missouri see Ernest Allen, Jr., "Waiting for Tojo: The Pro-Japan Vigil of Black Missourians, 1932-1943," *Gateway Heritage* 16 (Fall 1995), p. 38-55; also of interest is Ernest Allen, Jr., "When Japan Was Champion of the Darker Races: Satokata Takahashi and the Flowering of Black Messianic Nationalism," *Black Scholar* 24 (Winter 1994), p. 23-46; Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 63-65, 535-541.

[49] *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942. The We Group was based in the YWCA and they performed at Black functions throughout the city including public NAACP rallies and the BSCP-sponsored 1940 Mid-Western Labor Conference. See *St. Louis Argus*, March 8, 1940; Mid-Western Labor Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, March 31-April 6, 1940, Reel 11, A. Philip Randolph Papers. A sympathetic but cautiously ambivalent voice in the St. Louis media unaffiliated with the Black press can be found in *St. Louis Labor Tribune*, August 19, 1942. The *Labor Tribune* asserted that, "On the whole, the negro has received much fairer treatment in St. Louis than in most metropolitan areas, although manifestly there is room for improvement." In an interesting inversion of racial thought that became more pronounced in the late twentieth century, this AFL affiliated newspaper continued, "we might point out that similar discrimination is extended to white workers, most of them skilled and qualified who are residents of St. Louis and who are union members. Certain war

plants have deliberately adopted a policy of giving job preference to out-of-towners" top keep open-shop wages lower. The result, in this source's opinion, was that "Union members have been discriminated against, even more so than negroes."

[50] *St. Louis Argus*, August 7, 1942.

[51] *St. Louis Argus*, August 21, 1942.

[52] *St. Louis American*, September 3, 1942 cited MOWM's figure of the plant having 3,200 employees but the *Pittsburgh Courier*, September 5, 1942 placed the number at 2,600; figure of Carter's contract from Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 50.

[53] *St. Louis Argus*, August 28, 1942.

[54] *Chicago Defender*, September 5, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, September 5, 1942; and *St. Louis American*, September 3, 1942 all report 500; *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, August 30, 1942 estimated 400; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 29, 1942 estimated 300; and the city's most widely circulated White-controlled media outlet provided the low estimate of 200 *St. Louis Star-Times*, September 5, 1942. A scholarly estimate of attendance contemporary with the demonstration placed the number at 250, see Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 7.

[55] *St. Louis American*, September 3, 1942.

[56] Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), p. 7, Paul Laurence Dunbar, "We Wear the Mask" in *Lyrics of Lowly Life (1896)* reprinted in John Edgar Wideman (editor), *My Soul Has Grown Deep: Classics of Early African-American Literature* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2001), p. 1248.

[57] *Pittsburgh Courier*, September 12, 1942 has a photograph of the March on Carter with youth writer Walter Dixon leading the procession. Dixon is carrying an American flag and he is closely followed by Jordan Chambers and T.D. McNeal. The caption indicates that to their left in the background are "feminine lovers of democracy."

[58] *Chicago Defender*, September 5, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, September 5, 1942; *St. Louis American*, September 3, 1942; *St. Louis American*, September 21, 1944; David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[59] *St. Louis Argus*, August 28, 1942; *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, August 30, 1942.

[60] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, August 28, 1942; St. *Louis Argus*, August 29, 1942; "St. Louis Negroes!!" flyer distributed Aug 24-29, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[61] *Citizen's Protector*, September 3, 1942; *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, August 30, 1942.

[62] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, August 28, 1942.

[63] For other accounts of MOWM's "March on Carter" and the company's ability to resist MOWM's pressure see Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 118-119, Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington*, p. 136-142, Patricia L. Adams, "Fighting for Democracy in St. Louis: Civil Rights during World War II," *Missouri Historical Review* 80 (October 1985), p. 63; Betty Burnett, *St. Louis at War: The Story of a City, 1941-1945* (St. Louis: Patrice Press, 1987), p. 41-43.

[64] *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 29, 1942; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, August 29, 1942. Police were often present at St. Louis MOWM events because "We notified the police department before every demonstration in writing, told them we were going to obey the law." Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, T-024, Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

[65] *Pittsburgh Courier*, September 5, 1942.

[66] Supportive residents were probably in favor of messages emblazoned on placards carried on the procession bearing slogans such as "Racial discrimination is sabotage," and "Barring Negroes from war industries makes Axis propaganda," Fight the Axis – Don't fight Us," "Our Bond Dollars Help Pay Carter's Payroll; Why Can't We Work There?" Photograph of marchers with signs found in *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 29, 1942.

[67] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, August 29, 1942; *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, August 30, 1942; *Citizen's Protector*, September 3, 1942 reports that "Carter Management took no notice of the orderly petition of loyal citizens who too long have been denied thru prejudice and bias, their analienable [sic] rights as citizens."

[68] *St. Louis Star-Times*, August 29, 1942 reports Grant "cautioned each of the marchers to be silent throughout the parade, to engage in no arguments with bystanders and to refer questions to parade monitors" that were present at this and all subsequent public demonstrations. David Grant to Layle Lane, July 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[69] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 7.

[70] *Chicago Defender*, September 5, 1942; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, August 28, 1942 explains McNeal's high estimate of 10,000 attendees, "We tested the sentiment of St Louis Negros on the subject at a mass meeting…and found we could figure on ample support for this undertaking."

[71] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, August 30, 1942.

[72] For an example of this phenomenon in another locale see Mitch Kachun, ""A Beacon to Oppressed Peoples Everywhere": Major Richard R. Wright Senior, National Freedom Day, and the Rhetoric of Freedom in the 1940s," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 91, No. 4 (March 2005), p. 1233-1263.

[73] This is evident in commentary on MOWM's Madison Square Garden rally in which one writer noted, "the most significant thing about the Rally is that this historic gathering was genuinely American. The leaders of the movement have no spiritual, intellectual, or political ties with any foreign land or ideology." *Interracial Review* Vol. XV, No. 7, (July 1942), Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[74] "St. Louis Negroes!", Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *Chicago Defender*, September 5, 1942.

[75] Mass Prayer Service, Sunday October 18 – 3:00pm broadside, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; duplicate copy found in MOWM: Miscellaneous Items, 1941-1945 & undated folder, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, September 4, 1942 – early announcements were for September but for unknown reasons the event was moved back to October 18.

[76] "The March," Vol. 1, No. 1, October 17, 1942, March on Washington Movement, 1941-1945, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 968-2, Schomburg Clipping File.

[77] A. Philip Randolph to Charles Wesley Burton, October 26, 1942, Reel 3, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Harlem MOWM joined the Chicago chapter that same day with a public prayer on city hall's steps. Attendance in Harlem was a low as 50 but Merritt Hedgeman, husband of Anna, led a praiseworthy YMCA choir, see Program of the Public Prayer, City Hall Steps, November 9, 1942, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 157-158.

[78] *Pittsburgh Courier*, September 12, 1942; *St. Louis American*, September 10, 1942.

[79] *St. Louis American*, October 15, 1942.

[80] Mass Prayer Service, Sunday October 18 – 3:00pm broadside, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[81] *St. Louis American*, October 15, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, October 16, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, September 4, 1942. Taylor, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 175 argues that "all the religious strategies," used by MOWM including its prayer protests, liberation theology, and sacred civil disobedience were part of a longstanding tradition of civic engagement in African American religious culture that "was resurrected in the modern civil rights movement."

[82] "All Saints Church Broadcast," October 18, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[83] *Pittsburgh Courier*, October 17, 1942.

[84] *St. Louis American*, October 15, 1942.

[85] *St. Louis Argus*, October 23, 1942; T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, October 28, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 66-67.

[86] Eugenie Settles to A. Philip Randolph, November 10, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[87] T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, October 28, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Eugenie Settles to A. Philip Randolph, November 10, 1942, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[88] *St. Louis American*, September 3, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, September 4, 1942.

[89] *St. Louis Argus*, October 16, 1942.

[90] *St. Louis Argus*, October 16, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, October 23, 1942. Newspaper accounts depict African American religious institutions as responding in complete unity and solidarity to MOWM's prayer meeting but a scholarly account from an eyewitness portrays ministers as "lukewarm…but they felt obliged to lend their cooperation." Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 66-67.

[91] *St. Louis Argus*, October 16, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, October 17, 1942.

[92] "Mass Prayer Service," October 18, 1942, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[93] "Statement of T.D. McNeal, Chairman of St. Louis Unit, March on Washington Committee, Mass Prayer Meeting Oct. 18th, St. Louis Memorial Plaza," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; T.D. McNeal to A. Philip Randolph, October 28, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[94] "Statement of T.D. McNeal, Chairman of St. Louis Unit, March on Washington Committee, Mass Prayer Meeting Oct. 18th, St. Louis Memorial Plaza," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. "National Program of Action: March on Washington Movement – August 1943 to July 31, 1944," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers indicates that annual membership dues rose to one dollar in 1943.

[95] "Statement of T.D. McNeal, Chairman of St. Louis Unit, March on Washington Committee, Mass Prayer Meeting Oct. 18th, St. Louis Memorial Plaza," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[96] *St. Louis Argus*, February 19, 1942; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 47-49.

[97] "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[98] Robert C. Weaver, "Racial Employment Trends in National Defense," *Phylon* Vol. III, No. 1, 3rd Quarter 1942 noted that recently expanded plants were more likely to employ African American workers. Weaver attributes this to newer plants not having an entrenched racial order.

[99] *St. Louis Argus*, February 19, 1942.

[100] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers, places the number at 21,000 total employees. Also see Table 2 in this dissertation. Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 47 reports that U.S. Cartridge employed 600 African Americans among its workforce of 20,500.

[101] *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 21, 1942.

[102] Pamphlet distributed by solicitors, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[103] David Grant, "Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor," June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[104] *St. Louis American*, August 24, 1944; "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[105] *St. Louis American*, August 24, 1944; Black workers in wartime St. Louis existed on the periphery of defense work and rarely entered into direct production of armaments. This pattern was consistent throughout the nation, where one historian concluded, "the greater the degree of skill involved, the higher the degree of exclusion." A notable exception was Ford Motor Company, where 11,000 African Americans were utilized for war work, many of whom performed tasks requiring a high degree of skill specialization. Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. 24, 63.

[106] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 16, 1942; *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942.

[107] *St. Louis Argus*, February 28, 1941; *St. Louis Argus*, July 4, 1941; Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 114-115.

[108] The situation at U.S. Cartridge was similar to that as African American workers at Ameritorp, where a MOWM member wrote to encourage the organization to "march on this place just as soon as you can" to confront of racially exclusive promotions and the wholesale lack of Black woman employees." Herman Hester to David Grant, May 17, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[109] *St. Louis American*, June 4, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, June 12, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 27, 1942; *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942; *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, June 17, 1942, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 16, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, June 19, 1942; *The Militant*, July 4, 1942; "Pamphlet distributed by solicitors," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[110] David Grant, "Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor," June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[111] *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 48-49. The broad class spectrum of African Americans who embraced St. Louis MOWM is evidenced by letters from members to the organization and by the array of advertisers appearing in the program for MOWM's 1942 rally at Kiel Auditorium. For example, one correspondent, an employee at U.S. Cartridge, wrote to advise the organization about working conditions at U.S. Cartridge even though "I feel very uncapable [sp] of giving my advice as I am a member of the working class." The writer, whose signature is indecipherable, told of extremely limited upward mobility within the plant. He advised Grant to cultivate greater support for the movement among African American clerics and educators.

Although it is difficult to accurately quantify, the profound psychological transformation that some working class African Americans experienced as a result of their participation in MOWM was as important as the organization's campaigns. "Letters from Members of MOWM," May 25, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "March on Washington Movement Mass Meeting," program August 14, 1942, Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 28-29 suggests that the plurality of African American experiences based on class status may have been over looked by White observers. Reed argues that typical Urban League members "believed that a pernicious mix of prejudice and ignorance prevented whites from distinguishing between respectable and dissolute blacks."

[112] *Chicago Defender*, June 27, 1942; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 16, 1942; *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942; Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 9.

[113] A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal, July 21, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[114] *St. Louis Argus*, June 26, 1942; David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers comments on the "complete cross-section" of "doctors and lawyers and teachers and preachers and fathers of boys who then were in the armed forces, and the wives of those men and their children."

[115] *Chicago Defender*, June 27, 1942; *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 27, 1942. Photographs in the *Courier* portray demonstrators waving "VV" signs with middle and index fingers of both hands. Boston Celtics captain Paul Pierce used a similar gesture during the 2007-2008 NBA playoffs. Pierce, a father and Celtic fan favorite for nearly a decade, was criticized in the Boston sports media for displaying what was thought to be gang signs even though Pierce had no history involvement with activity of the sort. *Boston Globe*, April 30, 2008**.**

[116] The picket and parade was "orderly, peaceable and in conformity with the laws of our City and Country," as McNeal promised St. Louis' police chief in a letter requesting "Police protection as may be adequate for the occasion." McNeal promised authorities that its mass meeting at Kiel in August 1942 would have a "patriotic atmosphere." T.D. McNeal to John H. Glassco, June 18, 1942, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[117] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Chateauvert, *Marching Together*, p. 101; for an overview of NAACP's silent march against lynching see Philip Dray, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America* (New York: Modern Library, 2002), p. 235-237.

[118] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[119] Placards Carried in March on June 20th, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; St*. Louis American*, June 25, 1942. Other placards authorized by the St. Louis unit of the MOWM were: "We are fighting for Democracy, why not practice it"; "Negro Dollars for Bullets? Yes! Bullet job dollars for Negroes? Take another guess!!"; "We fight for the right to work as well as die for victory for the United Nations"; "Negro Robert Brookes Dies First on the Firing Line at Pearl Harbor, Why must we be last on the production line at St. Louis?"; "Racial discrimination is SABOTAGE"; "We are helping to stop Hitler in Europe – We demand that his practices be stopped here too"; "Where is your conscience fellow Americans?"; "20,500 workers at Small Arms – Not one Negro in Production. Is this democracy?"; "Pres. Roosevelt says 'No Discrimination" Small Arms management replies 'Says You!'"; "Fight the Axis – Don't fight US!"; "8000 Women employed – Not one Negro Woman"; "Not one Black American in production her – Is that Democracy or Hitlerism?"; "We denounce and condemn humiliating and degrading Jim Crow policy inside small arms plant"; "and

We'll rind axes 'gainst the Axis in Europe or Japan and also grind them at the Small Arms Plant!"

[120] Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*, p. 1 adroitly comments, "African Americans turned the war against fascism into a war against white supremacy at home."

[121] St. *Louis American*, June 25, 1942; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 21, 1942 was less enthusiastic, calling the demonstration "anti-climactic" because it came two hours after a company announcement that a program to train Black workers would be started in the "immediate future."

[122] *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 27, 1942.

[123] *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942. For motives that may have been genuine or provocative, the United States Employment Service placed advertisements in both of the city's mainstream White newspapers announcing "War Production Jobs for Colored Workers." *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 27-July 3, 1942; *St. Louis Star-Times*, June 26-July 3, 1942.

[124] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 16, 1942, *St. Louis Argus*, June 12, 1942 reports that St. Louis MOMW telegrammed the FEPC office in Washington, "The St. Louis Unit of the march on Washington Committee and thousands of Negro citizens of this community wish to inform you that we protest today's dismissal of some two hundred Negroes employed at the Small Arms Plant. We urge that you look into this matter immediately, due to the fact that this great defense plant has refused to hire Negro skilled workers, and now fires most of its Negro porters."

[125] David Grant, "Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor," June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[126] *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, June 26, 1942; Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 98.

[127] St. *Louis American*, June 25, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, September 5, 1941.

[128] Shaw, *What a Woman Ought To Be and To Do*, p. 14, 119 argues that "Black women's incomes were often critical to the family economy" and the instances of African American women who did not perform work in support of a family were exceptional.

[129] St. *Louis American*, June 25, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, June 26, 1942; *The Militant*, July 4, 1942.

[130] For statistics on women's employment see National Urban League, "A Summary Report of the Industrial Relations Laboratory: Part 1 – Performance of Negro Workers in Three Hundred War Plants," June 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[131] St*. Louis American*, June 25, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, June 26, 1942; *The Militant*, July 4, 1942.

[132] Takaki, *Double Victory*, p. 42-50; Honey, *Bitter Fruit*, p. 7-8, 12; Barbara Dianne Savage, *Broadcasting Freedom: Radio, War, and the Politics of Race, 1938-1948*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p. 168-177.

[133] "Pamphlet distributed by solicitors," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 9, 19 interprets the U.S. Cartridge campaign as evidence of "the social productiveness of conflict."

[134] *St. Louis Star Times*, June 18, 1942. Even though MOWM was a mass protest organization that thrived on direct action and pickets, negotiating with plant management was a seminal component of MOWM protest tactics. McNeal's experience in the labor movement influenced MOWM's program, which was to broker public pressure into political capital that could be wielded to make management capitulate to the organization's demands.

[135] David Grant, "Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor," June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[136] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, June 17, 1942.

[137] *St. Louis Argus*, June 12, 1942.

[138] *St. Louis American*, June 25, 1942.

[139] "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[140] *St. Louis Argus*, June 26, 1942; *St. Louis Argus*, July 24, 1942.

[141] *St. Louis Argus*, June 26, 1942 reports that pickets were in "abeyance for a short time to determine whether or not the company intends to carry out" the spirit of E.O. 8802.

[142] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, May 6, 1943 corroborates Grant's stance, writing that MOWM "is not fighting the War Industries, the Public Service Company or Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. It is trying to open the eyes of our fellow Americans that their bigoted attitude is jeopardizing our Republic's liberty."

[143] "Pamphlet distributed by solicitors, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers estimates that the $30.00 weekly income of U.S. Cartridge's Black workforce totaled $2,652,000 "flowing into the pockets of St. Louis Negroes."

[144] *St. Louis Argus*, April 30, 1943; *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, May 11, 1943; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, May 10, 1943 placed attendance at 4,000 and gives a more enthusiastic account describing Randolph as speaking "with thunderbolts as if from the Olympian Jove." *St. Louis American*, May 13, 1943 called Randolph "the greatest militant orator in this country since Frederick Douglass." *St. Louis Argus*, May 7, 1942 announcement that his Biblical skit would be performed. 8,000 employee estimate came from MOWM, see "Pamphlet distributed by solicitors," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[145] *St. Louis American*, May 13, 1943.

[146] St. *Louis American*, May 13, 1943; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, May 10, 1943; for snapshots of race relations in AFL and CIO affiliates prior to 1955 see Mark Karson and Ronald Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker, 1894-1949" and Sumner M. Rosen, "The CIO Era, 1935-1955" in Julius Jacobson (editor), *The Negro and the American Labor Movement* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1968), p. 155-187, 188-208; Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1973* (New York: International Publishers, 1974), p. 158-176, 215-237.

[147] *St. Louis American*, May 13, 1943; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*; May 10, 1943.

[148] *St. Louis Argus*, May 14, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, May 22, 1943; a similar hate strike that drew editorial comparison occurred in Detroit at Chrysler Corporation, see *St. Louis Argus*, June 12, 1942.

For secondary sources on Second World War hate strikes in America see Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, p. 255-257, 265-268; Joshua Freeman, "Delivering the Goods: Industrial Unionism during World War Two," *Labor History* 19 (Fall 1978), 585-587; David Roediger, *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness: Essays on Race, Politics, and Working Class History* (New York: Verso, 1994), p. 29.

[149] Mark Robert Schneider, *We Return Fighting: The Civil Rights Movement in the Jazz Age* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), p. 373. Second World War hate strikes are certainly evidence of what one team of scholars identified as "a continuous arc of white animosity." Adams and Sanders, *Alienable Rights*, p. xiii.

A 600-person hate strike occurred at Packard Motor Company in Detroit, see Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 151. A considerably larger strike of 6,000 White workers in Philadelphia responding to eight African Americans working as street car operators virtually shut down the city for five days and captured national headlines a year later. For St. Louis newspaper coverage see *St. Louis Star Times*,

August 5, 1944; *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, August 6, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, August 11, 1944. For more on this event see Allan M. Winkler, "The Philadelphia Transit Strike of 1944," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (June 1972), p. 73-89**.** Similar problems were experienced in Cincinnati, where one defense plant manager remarked, "We have attempted to employ additional Negro workers, but have met with resistance on the part of our white workers." National Urban League, "A Summary Report of the Industrial Relations Laboratory: Part 1 – Performance of Negro Workers in Three Hundred War Plants," June 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, p. 22 acerbically remarks that "Working-class solidarity meant little to those excluded from working at all. Though speaking of racialized workplaces half of a century earlier, the persistence of White supremacy makes Gilmore's incisive comment an apt description of how some workers saw St. Louis defense plants.

[150] *St. Louis Argus*, May 14, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, May 22, 1943.

[151] *Chicago Defender*, May 22, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943. Although this hate strike at U.S. Cartridge is not included, an extremely useful table of wartime hate strikes is in Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 143-144; also see Takaki, *Double V*, p. 51.

[152] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, May 10, 1943; *St. Louis Star Times*, May 10, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943.

[153] *St. Louis Star Times*, May 11, 1943; *St. Louis American*, May 13, 1943; *St. Louis American*, May 14, 1943. U.S. Cartridge's response to this small crisis was opposite of recommendations one month later by Rev. R.N. Dutton, President of the Metropolitan Church Federation. Dutton advised that management handle racist White workers firmly. He recommended that these workers "be transferred or allowed to resign" if they persisted to ignore the spirit and letter of E.O. 8802. R.N. Dutton, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two addresses delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions held as Central Baptist Church, April 9-11, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[154] Hine, "Black Professionals and Race Consciousness," p. 1293.

[155] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 3, 1943; *St. Louis Star Times*, June 3, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, June 12, 1943. This was not the only African American led strike in wartime St. Louis that year. At Monsanto Chemical Company, an entire shift of 175 Black workers refused to get out of the locker room "in protest over failure of the management to fire a white man who had engaged in an altercation with a Negro worker in the plant cafeteria." For details see *St. Louis Star Times*, November 17, 1943.

[156] *Chicago Defender*, June 12, 1943. There was ample reason for dissatisfaction among the ranks of U.S. Cartridge's African American workers. In addition to the hate strike by White woman workers, Black employees found upward mobility within the workforce severely limited by racial discrimination. According to one Black worker at the Small Arms plant, "we are all doing porter work but just for a few mens they put on the production line…I has been sweeping every since I been there." See Letters from Members of MOWM, May 25, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. *St. Louis Star-Times*, June 3, 1943 reports that in over a year the company had not followed through on its promise to train African American workers for supervisory positions. Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 120 erroneously identifies unit 202 as "lily white" and has building 103 as U.S. Cartridge's segregated Black unit.

[157] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 3, 1943.

[158] *St. Louis Argus*, June 4, 1943.

[159] *St. Louis Argus*, June 4, 1943.

[160] *St. Louis Argus*, June 4, 1943; *St. Louis American*, June 10, 1943.

[161] *St. Louis American*, June 10, 1943, also has an interesting parable of Dorie Miller who "went to town" defending Pearl Harbor, "We strongly suspect that out at Small Arms…Negro employees could step up and do the work of those graded higher, and do a darn good and efficient job. And we don't need any Jap coercion either to bring it about."

[162] *Daily Worker*, June 23, 1943.

[163] *St. Louis Star Times*, June 3, 1943.

[164] An Appeal from the March on Washington Committee," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "To the workers employed in Building 202," issued by Local 825, CIO warned that "further stoppages of work might hinder progress being made to give supervisory jobs" to African American workers.

[165] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 3, 1943; *St. Louis Star Times*, June 4, 1943.

[166] An Appeal from the March on Washington Committee," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, June 10, 1943 reports that McNeal and Grant "sped to the Small Arms plant to save an economic opportunity."

[167] *Chicago Defender*, June 12, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 12, 1943; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 56.

[168] *St. Louis American*, July 15, 1943.

[169] *St. Louis American*, July 15, 1943.

[170] *St. Louis Argus*, February 5, 1943 reminded readers that "If a certain kind of uniform is prescribed for workers, comply with the rule. If hair nets hide your curled or wavy tresses, wear the net anyway on the job…Think, think, think."

[171] *St. Louis American*, July 15, 1943.

[172] "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Inability to find work took a serious toll on Callie Smith, 18, who suffered depression over her inability to find work. Smith was hospitalized after drinking a bottle of disinfectant, for details see *St. Louis Argus*, November 13, 1942.

[173] "Minutes of Meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission," March 21, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers describes the extent of the commission's involvement. As the commission's invitation, Mr. Bassett, general manager of U.S. Cartridge, "made a brief statement in regard to laying off both white and colored at the Small Arms Plant." Basset and the Race Relations Commission agreed to consult each other "in solving problems that may develop in the future." For a national statistical survey of African American women in war work see Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. 81-87.

[174] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[175] John Clark, St. Louis Urban League, to B.E. Bassett, U.S. Cartridge, August 7, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; published in *St. Louis American*, August 17, 1944.

[176] Grant thought that this theme was important enough to restate, "when you deprive a man of the opportunity and he does get it, he over-compensates, he does a little bit better – and I think that is what is happening with the 99th Pursuit Squadron." David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Unit 202's low absenteeism is consistent with patterns established by African American workers in wartime St. Louis, see R.N. Dutton, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two addresses delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions held as Central Baptist Church, April 9-11, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 52.

[177] *Chicago Defender*, November 27, 1943.

Chapter 6

[1] Langston Hughes, "How About it Dixie," *Jim Crow's Last Stand* (1943) reprinted in Arnold Rampersad and David Roessel (editors), *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), p. 238

[2] Card Sent to all MOWM, June 9, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, June 4, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943; "Pamphlet passed out to public at March on Bell telephone Co," June 12, 1943, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, May 28, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, June 25, 1943.

[3] "March on Washington Movement Starts Campaign to Get Negroes in Public Utilities," press release, December 10, 1942, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Randolph Says Negroes Should Picket Metropolitan Insurance Company To Force Change In Policy On Proposed Lily-White Stuyvesant Town," press release May 28, 1943, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "A. Philip Randolph Leads Picket Line Against Main Office Metropolitan Life Insurance Company," press release, November 4, 1944, March on Washington Movement Press Releases, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 967-1, Schomburg Clipping File. Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 134-135 mentions "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaigns during the 1930s but offers few details, more information is found in Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 38-39, 46.

For information on these campaigns in Depression-era Harlem see excerpt from Claude McKay, *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* reprinted in Broderick and Meier, *Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century*, p. 109-118.

[4] "Pamphlet passed out to public at March on Bell telephone Co," June 12, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers argues that African Americans were entitled to work at Bell telephone because they collectively paid $4,000 per day for telephone service; "2.5 Million Negro Policy Holders Can Make Their Demands Heard!" [n.d.], Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; *Chicago Defender*, October 7, 1944 mentions Randolph's presence at a picket line organized by Harlem MOWM for jobs at Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Also see Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 73; for more on the use of boycotts to gain employment opportunities by African American activists during the Depression see Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis*, p. 84-85, 197, 209, 285, 295, 399, 412, 733, 743. Michele F. Pacifico, "'Don't By Where You Can't Work': The New Negro Alliance of Washington," *Washington History* 6 (Spring/Summer 1994), p. 66-88; Andor Skontes, "'Buy Where You Can Work': Boycotting for Jobs in African-American Baltimore, 1933-1934," *Journal of Social History* 27 (Summer 1994), p. 735-761; Gary Jerome Hunter, "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work: Black Urban Boycott Movements during the Depression," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1977).

[5] "The Position of the March on Washington Committee Concerning Employment of Negroes by the Southwest Bell Telephone Company," October 23, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[6] Card Sent to all MOWM, June 9, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, argues "If we cannot work we cannot live as free citizens. No man is free who is economically in slavery."

[7] *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 1943. For more on New York City's MOWM campaign against employment discrimination at Metropolitan Life Insurance see "Randolph Says Negroes Should Picket Metropolitan Insurance Company To Force Change in Policy on Proposed Lily-White Stuyvesant Town," press release May 28, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; Folder - MOWM Metropolitan Life Insurance Case, 1944, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Chicago Defender, April 28, 1945 includes an anecdote that in a visit to New York, Wiley College professor and African American poet Melvin Tolson got "the biggest kick…in writing slogans for the March on Washington to use to picket the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company." The Harlem Met Life campaign tapped a deep reservoir of African American anger over the company's discriminatory practices best exemplified by one person's complaint that "I have been writing that Company for 25 years, trying to make them see just what you are trying to make them see now." L.F. Coles to A. Philip Randolph, November 21, 1944, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[8] *St. Louis American*, May 27, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, May 28, 1943; Card Sent to all MOWM, June 9, 1943, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[9] *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943; "Pamphlet passed out to public at March on Bell telephone Co," June 12, 1943, T.D. McNeal Papers. In a press release, St. Louis MOWM also named Baltimore as a city that began integrating African American workers into public utilities. This example was incisive because Baltimore was comparable to St. Louis in terms of its geography, demographics, and "mores and employment patterns," see "The Position of the March on Washington Committee Concerning Employment of Negroes by the Southwest Bell Telephone Company," October 23, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[10] *St. Louis American*, June 3, 1943.

[11] For example, A. Philip Randolph shared this assessment with T.D. McNeal. In a widely circulated essay outlining MOWM's philosophy, Randolph sketched the character of the times as one in which members of the "so-called master white race…are re-examining their own moral, spiritual and intellectual armament." *Chicago Defender*, June 19, 1943.

[12] "Pamphlet passed out to public at March on Bell Telephone Co," June 12, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, June 10, 1943 and *St. Louis Argus*, June 11, 1943 report that McNeal's faith may have been vindicated by "a large number of both colored and white organizations…fully behind the effort" to integrate Southwestern Bell's workforce.

Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, p. 4 substantiates St. Louis MOWM's optimistic appraisal of mainstream White opinion during the Second World War as, "a time when growing segments of the white public, stimulated by the ideological concerns of the New Deal for America's dispossessed citizens and by the irony of fighting the racist Nazis while tolerating domestic racism, were gradually becoming more sensitive to the black man's plight."

[13] *St. Louis American*, July 29 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, August 13, 1943 has a picture of the sticker on an envelope; "Fellowship News," August 1943 reports that Nita Blackwell will be at St. Louis FOR's next meeting and the stamps will be available. *St. Louis American*, September 23, 1943 called on MOWM to broaden awareness of the campaign by dispersing the stickers through existing social clubs. Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 120 adds that stickers were placed on billing envelopes in lieu of payment. This is unlikely because Kersten and I use the same sources and I found no evidence that St. Louis MOWM asked supporters to withhold monies from Southwestern Bell. It would also be out of character for an organization like MOWM to advocate not paying phone bills when it also sponsored a highly publicized demonstration urging African Americans to pay their bills en masse at the phone company's collecting office to dramatize the spending power of Black utility consumers.

Another sticker printed and distributed by MOWM read "MAKE F.E.P.C. PERMANENT for Jobs and Justice – March on Washington Movement." This sticker was banned for a month by the postal service because it was "of controversial nature." Benjamin McLaurin's lobbying convinced assistant postmaster general Ramsey Black to reverse the decision, in part, because McLaurin argued that there was no plan to compromise national security by actually marching on the capitol. *Chicago Defender*, December 23, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, January 13, 1945; *Chicago Defender*, January 27, 1945; "March on Washington Movement Protests Post Office Ban on FEPC Stamps," press release, December 29, 1944, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Ban on FPC Stamp Removed," undated press release, Reel 17, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Ramsey Black to Benjamin McLaurin, January 13, 1945, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[14] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 78.

[15] *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943.

[16] For a contemporary version of this practice see Barbra Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (not) Getting By in America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001); also check the phenomenon of "smiling racism" elucidated by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva,

"The Strange Enigma of Racism in Contemporary America" (lecture) reprinted in Paula S. Rothenberg (editor), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, 7th edition (New York: Worth, 2007), p. 132.

[17] Eleanor Green, "Report on Meeting with Bell Telephone Company," April 14, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, May 27, 1943 reports that "a number of local well qualified young Negro women have made application to the Telephone Company and that none of these have been given jobs while the company continues to beg for workers" and place advertisements announcing positions. A similar account is found in *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943.

[18] *St. Louis American*, April 16, 1943.

[19] Eleanor Green, "Report on Meeting with Bell Telephone Company," April 14, 1943, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, May 27, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943.

[20] *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943.

[21] *St. Louis American*, June 24, 1943.

[22] *St. Louis American*, June 3, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, June 4, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, June 12, 1943.

[23] Card Sent to all MOWM, June 9, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943 and *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 12, 1943 report over 300 attended but *St. Louis Argus*, June 18, 1943 estimated the crowd at 150 and has a good picture of women marching single file holding placards; *Chicago Defender*, June 19, 1943 reports 175 attending. "Pamphlet passed out to public at March on Bell Telephone Co," June 12, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers lists placard slogans including: "$4,000 spent daily by St. Louis Negroes for phones! Yet not one decent job for us"; "Negro operators working in other cities, why not in St. Louis?"; "We sought a conference. Bell's refusal forced us into the streets."; "Why harm us? We are your fellow Americans! Where is your conscience?"; and "Negroes are helping stop Hitler abroad. Let's stop would-be Hitlers at home." For commentary that African Americans should work in public utilities in proportion to their buying power see "The Position of the March on Washington Committee Concerning Employment of Negroes by the Southwest Bell Telephone Company," October 23, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[24] *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943.

[25] Card Sent to all MOWM, June 9, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 13, 1943; *St. Louis Star*, June 12, 1943; there is no mention of how African American janitors and maintainers of Southwestern Bell personally

responded about picket placards proclaiming "Four thousand dollars spent daily by St. Louis Negroes for phones, not one decent job for us," and MOWM literature that job opportunity beyond "those of moping floors and the like." Implicit in this protest rhetoric is an implication that custodial work was less than "descent" and unimportant. According to McNeal, some college graduates applied for positions and were not interviewed. Unfortunately, no data exists to substantiate or quantify this claim.

Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, p. 14, 195, 211 notes that "politics of respectability…equated public behavior with self-respect and with the advancement of African Americans as a group" and that this impulse often coincided with a "valorization of work."

[26] *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 5, 1943. Comments from White observers were favorable or fairly benign: "Why shouldn't they work here, they have telephones!" and "What is it about? I can't see what the signs say." See *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943.

[27] *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, June 25, 1943. Bell Telephone tried to head off protests with an advertisement placed in the *Argus* featuring a hand reaching for a phone and a caption reading, "Please, Mister, can this call wait? This is the busy hour." Even though the text specified that the advertisement was about curbing daytime telephone use in order to keep switchboards free, the advertisement's location in a Black newspaper the week after MOWM's protest suggests that Bell Telephone was attempting to portray MOWM's campaign as untimely and destructive to the war effort.

[28] *St. Louis* Star, June 12, 1943; St*. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 12, 1943; *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943. These sources indicate that McNeal urged demonstrators to allow their signs and countenance to do the talking, thus minimizing the chances for a flare-up between protestors and spectators.

[29] *St. Louis* Star, June 12, 1943; St*. Louis Post Dispatch*, June 12, 1943.

[30] *St. Louis American*, June 17, 1943. Note that White mainstream media in St. Louis covered MOWM much more fairly than Alabama newspapers did the 1942 Birmingham FEPC hearings. "President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice Press Clippings Digest," No. 4, July 6, 1942, p. 14-24, Reel 10, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[31] *St. Louis American*, September 2, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, September 3, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, September 4, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, September 24, 1943; for more on "culture jamming" as a form of protest see Kalle Lasn, *Culture Jam: How to Reverse America's Suicidal Consumer Binge – And Why We Must* (New York: Harper, 2000).

[32] *St. Louis Argus*, September 24, 1943; "Negroes Protest Telephone Discrimination Through Mass Payment of Telephone Bills," press release, September 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; *Chicago Defender*, September 25, 1943.

[33] March on Washington Movement Press Release, December 9, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, December 17, 1943. Although initial projections forecasted this branch's opening to occur in two months, it took twice that amount of time. In May 1944, the Vandeventer Avenue office opened with little fanfare and guarded praise from the Black media, see *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944; *St. Louis American*, July 19, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, July 20, 1944.

[34] Not all companies cracked under dual pressure from that summer's FEPC Hearings and MOWM lobbying. The other two of the four public service companies MOWM targeted were Union Electric Company and LaClede Gas Light. Both of these companies had separate conferences with McNeal in December 1943 "for the purpose of exploring the possibilities of integrating the Negro citizens into all branches of your employment." Neither company took action in the next several months despite reaching an "understanding" that "white-collar jobs" would be integrated. T.D. McNeal to LaClade Gas Light Company, July 5, 1944; T.D. McNeal to Union Electric Company of Missouri, July 5, 1944; T.D. McNeal to LaClade Gas Company, November 16, 1943; J.W. McAfee to T.D. McNeal, November 18, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[35] *Chicago Defender*, April 29, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, July 20, 1944.

[36] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944.

[37] Thomas Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*, (New York: Random House, 2008), p. 403 argues "Most civil rights and radical organizations in the postwar years had male heads but depended on the energy of a large female rank and file."

[38] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944.

[39] Savage, *Broadcasting Freedom*, p. 276.

[40] "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[41] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944; "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[42] "The Spider's Web," a weekly column by Henry Winfield Wheeler, lists the following as participating at sit-ins at Stix-Baer and Fuller, Famous-Barr Co., and Scruggs Vandervorts: Pearl S. Maddox, Thelma Grant, Modestine Crute Thornton, Milton Thompson, Florence McCluskey, Birdie Beal Anderson, Myrtle Walker, Lillian

Sawyer, Anabel Mayfield, Ross Smith, Rogers Smith, Shermine Smith, Vora Thompson, Evelyn Roberts, Ethel Haywood, Essie Martin, Ruth Mattie Wheeler, Mrs. Milton Thompson, Maggie White, Florence Harrison, Helen Elam, Hattie Bobo, Margaret Battles, Eula Evans, Jessie McMillan, and Juanita Ivory.

[43] "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Greene, *Published in the Interest of Colored People*, p. 138-139 mentions the sit-ins but only mentions Pearl Maddox, Henry Wheeler, David Grant, and T.D. McNeal.

[44] "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; for more on the politics of respectability see Paisley Jane Harris, "Gatekeeping and Remaking: The Politics of Respectability in African American Women's History and Black Feminism," *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 212-220**;** for a survey of African American women's responses to gendered limitations see Deborah Grey White, *Too Heavy A Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

[45] David Grant, "Race Problems in Our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two Addresses Delivered at the Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, echoes this sentiment, "It is my belief that the depression years produced the best race relations St. Louis has ever known" as White citizens across the social spectrum became more sympathetic to African Americans.

No cynic, Grant remained hopeful that "the currents of hate and prejudice…directed at the Negro people" could be challenged and defeated by the kind of "determination, persistence, leadership, fortitude, courage, and vision" that Moses had and African Americans could use in his day. David Grant, "A Biblical Narration from the Second Book of Moses," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Also see *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, April 10, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, May 1, 1943 which suggest that McNeal shared Grant's pessimism at the time. The *Defender* reported this "grave situation" in St. Louis, where "the fight for true democracy at home is being lost although the fight for democracy on foreign shores is in the process of being won." This glum assessment was echoed yet again in the *Chicago Defender*, April 17, 1943, when reporting on "Assertions that many St. Louis Negroes have become unenthusiastic regarding the nation's war effort because they found themselves discriminated against when they sought jobs in war industries."

[46] Edwin Embree, "City of Chicago Mayor's Conference on Race Relations," February 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[47] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, January 28, 1943, "public spaces" included restaurants, theatres, taverns, hotels, and public conveyances. The bill stopped short of recommending the "mingling of the races" in public schools. Also of interest is *St. Louis Argus*, February 5, 1943; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 63-64.

[48] Kenswil was lauded with a Merit Award at the 1943 Emancipation Celebration featuring Judge William Hastie shortly after he resigned as Civilian Aid to Secretary of War, see *St. Louis American*, September 10, 1943; "Sixth Annual Emancipation Celebration" program, September 22, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, September 23, 1943.

[49] *Chicago Defender*, February 6, 1943.

[50] S.R. Redmond to T.D. McNeal, January 27, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[51] *Chicago* Defender, February 6, 1943; St. *Louis Post Dispatch*, January 28, 1943.

[52] *St. Louis Argus*, February 5, 1943.

[53] Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, T-024, Western Historical Manuscript Collection; Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison, May 20, 1974, T-343, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection.

[54] Chicago CORE led sit-ins in 1942, for details see Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 146-147. For an excellent analysis of 1960 sit-ins refer to Wesley C. Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), p. 13-44.

[55] Honey, *Bitter Fruit*, p. 25.

[56] *St. Louis American*, "Spider's Web," May 25, 1944; *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944. There is no record of Cobb's remarks but it is possible that he addressed sit-ins led by Pauli Murray and other Howard University students that took place in 1943. For a first-person account refer to Murray, *Song in a Weary Throat*, p. 198-209. For an account and summary of Howard's sit-ins see *Chicago Defender*, April 24, 1943.

[57] Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[58] *St. Louis American*, June 1, 1944; "MOWM Drive Off to a Good Start," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[59] *St. Louis American*, July 22, 1943 chastised the *Courier* for betraying Robert Vann's ideals when it speculated that MOWM's use of civil disobedience "can only lead to disaster, considering the present national state of mind." In the next week's article, the *American* wrote against "mean little minded men" like Schuyler of the *Courier* and John Robert Badger of the *Defender* as "scribes and Pharisees" who habitually

attacked Black leadership but offered no programs to alleviate racial problems in the United States. See *St. Louis American*, July 29, 1943.

[60] "Outline of Summer Training Course in Non-Violent Direct Action," [n.d.], 1943 likely because of other documents in this series], Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[61] "A Suggested pattern for Good Will Direct Action To Take," [n.d.], 1943 likely because of other documents in this series], Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[62] St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions, April 9-11, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *Fellowship News*, June 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers both name Nita Blackwell as the leader of 15 canvassers administering the survey. For more documentation on the survey see St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation, Folder 10-11, Box 1, Western Historical Manuscript Collection. MOWM and FOR were not alone in surveying public opinion towards the end of progressive social change, the New York City-based Council For Democracy was also involved. "Council For Democracy," 1944 newsletter, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[63] *St. Louis American*, August 26 1943.

[64] *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944; Thelma McNeal was married to T.D. McNeal, Ruth Mattie Wheeler was the daughter of St. Louis American columnist Henry Winfield Wheeler. Powell, Jr., *Marching Blacks*, p. 5-7.

[65] *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944.

[66] *St. Louis Argus*, May 26, 1944; St*. Louis American*, June 1, 1944; "Democracy and the Race Problem," in St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions, April 9-11, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. The CCRC was heavily influenced by the Fellowship of Reconciliation's belief that the most effective organized response to racial segregation and inequality is disciplined Christian-based nonviolence. Other MOWM members listed on the Institute's roster include Nita Blackwell, David Grant, and N.A. Sweet.

[67] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, April 10, 1943; *St. Louis American*, April 15, 1943 reports that Chattergee was challenged by several attendees in the question period about his assertion that "The Negroes don't have to fight their government here, but they have to fight the mores, customs and manners of a large part of the ruling people."

[68] A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal, March 26, 1943, T.D. McNeal Papers encourages McNeal's attendance. Charles C. Johnson and Lillian Smith were originally scheduled to speak but they both cancelled their appearance; see *St. Louis American*, April 15, 1943.

Farmer was ambivalent about working so closely with MOWM because he thought that CORE had little to gain by assisting another organization that could

"fold up in a year." In Farmer's opinion, "One can only cry wolf…so often" and he believed that MOWM's adoption of civil disobedience was "just a threat, like the original march." James Farmer to George Houser, February 5, 1943, Reel 11, CORE Papers.

[69] "The March on Washington Movement and Non-Violent Civil Disobedience," press release, February 23, 1943, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Randolph championed this protest tactic but stopped short of moral perfectionism because he discouraged enlisted men or women and defense workers from joining on because MOWM did not want to obstruct the war effort. For a historical survey of non-violent direct action see Peter Ackerman, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

[70] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, April 11, 1943.

[71] E. Pauline Myers to T.D. McNeal, June 1, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, June 16, 1944 remarks on Randolph's advocacy of non-violent direct action at a speech at the Pine Street YMCA.

[72] "Non-Violent Direct Action: A Digest of the findings of the National Committee On mass Action and Strategy," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[73] "Non-Violent Direct Action: A Digest of the findings of the National Committee On mass Action and Strategy," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[74] "Non-Violent Direct Action: A Digest of the findings of the National Committee On mass Action and Strategy," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[75] "Non-Violent Direct Action: A Digest of the findings of the National Committee On mass Action and Strategy," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, predicts that "As the campaign gathers momentum and the public is more favorable, it is expected that more and more white allies will be won over" out of respect for the discipline of protesters and a deeply rooted attachment to egalitarianism.

[76] "Non-Violent Direct Action: A Digest of the findings of the National Committee On mass Action and Strategy," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[77] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 30-31.

[78] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 97.

[79] "2nd Major Mass Meeting!" flyer, May 9, 1943; *St. Louis American*, April 29, 1943; *St. Louis American*, May 6, 1943; St. *Louis Argus*, May 7, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, May 14, 1943; *Chicago Defender*, May 8, 1948 reports that the rally's purpose was "to register a mass protest against the continued discrimination against Negroes by

local war plants and public utilities, the vicious Jim Crow set up in the arm, navy, and air corps, the emasculation of the Fair Employment Practices Committee and other indignities to which Negro Americans are being subjected while they…place their lives on the altar for democracy."

[80] *St. Louis Argus*, May 7, 1943; A, Philip Randolph to Leighton Weston, October 5, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers thanks St. Louis MOWM for a $100 contribution to the national office's coffers. Also see Aldrich Turner to Leyton Weston, October 19, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; E. Pauline Myers to Leyton Weston, October 20, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[81] *St. Louis Argus*, May 7, 1942. Players in the skit included MOWM members Leyton Weston, Ernest Hutchinson, Harry Ball, William Rose, and the March on Washington Quartet led by William Smith. "Program of Mass Meeting," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[82] For another playlet performed in New York, Chicago, and St. Louis see "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[83] David Grant, "A Biblical Narration from the Second Book of Exodus," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Grant's skit concludes with the melodramatic closing lines, "The March on Washington Movement has set its face toward delivering the Negro people – toward erasing for all the time to come, every obstacle which stands in the way of their realization of full citizenship in this glorious land of ours. Its efforts toward delivery will continue until black men of the world are accorded their full stature as men. We in the March Movement today herewith rededicate our time, our money, and if needs be, our lives, to the righteous cause that is true freedom and real citizenship for the Negro people in this, our native land." Additional copy can be found in "The March on Washington Players, St. Louis Unit, present a Biblical Narration taken from the Book of Moses called Exodus," Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[84] *St. Louis Argus*, May 14, 1943.

[85] Less than desired attendance bothered one individual who believed that "The March on Washington Organization is the Champion of the Negro people," to chastise Black St. Louisians for not being where they should have "on May 9th, 1943, between the hours of two and six." See Z.D. Kirksey, "An Open Letter to the negros of St. Louis," *St. Louis American*, May 20, 1943.

[86] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, May 10, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, May 14, 1943.

[87] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944.

[88] *St. Louis American*, May 25, 1944; Saint Louis Negro Teachers Association to March on Washington Movement, March 23, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *Chicago Defender*, April 17, 1943 favorably reported that Farmer and others "stressed" that "over-zealous Negroes would only serve to aggravate the question."

[89] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944. St. Louis MOWM members Thelma McNeal and Rosie Johnson were familiar with theoretical foundations of Non-Violent Good Will Direct Action because they were delegates on the committee about the subject at MOWM's Chicago conference in July 1943. T.D. McNeal to Pauline Myers, June 25, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[90] *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944.

[91] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944.

[92] "Non-Violent Direct Action: A Digest of the findings of the National Committee On mass Action and Strategy," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; also see E. Pauline Myers to Leyton Weston, October 20, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, in which Myers sends a sample of a pamphlet about non-violent direct action produced by the national office and sold to local branches who, in turn, sold them to members for small profit. Myers warns "We need finances desperately in order to carry forward this gigantic campaign."

[93] "Report of Committee on Resolutions to We Are Americans Too Conference," 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers located the place of White collaborators as "advisable and desirable to advance the cause of the Negro and Democracy." This pattern of protest was effective in St. Louis' early 1950s sit ins, Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 46; Jolly, *It Happened Here Too*, p. 77.

[94] *St. Louis Argus*, September 8, 1944.

[95] *St. Louis Argus*, May 19, 1944 reports that the first sit in was at Grand Leader's lunch counter but CCRC files indicate that the first sit-in was at Stix-Baer & Fuller with five CCRC members including one White person. Store manager Mr. Hyatt discouraged them, stating, "the American pattern would not permit the serving of Negro customers." CCRC files and the *Argus* agree that the store manager was a Mr. Hyatt, their only discrepancy is in the name of the first site.

[96] Anderson and Maddux were on the St. Louis NAACP's Executive Committee, see *St. Louis Argus*, November 12, 1943.

[97] *St. Louis American*, May 25, 1944; Gilmartin petitioned the St. Louis Director of Pars and Recreation to ensure that attendants monitoring the city's tennis courts clearly understood that courts were open to voluntarily integrated teams for single and doubles play, see *St. Louis American*, September 28, 1944. Gilmartin also

volunteered himself for service in a mixed-race Army division, an offer that the Manpower Division indirectly dismissed, replying that Gilmartin would first have to obtain a release from his employment at U.S. Cartridge. Hugh Gilmartin to Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 12, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Leonard Russell to Hugh Gilmartin, June 23, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[98] Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[99] *St. Louis Argus*, May 19, 1944.

[100] *St. Louis American*, May 25, 1944; Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944.

[101] "Job Situation for Women her Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944.

[102] Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[103] *St. Louis American*, May 25, 1944.

[104] Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, places the entire onus of restaurant segregation on management, reporting "Close observation disclosed the fact that not a single white customer at the lunch counters left before finishing his food or refused to take a seat because of our presence. On all occasions sympathetic expressions in our favor were made by white customers…In addition, we have received numerous letters and telephone calls from white citizens encouraging us to carry on. In the meantime management took the position that white customers would not permit lifting of the ban."

[105] *St. Louis Star-Times*, July 20, 1944.

[106] Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 3-4, 8; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 11, 1990; Jolly, *It Happened Here Too*, p. 75-76 notes that Stix, Baer, and Fuller's highly visible lunch counter made it prone to civil rights activism. Reasons for the refusal to cover sit-ins in the early 1950s are well documented and this interpretation is being extrapolated to explain a similar phenomenon on the previous decade. Also see Florence R. Beatty-Brown, *The Negro as Portrayed by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch from 1920-1950*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Illinois, 1951). Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 48 recognizes the tendency of white daily papers to rarely even cover front-page news in African American newspapers.

[107] *St. Louis Argus*, July 2, 1943, Stix, Baer and Fuller furniture department "stock boy" Eugene Hayes, a recent high school graduate, to Julliard School of Music in New

York City. Hayes used time during lunch break to practice drumming and customers "began to marvel at the music this colored boy was playing and attention to him was called to the Board of Managers."

[108] *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944. This meeting should not be understood simply as a top-down attempt to maintain the status quo because conferring with management was an important component of St. Louis MOWM's tactics for creating sustainable and long-standing change in the city's racial order. David Grant to Layle Lane, July 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[109] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944. Civil disobedience was seen as necessary even though Famous-Barr previously donated to an NAACP fund drive, see *St. Louis Argus*, April 12, 1940. Interestingly, as late as the 1960s, African Americans held less than 1 percent of the jobs, none of which were salaried, at Famous-Barr, see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 133.

[110] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 30-31, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection.

[111] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 30-31, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection.

[112] Jerry Gershenhorn, "Double V in North Carolina: The *Carolina Times* and the Struggle for Racial Equality during World War II," *Journalism History*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Fall 2006), p. 164

[113] *St. Louis Star Times*, November 17, 1943; *St. Louis American*, November 18, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, November 19, 1943; Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

Sidney Redmond and the St. Louis NAACP led the campaign to desegregate the Post Office employee cafeteria dating back to December 1941, for details of this campaign see *St. Louis Argus*, December 11, 1942, for a comprehensive study mid-twentieth century civil rights law see Michael J. Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 171-280.

[114] David Grant to Layle Lane, July 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[115] "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[116] "…Half-Negro, Half-American: How You Can Dissolve Segregation," *St. Louis American*, August 24, 1944.

[117] Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Leyton Weston to Famous-Barr, January 11, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Leyton Weston to Scruggs, Vandervoort, and Barney, January 11, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers are examples of MOWM's letters to area businesses. Weston wrote to "denote the complete absence of Negroes as workers in your store and no facilities whatsoever for Negro patrons to eat in your cafeteria or dining room…We would appreciate knowing whether or not this condition is an oversight on your part or whether you are deliberately discriminating against American citizens because of color."

[118] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944.

[119] Some establishments decided to uphold racial segregation instead of ensure their days profits. Famous-Barr "discontinued all service" for the day when 15 Whites who supported the MOWM purchased ice cream and handed it to African American women.

[120] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944 photo has Hattie Thomas with a sign reading "IN CHRIST THERE IS NO BLACK AND WHITE" and Jessie McMillan sitting to her left with a sign reading "A NAZIS BULLET KNOWS NO PREJUDICE."

[121] Citizens Civil Rights Committee Statement, August 1, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers reveals that management responded hastily to larger groups with signs condemning American segregation and closed their food service for the day.

[122] Eden Seminary had a contingent of about thirty FOR members who supported racial equality and other progressive causes, for documentation of their activity see St. Louis Regional Fellowship of Reconciliation, "Meeting Reports and Notes, 1940s," Folder 12, Box 1, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection.

[123] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944; for Biblical reference to the bread and stone analogy see Matthew 7:9.

[124] *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944.

[125] *St. Louis American*, May 25, 1944.

[126] "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[127] *St. Louis American*, "Spider's Web," May 25, 1944; "MOWM Drive Off to a Good Start," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[128] *St. Louis American*, May 25, 1944.

[129] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944.

[130] *St. Louis American*, May 25, 1944.

[131] Charles A. Simmons, *The African American Press: With Special Reference to Four Newspapers, 1827-1965* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1998), p. 79-82 discusses how widespread the *Courier's* Double V became.

[132] Chateauvert, *Marching Together,* introduction & p. 178 outlines the boundaries of protest within the politics of gendered respectability.

[133] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944.

[134] *St. Louis American*, August 24, 1944.

[135] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944.

[136] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944.

[137] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944.

[138] *St. Louis American*, July 19, 1944 mentions that on June 10 Stix, Baer, and Fuller "demurred in serving a young Colored soldier with his white comrades from Scott Field."

[139] *St. Louis American*, July 19, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944 also equated White supremacy with Nazism, "Isn't the world today paying and paying dearly for the sins of the so-called superior race, whom we call the Nazis?" Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 78-82 arguers that equating Nazi extremes with racial apartheid was commonplace among African Americans. At the core of their argument was the assumption that "America was imperfect, but perfectible."

[140] *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944 reports that this woman was Eula Harris; "Job Situation for Women here Serious," [n.d.] reports that the woman with this sign was Hattie Duvall of 4726 McMillan Street. Other signs included "Job Situation for Women her Serious," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, July 14, 1944. Other signs used at the sit-ins included "WHY CAN'T I EAT HERE?" – "WHAT DOES DEMOCRACY MEAN TO YOU?" – MY DOLLARS ARE SPENT IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS WHY NOT HERE?" – "IN CHRIST THERE IS NO BLACK AND WHITE – A NAZIS BULLET KNOWS NO PREJUDICE."

[141] "St. Louis Race Relations Commission: Executive and Committee personnel," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; As a member of the Mayor's Interracial Committee and director of the St. Louis MOWM with a responsibility to advise the CCRC, McNeal "voiced the opinion that to accept the proposal to eat in basement cafeterias would be to dig another pit of segregation for Negroes who already burdened to the

breaking point in St. Louis." *St. Louis Argus*, September 8, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, April 29, 1944. Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 60 argues, Lacking any legal powers, such committees gave the appearance of activity while doing little to change the city's social landscape.

[142] T.D. McNeal to A.P. Kauffman, September 17, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; Charles Riley to T.D. McNeal, September 20, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. McNeal labeled Chairman Meissner "one of the principal causes of racial tension and ill will." Meissner's reputation as antagonistic persisted two years later, when a *Defender* columnist called him "a first class you know what." While Mayor Kauffman was certainly a pro-active official, his leadership style was to use committees in order to distance himself from unpopular or controversial decisions. His political capitol among African Americans in St. Louis was in decline before the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations announced its compromise.

Less than a month earlier, he was criticized by appointing a thirty-six member committee to nominate an appointee for a recently vacated position on the School Board. The influence of four African Americans on this committee was disregarded as "window dressing" because their numbers were statistically insignificant. Kauffman was accused of "committee packing" and using an "Italian hand" that undermined chances for Black representation in creating public education policy. This accusation was serious, especially considering that the committee was formed in the aftermath of Detroit's riots with hopes that the committee could rectify social forces that created favorable conditions for urban upheaval. Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 268-269; Lang, *Grassroots at the* Gateway, p. 59; St*. Louis Post Dispatch*, July 14, 1943; Collier-Thomas, *Jesus, Jobs, and* Justice, p. 384; St*. Louis Star Times*, July 14, 1943; *St. Louis Star Times*, July 15, 1943; *St. Louis* American, August 24, 1944; St*. Louis Argus*, August 25, 1944; for slur see *Chicago Defender*, April 29, 1944; for criticism of Meissner see *Chicago Defender*, June 28, 1945.

St. Louis American, August 24, 1944 exemplifies dissatisfaction with Kauffman's handling of racial matters: "Unfortunately the sector of American citizens who by chance are Negroes must live under the pressure of paradoxes. The irrational pattern of American segregation makes it so. Mayor Kauffman's recent proxy appointment to a Board of Education vacancy is an example. Here was an honest occasion for the Mayor to give the Negro citizens a short-term representative on a Board that governs a dual system which separates the Negro children from all other American children (and God forgive the U.S. until this business of Jim Crow is completely removed). But the Mayor passed the 'bucket' to one of those most honorable citizens' committees and thus set the table for another paradox in our American way. And here is the paradox: many (too many) of our leading, high-minded influential white citizens only know superficially and indifferently their Negro fellow citizens: they are prone to think in terms of their colored servants or the porter who kowtows to their coming and going; they live and think in a pre-war style that recalls a vague and distant name of Booker Washington when it comes to Negro education; they don't really know the depth and height of Booker

Washington, only his metaphor of the separate fingers on one hand – another one of those inexorable paradoxes. These good leading citizens who are without any real contact with the present-day aspiration of Negro Americans serve on a committee with good intentions but are no guarantee of providing Negro Americans with first-class citizenship."

[143] St. Louis Race Relation's Commission Minutes, April 18, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Housing and Living Conditions Committee: Progress Report, March 17, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Artificial shortages of housing were an issue in wartime St. Louis. A third-party survey found that an average of 20% of African American income went to rent, the most significant expenditure among Black residents in the city. For more on MOWM and NAACP attempts to lift Restrictive Covenants in St. Louis see *St. Louis Argus*, September 5, 1941; *St. Louis Argus*, November 13, 1942.

[144] *St. Louis Argus*, September 8, 1944; *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944.

[145] *St. Louis Argus*, September 8, 1944.

[146] *St. Louis Argus*, September 8, 1944.

[147] *St. Louis Argus*, May 6, 1944; *St. Louis American*, April 6, 1944, *St. Louis Argus*, April 7, 1944 and St*. Louis Globe Democrat,* April 6, 1944 report on the Board of Alderman's 22-4 vote to desegregate all concessions operating on city property including the lunch rooms at City Hall and the Municipal Courts Building with penalties of $25 to $500 for violating the ordinance. Ten African American pastors and a cadre of "interested citizens" including Pearl Maddox, Birdie Beal Anderson, and Henry Winfred Wheeler attended the meeting, as did a group of students from a local high school. Although not named, McNeal and Grant were conspicuously absent. The *American* noted with disdain that "such leaders who are supposed to be anti-Jim Crow adherents, somehow were too busy to be seen at this meeting." Among this group were "Leaders in the march on Washington, the N.A.A.C.P., the Mound City Bar, the Business League, the Medical Forum, the Postal Alliance, and the Ward Committeemen who claim to be such Race Men." News of the ordinance's introduction for debate is in *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, January 14, 1944.

[148] *St. Louis American*, September 21, 1944.

[149] Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 67.

[150] *St. Louis American*, September 28, 1944. A clear upper class bias is evident later in the column when the writer continues, "We believe that only by accepting it [segregation] temporarily can greater gains be made. We further believe that such temporary acceptance, by well behaved, neatly dressed individuals…will certainly result in the opening of other doors to our people." Surveyors privately recognized

their bias but did not allude to it in press releases that cheered artificially inflated numbers of progressive White citizens in St. Louis. Anna Astroth to Leyton Weston, April 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Additional evidence suggests that the survey was highly partisan in nature. According to the FOR's monthly newsletter, "The march on Washington will use the results in its campaign for wider employment of Negroes." *Fellowship News*, June 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[151] *St. Louis Argus*, September 8, 1944.

[152]*St. Louis American*, April 13, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, September 8, 1944.

[153] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, David Grant Papers; Greene, Kremer, and Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*, p. 159-160.

[154] Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 68.

[155] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, David Grant Papers.

Chapter 7

[1] Trial, "War By Other Means," *Are These Our Lives?* Equal Vision Records, 1999, compact disc.

[2] "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[3] *St. Louis American*, September 7, 1944. *Chicago Defender*, May 19, 1945 expounded upon this sentiment, urging readers to act on "a new all-out offensive against job discrimination…in a new campaign for peace jobs" that could keep African Americans employed at a similar rate that the defense industry did during the height of conflict. Elsewhere in Missouri, the Kansas-Missouri Council for a Permanent Fair Employment Practice Committee chaired by Randolph's friend Bobbie Arnold expressed alarm that 6,000 of the area's 7,800 African Americans employed in war industries were doing jobs that had no relevance to a peacetime economy and could expect to have their positions terminated in the near future. Bobbie Arnold to A. Philip Randolph, April 24, 1946, Reel 15, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[4] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, June 12, 1944. Though present at early MOWM events, Granger left the MOWM when it set up as a permanent organization because his commitments to the Urban League kept him from devoting sufficient energy to MOWM's efforts. Granger was also concerned that MOWM's upcoming Policy Conference in Detroit would be impaired by Randolph's delusions of grandeur, see

Lester Granger to A. Philip Randolph, September 1, 1942, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[5] Walter W. Head to T.D. McNeal, June 13, 1944. A similar trend took place in Chicago, where a group of scholars, activists, and concerned citizens met twice a month for five months discussing techniques and programs to integrate public space, economic advantages to White supremacy, and race relations in the Third World. "Institute on Racial Minorities in the Post-War World," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers. *St. Louis Argus,* April 7, 1944 reports that the St. Louis NAACP also sponsored similar discussions.

[6] Call for Non-Partisan Political Conference for Negroes by the March on Washington Movement, press release, April 18, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 364 demonstrates that Randolph's commitment to eschewing partisan loyalty altered in 1964, when he endorsed the Democratic Party.

[7] Walter W. Head to T.D. McNeal, June 13, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Minutes of meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, June 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[8] *St. Louis Argus*, June 9, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, June 23, 1944; *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944; Minutes of meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, June 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[9] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944.

[10] *St. Louis American*, June 8, 1944; David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[11] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[12] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[13] *St. Louis Star-Times*, June 7, 1944; David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[14] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[15] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[16] *Chicago Defender*, May 6, 1944. This unemployment statistic was collected through a joint effort by St. Louis' MOWM, NAACP, and Urban League chapters.

[17] *St. Louis American*, April 6, 1944.

[18] Contract amount from Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 44; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 261 indicates that this company had approximately 13,000 employees, making "the largest and most active aircraft company in the city."

[19] *St. Louis American*, February 4, 1943; *St. Louis Star-Times*, February 5, 1943; St. Louis Post Dispatch, February 5, 1943; "Riveting the Sinews of Democracy," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. If other industrial training programs took the best and brightest from the ranks of Black women in St. Louis, it is likely that the ultimate result of their efforts was not the broad uplift of proletarians from that demographic but rather the elevation of wages for previously employed and usually skilled African American women. Further research will indicate if data exists to quantify the professional background of African American woman working in defense productions. Of particular interest is developing a methodology to gauge whether or not these individuals experienced significant upward mobility as a result of their work in American defense production.

[20] *Chicago Defender*, January 29, 1944.

[21] Roy Hoglund to T.D. McNeal, January 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers exemplifies the close relationship between the FEPC and St. Louis MOWM. Regional Director Hoglund wrote to notify McNeal that Malcolm Ross, national FEPC chairman, was speaking on NBC the upcoming week. For a thorough account of FEPC and MOWM in this region see Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 112-125.

[22] *St. Louis Argus*, November 19, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, June 9, 1944; Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 75; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 89.

[23] *Chicago Defender*, August 1, 1942.

[24] *St. Louis American*, April 27, 1944 gives an example of MOWM and FEPC collaborating to redress complaints of racial discrimination. The St. Louis Car Company upgraded a number of African American employees, positively forcing the FEPC to stop an impending investigation that MOWM brought to its attention; also see T.D. McNeal to Employees of the St. Louis Car Company, April 3, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. McNeal invites workers to "a private conference for men of your group, on an extremely important matter." No further details of this meeting are documented but its timing a week after an ad hoc group of African Americans, including some members of MOWM, made an unauthorized visit to the home of St. Louis Car Company's President, Edwin Meisner. David Grant to Edwin Meisner, March 31, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 3.

[25] "Skit read at meeting – Block Captains," [n.d.], Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, November 12, 1943 editorializes about Roosevelt's commitment to FEPC and praises the agency's work despite its small budget. A hostile congress was blamed for its limited annual allocation.

[26] *St. Louis American*, June 3, 1943 notes, "It is the intent of the March to prosecute with vigor all cases of discrimination which this Committee (FEPC) will have jurisdiction on." Also see *St. Louis Argus*, November 19, 1943; Orden Oechsli to Leyton Weston, June 24, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

Amertorp's Industrial Relations Manager wrote that he welcomes a conference with MOWM but the company was surprised because MOWM presented the "first indication we have had from any source that reports of this sort (discrimination) have been made concerning our Company." Weston responded with, among other things, allegations that African Americans were underrepresented among plant employees, the complete absence of African American women from the company's workforce, and a lack of in-plant training facilities open to Black workers seeking to further their career with Amertorp. Leyton Weston to Orden Oechsli, July 14, 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[27] Lawrence Ervin, "Speech Delivered by Lawrence Ervin, Eastern Regional Director of the March on Washington Movement at the We Are Americans, Too Conference, Held at the Metropolitan Community Church, Chicago, Ill., June 30, 1943," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

In New York City, for instance, the FEPC office did not need to solicit complaints because its staff could only handle fifteen per week and a weekly average of fifty complaints flooded the office, see *PM*, April 13, 1943.

[28] *St. Louis Argus*, January 30, 1942.

[29] *St. Louis Star-Times*, June 25, 1942. The CIO recognized connections between labor and civil rights and it criticized the city's Municipal Athletic Association for a recent ruling that segregated the city's softball league as "undemocratic and…against a loyal and patriotic group of citizens."

[30] *St. Louis Star-Times*, October 7, 1944; *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, October 10, 1944. In a span of five years the FEPC logged an annual average of 5,000 complaints, see Janken, *Walter White*, p. 261.

[31] "Pamphlet distributed by solicitors," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, February 26, 1943.

[32] "Pamphlet distributed by solicitors," 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Argus*, February 26, 1943.

[33] *St. Louis Argus*, February 26, 1943. A photograph of the card and its principal signatories includes a veritable who's who of MOWM's founders: Thelma Grant, N.A. Sweets, E.J. Bradley, T.D. McNeal, Nita Blackwell, David Grant, Leyton Weston, Harold Ross, and Marie Pace. Full text including a list of all sponsoring organizations is available in Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement: A Study in the Sociology of Conflict* (M.A. Thesis), Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, 1944, p. 69.

[34] David Grant to President Roosevelt (telegram), January 21, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Joseph McLemore to President Roosevelt, January 21, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers, reprinted in *St. Louis American*, January 28, 1943.

[35] *St. Louis American*, January 21, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, September 24, 1943. FEPC consisted of Haas, Sara Southall, Milton Webster, Samuel Zemurray, Boris Shiskin, P.B. Young, and John Brophy.

[36] *St. Louis American*, September 30, 1943; *St. Louis Argus*, October 1, 1943.

[37] *St. Louis American*, September 30, 1943.

[38] Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color*, p. 182 dismisses the importance of FEPC hearings. Citing the *Washington Post*, Arnesen advances the argument that "In a certain sense, these hearings are ritualistic…evidence of discrimination against Negroes is apparent to the naked eye of anyone who has ever traveled on the railroads of the United States."

[39] *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, July 25, 1944; *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, August 1, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, July 15, 1944 reports that meetings were rescheduled "to save travel time and facilities" for FEPC agents who eventually combined travel for hearings in St. Louis with another round of hearings in Los Angeles.

[40] *St. Louis American*, May 18, 1944.

[41] *Chicago Defender*, July 20, 1944.

[42] *St. Louis Argus*, June 9, 1944.

[43] *St. Louis Argus*, June 9, 1944; "Untitled," [n.d., likely 1944], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers called reporting discrimination to the MOWM "the most important thing you can do for your race at this time."

[44] *Chicago Defender*, July 20, 1944; Valeria Sarilla Brooles to T.D. McNeal, March 17, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Brooles wrote, "I don't want a job in a war plant, I desire a job as a receptionist," a position that many women who preferred white-collar office work to factory labor sought. Brooles, a recent graduate of Lincoln High

School, explained, "the reason I didn't come in person" was that she worked until mid-afternoon and could not make an appointment during office hours "But if you want me to come in for an interview I would be glad to come."

[45] *Chicago Defender*, July 20, 1944.

[46] *St. Louis American*, July 27, 1944.

[47] Theodore Brown to Leyton Weston, January 17, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers details cases that were unresolved or investigated and the reasonable explanations for the plaintiffs' failure to secure employment were outlined with the caveat that the investigator was still looking for evidence that White applicants were held to the same standards for employment.

[48] Christine Barry Morgan to March on Washington, June 15, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[49] "Complaint Against 410 Broadway," March 16, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[50] Complaint from a General Cable Employee, June 14, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Another anonymous letter complained that three area businesses had help wanted advertisements in the newspaper but that when the prospective employers were visited by an African American they claimed to have no open positions but assured the applicant that the company hired African Americans. Friend of MOWM to T.D. McNeal, March 16, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[51] For more details of the General Cable strike see Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 121-122.

[52] *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, July 25, 1944.

[53] *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, July 25, 1944; *St. Louis American*, July 27, 1944.

[54] *St. Louis American*, May 29, 1942.

[55] *St. Louis American*, June 14, 1944.

[56] Minutes of meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, March 21, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis Star-Times*, October 10, 1944. The office was part of Region IX covering Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho.

[57] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, October 10, 1944; *St. Louis American*, October 12, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, May 19, 1945.

[58] *Chicago Defender*, September 9, 1944.

[59] *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, July 28, 1944; *St. Louis Star-Times*, July 28, 1944.

[60] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, July 28, 1944.

[61] *St. Louis Star-Times*, July 24, 1944.

[62] *St. Louis Star-Times*, July 27, 1944.

[63] *St. Louis Star Times*, April 26, 1944; *St. Louis American*, April 27, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, April 28, 1944; Pittsburgh *Courier*, May 6, 1944; St. *Louis American*, May 18, 1944; Donald J. Kemper, "Catholic Integration in St. Louis, 1935-1947," *Missouri Historical Review*, Vol. 73 (1978), p. 1-22; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 64, 78-79 points out that St. Louis University the first university in a former slave state to integrate its student body and that all of the city's parochial schools desegregated prior to *Brown*.

[64] R.N. Dutton, "Race Problems in our Community," in "St. Louis – White and Black: Two addresses delivered at the St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions held as Central Baptist Church, April 9-11, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Greene, Kremer, and Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*, p. 155-156; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 109-110 outlines a litany of problems at Lincoln University including insufficient buildings, high teaching loads, difficulty retaining faculty, little research, and curtailed course offerings.

[65] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, April 26, 1944.

[66] St. *Louis Star-Times*, October 4, 1944; Minutes of Meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, May 16, 1944. The survey's wording was more neutral than one might expect, "Do you favor the inclusion of Negroes in the employ of the St. Louis Public Utilities in positions for which they have the necessary qualifications or ability?" For full text of this survey refer to "Survey on Local Racial Attitudes," [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

I found no record detailing the survey's tabulation or demographic data and can therefore not accurately appraise its soundness. However, another survey about a similar subject suggests that information from heavily partisan and racially loaded surveys should be held in suspicion. Volunteer canvassers with the Interracial Employment Survey intentionally influenced responses with the "hope" that they could explode the perceived barrier of public opinion that conventional contemporary wisdom held was against integrating African American workers into public utilities. Canvassers were instructed to be affirmative with their questions, phrasing them to sway answers. For example, they were told to ask, "You would have no objections, would you, to the employment of Negroes in the utilities?" and to "point out tactfully that the Negro is a fellow-citizen, a taxpayer, and a member of

the democracy we hope to preserve in America." Refer to, "Interracial Employment Survey Committee," [n.d., likely 1944 because of grouping in files with other documents from that year], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[67] St*. Louis Star-Times*, October 4, 1944; *St. Louis American*, September 7, 1944 indicates that Heithaus was not the only prominent White figure in St. Louis to detect a shifting consciousness among White Americans in his city. William Senter, an outspoken communist and Vice President of the CIO-affiliated United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers located blame for employment segregation not on racial prejudice among White workers but on "the Jim-Crow policy of St. Louis industry," that served to divide workers and "maintain low wages." For more on Senter refer to Judith Stepan-Norris and Maurice Zeitlin, *Left Out: Reds and America's Industrial Unions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 82; Louis Cantor, "A Prologue to the Protest Movement: The Missouri Sharecropper Roadside Demonstration of 1939," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (March 1969), p. 817.

[68] *St. Louis American*, September 21, 1944; St*. Louis Star-Times*, October 4, 1944. Heithaus spoke with unusual clarity about the "red herring" of imagined miscegenation on the heels of integration. He discouraged interracial marriage only out of prudence and understood that the real issue was that "The Negroes are asking for their rights as American citizens, human beings, and Christians. They are not asking for the privilege of marrying your daughter."

[69] *Midwest Labor World*, February 23, 1944; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 272.

[70] *St. Louis American*, September 28, 1944.

[71] *Chicago Defender*, May 6, 1944.

[72] *St. Louis Argus*, February 18, 1944; *St. Louis American*, February 17, 1944 and *Midwest Labor World*, February 23, 1944 reprints Heithaus' sermon in full text with only slight discrepancies between the accounts.

[73] *Midwest Labor World*, February 23, 1944; *Pittsburgh Courier*, May 6, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, February 18, 1944 and *St. Louis Star*, February 21, 1944 reports that Heithaus' crusade against racism brought him to the YMCA for a discussion of "The Future of Negroes in Higher Education" and CIO event later that month, where he preached inter-racial unity and the dignity of labor.

[74] *Midwest Labor World*, February 23, 1944.

[75] *St. Louis American*, February 17, 1944.

[76] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Minutes of meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, June 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers indicate that St. Louis University's precedent for initiating desegregation was monitored by the Mortar Board Postwar Planning Commission of the University of Missouri. By mid-June, the University was interviewing its exclusively White student body "to determine the students' attitude in regard to the admitting of Negroes to the University."

[77] *St. Louis American*, April 27, 1944.

[78] *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, January 14, 1944 marked the beginning of attacks on Lincoln University's restricted course offerings when Edith Louise Massey applied for applied for graduate study at Missouri University because the traditionally Black Lincoln University did not offer the program. *St. Louis Star Times*, April 26, 1944.

[79] *Chicago Defender*, February 5, 1944.

[80] *Chicago Defender*, December 27, 1941; National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, St. Louis Chapter newsletter, Volume 1, Issue 1, February 18, 1844 indicates that this organization, as well as the local MOWM and NAACP led a campaign against Lincoln University's fabricated academic programs. Under Redmond's leadership, the St. Louis NAACP branch affiliated itself with this organization. For a summary of the *Gaines* decision see Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day*, p. 152-153; interestingly, St Louis NAACP leader Sidney Redmond worked on the *Gaines* case, see Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 78-81.

[81] *St. Louis American*, April 6, 1944; *St. Louis American*, April 27, 1944; *St. Louis American*, May 4, 1944.

[82] *St. Louis Argus*, February 4, 1944.

[83] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, April 30, 1944.

[84] *St. Louis Argus*, February 4, 1944.

[85] *St. Louis American*, March 30, 1944.

[86] This arrangement was criticized by the city's African American press, see *St. Louis American*, February 10, 1944 and *St. Louis Argus*, February 11, 1944. MOWM's position is summarized in "Letter mailed to Churches about Mass Meeting," January 29, 1944. *St. Louis American*, March 30, 1944 describes how the campaign occurred in context of a failed bid earlier that year to amend the Missouri Constitution and eliminate the requirement for separate schools, see *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, January 14, 1944 and St. *Louis Star*, February 24, 1944. An internal memorandum from the Coordinating Council of Negro Organizations dated January 29, 1944

outlines the issue as "white teachers from Missouri University are to be sent to Lincoln University's School of Journalism to teach the single Negro girl, Miss Massey.

[87] *St. Louis American*, February 3, 1944. David Grant's keynote speech addressed the need for local people to make federal law apply in their own cities.

[88] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, April 30, 1944. Recent precedent MOWM's use of Thelma McNeal to highlight shortcomings at Lincoln University's School was established by the NAACP's use of Edith Massey application to Missouri University's School of Journalism, another discipline in which Lincoln offered in its catalogue but not in reality. For details of Massey's application to Missouri University see *St. Louis Argus*, February 18, 1944; *St. Louis American*, January 20, 1944. In 1942, Charles Hamilton Houston argued a similar case before the U.S. District Court against the University of Missouri. The case, *Bluford v. Canada*, found the university's registrar not responsible for $10,000 damages growing out of what Lucille Bluford thought was the wrongful refusal of her application. For details of the case see "Memorandum to the National Legal Committee from the Legal Department," May 7, 1942, NAACP – Legal Defense and Education Fund, FSN Sc 003,430-1, frame 18, Schomburg Center Clipping File.

[89] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, April 30, 1944.

[90] *St. Louis American*, May 4, 1944; *Chicago Defender*, May 13, 1944 features a fair account of the proceedings.

[91] *St. Louis American*, April 13, 1944.

[92] *St. Louis American*, April 13, 1944.

[93] St. Louis' Urban League, headed by John T. Clark, strongly advocated for an FEPC presence in the city as well. Unlike MOWM, which operated through mass protest politics, St. Louis' Urban League fought racial discrimination through cooperation with area businesses and church groups. For an example of the Urban League's inter-racial network including the Metropolitan Church Federation of St. Louis, Scullin Steel Company, and FEPC, see W.A. Cooper to T.D. McNeal, June 13, 1944, T.D. McNeal Papers. For a survey of the National Urban League's early history see Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*.

[94] Progress Report, June 15, 1942, Housing and Living Conditions Committee, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[95] Minutes of meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, June 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Minutes of Race Relations Commission, May 3, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[96] Minutes of Meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, May 16, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Minutes of meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, June 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Desegregating access to playing fields came about after strong-arming a private group, the Municipal Athletic League, which had a contract to manage ten different sports on city property.

[97] Joseph Stanton, *Stan Musial: A Biography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), p. 52.

[98] Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 332.

[99] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[100] *St. Louis American*, September 21, 1944; Minutes of Meeting of St. Louis Race Relations Commission, May 16, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[101] *St. Louis Argus*, June 25, 1943.

[102] Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, p. 3.

[103] David Grant, Testimony to House of Representatives Committee on Labor, June 6, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers. Grant suggests that MOWM's most active members were worn out in 1944 before the sit-ins revitalized Black protest in St. Louis. It is possible that the war's waning months and bleak prospects fro African Americans to hold on to gains after the war discouraged some from devoting more time to activism.

Grant is supported by an announcement that MOWM's weekly meetings at Pine Street YMCA were laying plans for "an educational economic crusade to awaken lethargic grownups and to inspire the youth to join the movement in its fight." Refer to *St. Louis American*, April 20, 1944 and *St. Louis American*, March 30, 1944 for a call to "Come out, young college folks and help us make a real democracy" by attending MOWM's weekly meeting to plan action for integrating busses run by St. Louis Public Service Company."

[104] *St. Louis Argus*, January 12, 1945. The agency's presence in St. Louis was short lived, with its office closing in April 1946 and the FEPC being disbanded later that summer, see *St. Louis Argus*, July 5, 1946; Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, p. 21 recognizes that the sustained fight to FEPC recommendations was because even though the agency's creation was "an important victory for the MOWM and black Americans, the creation of the FEPC was only a beginning."

[105] *St. Louis Argus*, January 26, 1945. Historian Lance Hill perceptively noted, "It is difficult to sustain interest and support for any social movement for long periods,

especially when the movement's goals appear to be accomplished." Hill, *The Deacons For Defense*, p. 241.

[106] *St. Louis American*, October 12, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, October 20, 1944. St. Louis NAACP was also concerned with the status of African Americans in the post-war world, see notes of meeting at Pine Street YMCA in *St. Louis Argus*, September 15, 1944.

[107] *Chicago Defender*, July 7, 1945; *Chicago Defender*, December 1, 1945 reported that the St. Louis USES expected the city's unemployed to swell as high as 64,000. Shortly after, St. Louis MOWM organized a "Save America" rally on December 15, 1945 featuring Randolph, Indiana Congressman Charles LaFollette, and Milton Webster. This last ditch attempt to make the FEPC a permanent fixture in the federal bureaucracy could not counter cutbacks that had rolled back the agency's presence to three offices throughout the nation, for more discussion see *Chicago Defender*, December 15, 1945.

[108] *Chicago Defender*, September 9, 1944, "What Will the Negro Do After the War?" photo essay shows African Americans in all fields of manufacturing but concludes with the disturbing image of several "broke" Black men waiting "for a freight train to take them some place where they can find work."

[109] St. Louis Institute on Race Relations and Non-Violent Solutions, April 9-11, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "Letter and Report on Negro Employees in Public Utilities by the Fellowship of Reconciliation," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Anna Astroth to Leyton Weston, April 20, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis American*, May 4, 1944 reports a survey about White attitudes in St. Louis about African Americans working in public utilities.

Commissioned by March on Washington Movement and facilitated by Fellowship of Reconciliation beginning in 1943 under Nita Blackwell's leadership, the tally showed that 662 responded "yes" to the question "Do you favor the employment of Negroes in the St. Louis Public Utilities in positions for which they have the necessary qualifications and abilities?" Opinions were split, as 488 of 1,405 polled responded "no," 119 were indifferent, 95 refused to answer, and 41 qualified answers with explanations such as "not if they are displacing white workers," and "only if he drives the bus in a heavily populated Negro district."

David Grant & T.D. McNeal to Public Service Company, March 10, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers indicates that St. Louis MOWM's work to integrate Public Service Company's workforce date back to at least to early 1943. Grant and McNeal cited E.O. 8802 as leverage for their request to have a meeting with the company's personnel department "for the purpose of exploring the possibilities of integrating Negro citizens into all branches" of its workforce. Not much came out of the conference except for MOWM to propose its forthcoming survey of White racial attitudes in St. Louis, a project for which it cooperated with FOR and hoped that its data would convince employers like the Public Service Company that White

Americans were, in fact, receptive to working alongside African Americans in previously unprecedented positions. The meeting also revealed employment data indicating that 250 of the company's 4200 employees were Black and that 25 Black women were brought in as bus cleaners in the weeks following MOWM's first written complaint to the company. "Report on Initial Conference with St. Louis Public Service Company," April 13, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[110] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 73. Public Service Company hired African Americans but their participation in the workforce was limited to maintenance men, bus washers, cleaners, and porters. Lunch counter integration in St. Louis would not be accomplished until several years later, when members of the newly formed St. Louis Committee of Racial Equality finished the long campaign set in motion by MOWM. See Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 41-69.

[111] Reed, *Not Alms But Opportunity*, p. 146-147 argues that "In spite of the fact that the FEPC lacked any real enforcement mechanism, most of the companies it investigated…followed through, to varying degrees, with pledges to comply with the executive order." Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color*, p. 202 argues that pressure came from a tremendous outpouring of grassroots activism and union pressure.

[112] *St. Louis Argus*, January 7, 1944; *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 26, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, March 5, 1943 used imagery of an African American male wrapping his arms around a small shoal marked "Presidential Action" while being battered by rough seas. Even without a FEPC, the immediate postwar years were, in the words of one historian, "the most bellicose…for union-management relations." See Janken, *Walter White*, p. 302.

[113] Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. 256-267, 302.

[114] *St. Louis Argus*, March 26, 1943. Census figures indicate that African Americans comprised 2.7% of Los Angeles County's total population. For more on FEPC's investigation of Los Angeles see *St. Louis American*, August 17, 1944; *St. Louis Argus*, August 18, 1944; *California Eagle* is an excellent resource for local commentary and news written from an African American perspective. This region is beyond the scope of this dissertation but a survey of the paper during the war years indicates that a healthy mix of militant radicalism and communism were major factors among the Black left. The increased employment brought the representation of Black defense workers up from 1.1% to 2.6%.

Milwaukee example in James Rorty, "Brother Jim Crow," p. 6. Rorty also mentions the Heil Company, which had 2 Black workers among its 2,140 employees and, in just eight months, had 1,440 African American employees.

[115] James Rorty, "Brother Jim Crow," p. 5.

[116] National Council for a Permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee, "Manual of Strategy: A Handbook of Suggestions for Local Council Operations," October 1945, Reel 17, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Gerald Horne, *Black & Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 71 reports that the committee was "wracked with dissension" internally and attacked by "right-wing obstruction."

[117] Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 63-67; *Chicago Defender*, September 9, 1944; "Webster Challenges Claim FEPC Lacks Power," press release, March 18, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers gives Milton Webster's perspective as an FEPC representative and BSCP member. He believed that since "FEPC derives its power from the President of the United States, Commander in Chief of the armed forces," and the country was still engaged in a war, that "the President possesses the power to force compliance."

[118] *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 26, 1944.

[119] Norgrent and Hill, *Toward Fair Employment*, p. 149; for an analysis of the impact on African American activism on presidential politics see Harvard Sitkoff, "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948: The Coming of Age of Civil Rights in American Politics," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (November 1971), p. 597-616; Alonzo L. Hamby, *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), p. 441; for the argument that United States involvement in the Korean War cut Congressional and Presidential interest in domestic reform see Gill, *Afro-American Opposition to the United States' Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 562.

[120] Marshall, *The Negro and Organized Labor*, p. 274; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 119-120, 129.

[121] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, June 20, 1944; *St. Louis Star Times*, July 24, 1944; *St. Louis Star Times*, July 25, 1944. For a summary of partisan and sectional lines with specific names of those in conflict during the FEPC appropriations battle see *PM*, "Southern Senators Threaten Filibuster to Kill FEPC," June 13, 1944.

[122] *St. Louis Argus*, August 17, 1944; Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, p. 10; Moreno, *From Direct Action to Affirmative Action*, p. 107-134 offers a useful summary of New York's FEPC.

[123] Hedgeman, *The Trumpet Sounds*, p. 87-89 called Chalmers "one of about a dozen whites whom I had come to believe was really Christian." MOWM's inability to galvanize a movement around this project is attributable to BSCP's reluctance to finance the project because, in Milton Webster's words, "we ought to slow down on handing out money in big chunks to that crowd" because if the campaign is

successful "everybody is going to get credit for it but us." Milton Webster to A. Philip Randolph, October 4, 1944, Reel 8, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

The National Council for a Fair Employment Practices Commission is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Further investigation on this subject should consult relevant conference files and correspondence located in Reels 14-18, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Statement of Walter White, Secretary National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Before the Labor Committee of the House of Representatives," June 13, 1944, Reel 25, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13; Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 64-67.

[124] Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 64-65; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 89-132 presents a lucid overview of Randolph's role in this campaign that correctly situates his activity within the context of a life of activism. The irony of "lily-black" MOWM's support for a very racially heterogeneous push for a Permanent FEPC was not lost on African American columnists, see *Chicago Defender*, October 2, 1943.

[125] "Negroes Should Make Nation-Wide Demand for Passage of Permanent FEPC Bill Before Election," September 1, 1944, March on Washington Movement Press Releases, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 967-1, Schomburg Clipping File.

Randolph responded to charges of racial chauvinism and exclusion by arguing that MOWM "created and set up" the National Council for a Permanent FEPC" that was open to and supported by Jews, Catholics, and members from both AFL and CIO unions. A. Philip Randolph to Dorothy Montgomery, June 6, 1940, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[126] Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 16-19; Hedgeman, *The Trumpet Sounds*, p. 87 gives Hedgeman's reflections on working with Randolph. Most of Hedgeman's collaboration with Randolph came through her work as Executive Secretary of National Council for a Permanent FEPC. Space had to be leased from the WDL because interracial office space in Washington, DC, was not available. Rustin's comments on Hedgeman and Randolph seem to combine CFPFEPC and MOWM into one organization, see "Bayard Rustin Interview," May 29, 1974, Folder 4, Box 58, August Meier Papers, NYPL.

[127] Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 17.

[128] *Chicago Defender*, August 31, 1946; *Chicago Defender*, September 7, 1946; also see Sidney Wilkerson to A. Philip Randolph, December 20, 1945, Reel 17, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Anna Arnold Hedgeman to A. Philip Randolph, July 16, 1946, Reel 15, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Wilkerson, Hedgeman's assistant, complained that the National Council for a Permanent FEPC had no money for stamps to address a 7,000 person mailing list, could not meet payroll, and had no finances to meet small operating expenses including taxi fare to Capitol Hill. The situation was so desperate that, in

Hedgeman's words, "I have no alternative but to resign…[because of] your total disregard of our continuous notification of impending financial crisis."

Hedgeman expressed this sentiment again when she privately charged Randolph with administrative irresponsibility because "staff has used every reasonable means of calling your attention to back salaries, expenses, earned vacation, and loans to the National Council due us for one year" that were strategically kept out of public discourse because of her commitment to the cause championed by her estranged employer, see Anna Arnold Hedgeman to A. Philip Randolph, 1947, Reel 15, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[129] Arnold Aronson to A. Philip Randolph, [n.d.], Reel 3, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Minutes of a meeting of the National Board of Directors, National Council for a Permanent FEPC," August 2, 1946, Reel 17, A. Philip Randolph Papers offers an official account of Hedgeman's resignation and gives opinions of her work from Board members.

[130] Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, p. 342.

[131] Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement*, p. 128 documents that 78% of the cases handled by FEPC were from African Americans while 7% were Jewish and 6% were unspecified aliens.

[132] *Chicago Defender*, September 13, 1941; Robert Patterson to Edwin Watson, June 3, 1941, OF 391, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers. Patterson argued that forcing the military to change its deeply rooted segregated ranks was unlikely to be successful on the eve of World War II because the idea that "for practical reasons it would be impossible to put into operation" was entrenched in the minds of military policy makers.

[133] Colonel Eugene R. Householder's quote that the military "is not a sociological laboratory," found in Buchanan, *Black Americans in World War II*, p. 67; MOWM was not the only civil rights organization pressing for this, see Walter White, "It's Our Country, Too: The Negro Demands the Right to be Allowed to Fight for it," *Saturday Evening Post*, December 14, 1940; Gerald Astor, *The Right to Fight: A History of African Americans in the Military* (Novato, CA: Presido, 1998).

[134] "Randolph Says President Roosevelt Should Issue National Proclamation to Abolish Segregation and Discrimination in the Armed Forces," press release, July 14, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "Full Text of Timely Speech Delivered By Hon. W.H. Hastie at Emancipation Celebration," September 22, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; A. Philip Randolph to T.D. McNeal, April 25, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers lists abolishing military segregation alongside "the formation of a powerful non-partisan political bloc" and securing a permanent FEPC as major campaigns for the year.

[135] E. Pauline Myers to T.D. McNeal, April 17, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; "The War's Greatest Scandal: The Story of Jim Crow in Uniform," Reel 22, The Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. This pamphlet brought the wrath of Daniel Tobin's *International Teamster*, which criticized Randolph and MOWM's role as publisher and distributer as Axis propaganda that fanned the flames of racial hatred, see *The Militant*, June 26, 1943.

[136] See folder Winfred Lynn Case, 1943 & undated, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers; "Report of Committee on Resolutions to We Are Americans Too Conference," 1943, Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers; Layle Lane to A. Philip Randolph, September 12, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers; Dwight MacDonald to A. Philip Randolph, April 13, 1943, Reel 20, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

Chicago had the most active cadre of anti-segregation activists focused on this issue. St. Claire Drake, who later published *Black Metropolis*, was an officer in Conscientious Objectors Against Jim Crow, a Chicago-based organization that called on African American males to refuse conscription unless segregation in the military was repealed. For more on this organization see Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War*, p. 25-26; *Chicago Defender*, January 25, 1941 depicts four well-attired males from COAJC taking an oath against fighting in a segregated military.

[137] Norgrent and Hill, *Towards Fair Employment*, p. 181; Buchanan, *Black Americans in World War II*, p. 67.

[138] The use of Nonviolence by The Committee to End Jim Crow in the Armed Forces is beyond the scope of this dissertation but hundreds of pertinent documents about aims, strategy, and public opinion regarding non-violent civil disobedience and military desegregation as it pertained to this upstart organization can be found on Reel 12 and 13, A. Philip Randolph Papers. A particularly insightful document is Bill Worthy to A. Philip Randolph, August 14, 1947, Reel 12, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Worthy raises "the possibility of reviving MOWM" by connecting peacetime conscription with the push for a permanent FEPC. Also of interest is "Testimony of A. Philip Randolph, National Treasurer of the Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training…Prepared for Delivery Before the Senate Armed Services Committee," March 31, 1948, Reel 9, CORE Papers. MOWM's promise to march on the capitol if Southern Senators successfully stopped all appropriations for FEPC also went unfulfilled, see *Chicago Defender*, June 30, 1945.

[139] Bayard Rustin, "Civil Disobedience, Jim Crow, and the Armed Forces," speech on April 11, 1948, reprinted in C. Vann Woodward (editor), *Down the Line: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), p. 8-12; for an excellent single-volume account of events leading to Truman's E.O. 9981 and the process of military desegregation see Sherie Mershon and Steve Schlossman, *Foxholes & Color Lines: Desegregating the U.S. Armed Forces* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); also of value is William C. Berman, *The Politics of*

Civil Rights in the Truman Administration (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1970).

Chapter 8

[1] Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Modern Library, 1994 – originally published 1952), p. xxii.

[2] Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 268; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 74.

[3] "Report on the Special Committee," October 19, 1946, March on Washington Movement, 1941-1945, Sc Micro F-1 FSN Sc 002, 968-4, Schomburg Clipping File. Documentation of MOWM's search an organizational identity is seen in A. Philip Randolph to Dear Fellow Marcher, September 10, 1946 and Benjamin McLaurin to Dear Fellow Marcher, October 9, 1946, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers. Many branches responded with regrets that they could not come to the conference because they were inactive, for examples see C.S. Wells to A. Philip Randolph October 16, 1946 and Jesse Taylor to A. Philip Randolph, October 19, 1946, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[4] Interview with Theodore McNeal by Richard Resh and Franklin Rother, July 22, 1970, Oral History T-024, Western Historical Manuscript Collection; Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison, May 20, 1974, Oral History T-343, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection. Henry Wheeler succeeded Grant as the branch's president, see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 91.

[5] Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 77.

[6] Interview with Theodore D. McNeal by Bill Morrison, May 20, 1974, Oral History T-343, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection. McNeal passed the torch of "non-violent direct action," to Irv and Maggie Dagen, who used this as the foundation of their lunch-counter sit-ins, see Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. 13.

[7] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 9.

[8] Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. 140-151.

[9] *St. Louis Argus*, February 22, 1944; For an outstanding political history of the Democratic Party in the Roosevelt and Truman years see Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South*, p. 28-66; also see Sitkoff, "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948," p. 597-616.

There was wave of racial violence following de-mobilization but it was not on par with precedent set in the previous war. A Klan resurgence coincided with a

pogrom in Monroe, Georgia, and the blinding of Isaac Woodard while he was wearing a military uniform. In St. Louis, racial violence manifested in the killing on 31-year old African American William Howard by White policeman William Niggeman, for details on the killing and St. Louis NAACP's response see *St. Louis Argus*, September 27, 1946; *St. Louis Argus*, October 4, 1946.

[10] *St. Louis Argus*, July 5, 1946.

[11] *St. Louis Argus*, July 5, 1946.

[12] *St. Louis Argus*, May 3, 1946.

[13] 8-Point Program; *Labor Action*, July 1943; "Relationship of NAACP to March-on-Washington Movement," Reel 2, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13. The NAACP accused MOWM of being a "duplication of what the N.A.A.C.P. has been advocating and working for during the last thirty years."

Also of interest is Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 73; *Chicago Defender*, December 12, 1942 covers students at Howard University urging MOWM to consolidate itself within the NAACP, effectively dissolving the organization.

[14] Grant, *The St. Louis Unit of the March on Washington Movement*, p. 102.

[15] For an excellent study exploring this theme through disproportionately high investment in war bonds made by African Americans see Lawrence R. Samuel, "Dreaming in Black and White: African American Patriotism and World War II Bonds," in John E. Bodnar (editor), *Bonds of Affection: Americans Define Their Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 191-210. For nineteenth century studies of African American patriotism during war see David W. Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War: Keeping Faith in Jubilee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), p. 101-121; for a similar study focusing on abolitionists' attitudes towards was see Francesca Morgan, *Women and Patriotism in Jim Crow America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), p. 21-28.

[16] Lawrence Ervin, "Speech Delivered by Lawrence Ervin, Eastern Regional Director of the March on Washington Movement at the We Are Americans, Too Conference, Held at the Metropolitan Community Church, Chicago, Ill., June 30, 1943," Reel 2, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[17] Buchanan, *Black Americans in World War II*, p. 133; Lee Finkle, "The Conservative Aims of Militant Rhetoric: Black Protest During World War II," *Journal of American History* 60 (December 1973), p. 693-705.

[18] Weaver, *Negro Labor*, p. 93-97.

[19] St. Louis Negro Grade Teachers Association to March on Washington Movement, March 26, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[20] Charles Kennedy and Eugene Wood, "Letter Sent to all March Members," April 1, 1943, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

[21] *St. Louis Argus*, November 30, 1945; *St. Louis Argus*, December 7, 1945. Randolph spoke at Kiel Auditorium on December 16, 1945 alongside Congressman LaFollette, James Carey of the CIO, and Milton Webster of the FEPC. Pine Street YMCA and the NAACP sponsored the event but it failed to capture the media's attention.

[22] *St. Louis Argus*, November 24, 1944. Key items on the NAACP list of "Activities for 1943-1944" were: influencing a local Congressman to recommend an African American teenager to attend West Point, secure promotions for Black postal workers, filing 105 complaints with the FEPC, advocating against police brutality, assisting veterans and soldiers, getting jobs for African American on the city's police force, distributing 2,500 copies of the "Races of mankind," and a school improvement drive to make Washington Technical High School on par with its White counterpart Hadley Vocational High School. Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*; Jolly, *It Happened Here Too* are excellent studies of Black protest in St. Louis waged by subsequent generations.

[23] Naison, *Communism in Harlem During the Great Depression*, p. 287-313 suggests that Black radicals briefly looked towards MOWM as a vehicle for meaningful protest.

[24] Sitkoff, "Racial Militancy and Interracial Violence in the Second World War," p. 662-663; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, p. 40-41; Dalfiume, "The Forgotten Years of the Negro Revolution," p. 99-100; Arnesen, *Brotherhoods of Color*, p. 189. NAACP membership spiked dramatically between 1940 and 1946. Branches increased from 355 to 1,073 while membership rose from 50,0556 to almost 450,000.

[25] Powell, *Marching Blacks*, p. 143; Beth Tompkins Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP, 1933-1941," *American Historical Review* 102:2 (April 1997), p. 340-377.

[26] Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph*, p. 26; LeRone Bennett, *Confrontation: Black and White* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1966), p. 278-279; August Meier, "Lecture and Discussion – Sunday Evening: The March on Washington Movement and the Detroit and Harlem Riots," October 13, 1943, Folder 12, Box 38, August Meier Papers, NYPL.

[27] A. Philip Randolph to Herbert Garfinkel, July 19, 1956, Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[28] Kimbrough and Dagen, *Victory Without Violence*, p. ix, 41-54, 78-81 offers an excellent study of how CORE led non-violent direct action campaigns in the post-war years. The authors correctly argue that he struggle for racial equality in St. Louis was "a story of long-delayed, long-opposed change, a story of courage, patience, and persistence" that took multiple generations of struggle." Racially segregated public space was, in fact, legal in St. Louis until 1961.

Also see Greene, Kremer, and Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*, p. 159-173; Kirkendalll, *A History of Missouri*, p. 270-276, 370-371; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, p. 97-126, 186-216.

[29] "Address by Walter White, Executive Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, at closing meeting of Wartime Conference, Sunday, July 16, 1944, Washington Park, Chicago, Illinois," NAACP – Wartime Conference, FSN Sc 003-437-2, Schomburg Center Clipping File.

[30] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, p. 225 recognizes that many efforts to undermine racial inequality failed but reminds "those who explore the politics of the oppressed" to consider "how much worse life might have been without…resistance."

[31] "The McNeal Story," April 1, 1966, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Jolly, *It Happened Here Too*, p. 96.

[32] Klinker and Smith, *The Unsteady March*, p. 1-9 argue that this struggle is only successful when African Americans press contentious issues during historical periods marked by military operations justified by progressive ideology and ostensibly racially egalitarian rhetoric.

[33] *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, June 12, 1944.

[34] Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, p. 137.

[35] Garfinkle, *When Negroes March*, p. 183.

[36] David Grant interview by Barbara Woods, June 2, 1979, Folder 9, SL 552, p. 52. Western Historical Manuscript Collection.

[37] *St. Louis Dispatch*, January 14, 1944.

[38] Layle Lane to A. Philip Randolph, April 27, 1944, Reel 21, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

[39] Kersten, *Race, Jobs, and the War*, p. 117 claims 4,000 members but does not cite documentary evidence. The same figure exists in an FBI report for 1943, see Hill, *RACON*, p. 237-238, which has identical numbers for NAACP and MOWM

membership at 4,000. Archival research for this dissertation never uncovered a list of dues-paying St. Louis MOWM members.

[40] "March on Washington Opens 1944 Financial Drive," press release, May 12, 1944, Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; *St. Louis* Argus, May 26, 1944; St*. Louis American*, May 18, 1944 reprinted this release verbatim.

There were some exceptions to this pattern, notably a worker who, without being solicited, donated $5 to St. Louis MOWM because David Grant helped her get a job at U.S. Cartridge's Small Arms Plant. This "very grateful" worker sent a "token" of her first week's wages to thank the organization for its work. "Name illegible to David Grant, [n.d.], Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers.

Eugenie Settles to A. Philip Randolph, February 15, 1943, Reel 7, A. Philip Randolph Papers indicates that Harlem MOWM shared difficulty in fundraising, finding "itself in dire straights" after it only collected $38 from a crowd of 400-500.

[41] Roy Wilkins to Walter White, June 24, 1942, Reel 23, Papers of the NAACP, Part 13.

[42] Norgrent and Hill, *Toward Fair Employment*, p. 69 presents this case through the lens of economic history, arguing that the "principle factoring for the gains" in Black employment was World War II.

[43] *St. Louis American*, June 1, 1944.

[44] Charles Kennedy and Eugene Wood, "Letter Sent to all March Members, April 1, 1943," Reel 1, T.D. McNeal Papers; Hedgeman, *The Gift of Chaos*, p. 64 testifies that MOWM collapsed "largely because there had not been enough money to carry on the quality of educational programs required to bring change in national policies."

[45] "Summary of Questionnaire Responses – Economic Stability," June 1939, NAACP Branches, FSN Sc 003,423-1, Schomburg Center Clipping File.

[46] Pauli Murray to A. Philip Randolph, [n.d.], Reel 22, A. Philip Randolph Papers.

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New York Daily News
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