

# LEGACY

A Journal of Student Scholarship

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Volume 3

2003

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A Publication of the Sigma Kappa Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta  
& the Southern Illinois University Carbondale History Department

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## A Journal of Student Scholarship

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Theta & the History Department  
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# Bradley D. Austin

## Birth of a State

*Montani Semper Liberi*. Mountaineers are always free – so says the official motto of West Virginia. In 1848, the United States Supreme Court indirectly cleared the way for that freedom with the ruling in *Luther v. Borden*. The Court interpreted the Constitution to guarantee every state a republican form of government, protection against invasion, and protection against domestic violence. Congress and the President determine these conditions by seating the state’s delegation and by giving government aid.<sup>1</sup> Although the case did not revolve around western Virginia, some people of that sector used the ruling as a rallying point at the outbreak of the Civil War. West Virginia separated from Virginia on 20 June 1863.

From the beginning of its settlement, western Virginia differed from the rest of the state. Around 1720, Welsh, German, and Scotch-Irish entered the region southward from the Appalachian Valley of Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup> In 1749, Jacob Marlin and Stephen Sewell established the first settlement west of the Alleghenies near Marlinton.<sup>3</sup>

From 1754 to 1763, the French and Indian War temporarily halted settlement of the region. After the British victory, the influx of settlers began again.<sup>4</sup> In 1774, the first permanent settlement in the Kanawha Valley sparked Lord Dunmore’s War with the Indians, as white settlers invaded native grounds south of the Ohio River. The war ended that same year; three years of relative peace followed. Fighting resumed in 1777 and lasted throughout the American Revolution.<sup>5</sup> In 1795, the Americans, led by General “Mad Anthony” Wayne, finally defeated the Indians at Fallen Timbers in Ohio.<sup>6</sup>

Western Virginia’s first county, Hampshire, formed in 1754 along the Upper Potomac. In 1776, county governments started to form west of the Alleghenies beginning with Ohio and Monongalia counties along the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers, respectively. Population in what would become West Virginia grew rapidly. By 1790, 55,000 people lived in the region; ten years later, the population had risen to 78,000, and included 35,000 people west of the Alleghenies. In 1800, western Virginia contained thirteen counties and at least nineteen incorporated towns. Virginia now consisted of four distinct sections: the Tidewater and Piedmont in the east, and the (Kanawha) Valley and Trans-Allegheny in the west. At the Constitutional Convention in 1830,

representatives to the legislature were allocated on the basis of these four large regions.

The Constitutional Convention of 1830 was established as a result of the state's growing sectionalism. People of the west wanted more democratic local government, white male suffrage, greater representation in the legislature, free public education, and more money for roads and other infrastructure. During this convention, the west received few concessions. The House of Delegates, composed of one hundred thirty-four men, would now have fifty-six from the western sections, and seventy-eight from the east. Equally unrepresentative to the west, the Senate contained thirty-two seats, of which the Valley and Trans-Allegheny received thirteen. As to the question of suffrage, the west made progress. Suffrage expanded to include all white men holding interest in real estate, and all heads of families who paid taxes.<sup>7</sup>

Bitterness over the lack of gains in 1830 led western Virginians to call another Constitutional Convention in 1851. The growing population of the western sections led to greater confidence that they would achieve their goals. The new House of Delegates contained one hundred fifty seats; the Senate contained fifty seats. Of these seats, the western sections garnered forty-seven in the House and twelve in the Senate. The new constitution did not provide for the free (white) population to be the determining factor in future allocations. The delegates left that to be determined, coincidentally, in 1865. While the west may not have made significant gains in the legislative branch, the new constitution did provide real reform to the other branches. After adoption, the governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and judges became popularly elected officials. The first popularly elected governor of Virginia—Joseph Johnson, the only governor that came from the west—lived in Bridgeport. The new constitution extended suffrage to all white males over the age of twenty-one. As concessions to the east, slaves continued to be taxed very lightly and the legislature was prohibited from emancipating the slaves.<sup>8</sup>

By 1860, western Virginia contained one fourth of the state's population but only one twenty-sixth of the state's slaves. The settlers of western Virginia came originally from different ethnic backgrounds; geographically, the land was unsuitable for large plantations. Subsistence agriculture took the place of cash crops such as cotton and tobacco. Less labor-intensive farming reduced the need for slavery, which, therefore, stayed mainly in the Potomac, Kanawha Valley, and

southeast regions.<sup>9</sup> This meant that, except for the tax limits, the concessions to the east were somewhat hollow.

Secession from the east did not begin as a strictly partisan political issue. In the 1850s the Democratic Party dominated Virginia. Henry A. Wise, elected governor in 1855, supported western reform at the 1850 convention. A member of the National wing of the party, Wise drew ire for not supporting President Buchanan on the Kansas issue. By the governor's race of 1859, the split in the Democratic Party became more apparent. The Southern Rights wing nominated "Honest John" Letcher. The National Wing, which had great support in the western counties, nominated Judge John W. Brockenbrough. Letcher won the party nomination and the right to face the candidates of the newly formed Opposition Party: William L. Goggin for governor and Waitman T. Willey for lieutenant governor. Letcher went on to win the governorship, by a slim margin.<sup>10</sup>

The presidential election of 1860 further divided Virginia. While both Democratic factions supported John C. Breckinridge, they hoped to unite the entire state behind either Breckinridge or Stephen A. Douglas. This did not happen. Wise and his supporters continued to back Breckinridge and urged secession from the Union. Governor Letcher backed Douglas.<sup>11</sup>

The young Republican Party had support mainly in the northwest part of Virginia, particularly in the Wheeling panhandle. While John C. Fremont had garnered a mere 391 votes in 1856, over the next four years the state Republican Party grew rapidly. State party officials held genuine hope for hosting the national convention in Wheeling. The Republican antislavery platform made the party appealing to the people of the west. Although Wheeling did not host the national convention, Virginia sent twenty-three delegates, fourteen of whom cast votes for Abraham Lincoln. Virginia, however, supported Cassius M. Clay for Vice President rather than Hannibal Hamlin.<sup>12</sup>

The Opposition Party, comprised mainly of former Whigs and Know-Nothings including Waitman T. Willey and Francis H. Pierpont, threw its support to the Constitutional Union Party's candidate, John Bell. The results of the general election gave Breckinridge and Bell forty-four percent each, Douglas ten percent, and Lincoln less than one percent. Governor Letcher allocated electors to the Electoral College, giving six to Breckinridge and nine to Bell. In protest of alleged election

fraud, the Breckinridge electors did not attend the meeting of the College. Governor Letcher replaced them with Bell supporters.<sup>13</sup>

Events following Lincoln's election to the Presidency did little to mend the widening rift in Virginia. Talk of the southern states seceding from the Union begot talk of the western counties seceding from the state. In February 1861, Virginia held a Secession Convention. Delegates from the northwest strongly opposed secession from the Union. Elections gave the state's unionists a majority. To the convention, the Tidewater and Piedmont sent sixty-nine delegates, thirty-nine for the Valley and forty-four for the Trans-Allegheny. As to the delegates' views: about thirty favored secession; approximately fifty supported the Union; the remaining seventy or so consisted of moderates.<sup>14</sup> The secessionists comprised mainly Breckinridge Democrats and included Henry Wise.<sup>15</sup> The Unionist camp had the backing of John S. Carlile and Waitman T. Willey. The Unionists consisted of westerners, National Oppositionists, and Republicans. The moderates came, for the most part, from Douglas Democrats and the States' Rights wing of the Opposition Party.<sup>16</sup>

At the convention, general sentiment from the Tidewater and Piedmont favored secession, but not immediately. The Valley leaned against secession. The Trans-Allegheny said absolutely not! Arthur I. Boreman – the future state's first governor – and Gen. John J. Jackson – patriarch of a prominent political and business family who had served previously with Andrew Jackson – saw that the people of the west could break apart the state using the claims of the secessionists.<sup>17</sup> On 16 March resolutions introduced against secession stated the west would leave the state before it would leave the Union. Two days later, Willey proposed tax reforms and the white-population basis for representation. The east would agree to the tax reform in exchange for western advocacy of splintering the Union.<sup>18</sup> Carlile and Willey argued that secession was unconstitutional and against the will of the people. Carlile described it as “an insult to all reasonable living humanity, and a crime against God.”<sup>19</sup>

While the convention sat, events farther south began to accelerate. News of the firing on Fort Sumter hastened the delegates' actions. On 17 April, by a vote of eighty-eight to fifty-five, Virginia passed an ordinance of secession. Delegates from the Trans-Allegheny and Valley voted twenty for and forty-two against.<sup>20</sup> Away from the convention at a meeting in Harrison county, more than one thousand

people repudiated the State and denounced passage of the secession ordinance before voter approval: "The joint forces will drive every secessionist beyond the Allegheny Mountains, and a new Virginia bright and fresh as the evening star, will rise among the mountains and vales of the West, to shine with lustre and glory for generations to come in the Constellation of the Union."<sup>21</sup> At a meeting in Clarksburg, twelve hundred men voted unanimously in favor of Carlile's resolutions denouncing secession and instructing each county to select delegates for a convention to start 13 May in Wheeling.<sup>22</sup> That Convention would determine the fate of the western section. As secessionist hostility would likely interfere, the people could appoint delegates any way necessary. On 25 April the state convention ratified the Confederate Constitution; on 27 April Governor Letcher formally offered Richmond as the Confederate Capitol.<sup>23</sup> Before adjourning, the convention set 23 May as election day for voters to approve a referendum on secession.<sup>24</sup> After their defeat and the secession of Virginia, Unionists met twice in Wheeling.

The First Wheeling Convention convened on 13 May 1861. Delegates chosen at local mass meetings represented twenty-six counties, although one third of those in attendance hailed from the Wheeling area.<sup>25</sup> Convention members decided to seat all delegates, but to weigh each county's vote in accordance with the votes from the 1860 presidential election. After electing John Moss as president, the delegates set about on the task of what to do next. Immediately, they decided to hold a second convention should the secession ordinance, which they officially denounced, pass.<sup>26</sup> During First Wheeling, John Carlile proposed the creation of a new state to encompass the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional districts.<sup>27</sup> With a population of 207,665 whites and 8,896 slaves according to the 1850 census, this new western state would span from the Clarksburg area to the Wheeling panhandle.<sup>28</sup> Opposition to this resolution came at once from the camp led by Willey, Pierpont, and General Jackson. These men felt the new state movement should remain on the back burner, for the moment. Presently, the convention needed to work toward building the support of the people and defeating the secession referendum.<sup>29</sup> Willey criticized the proposal saying, "such a move would defeat their objective and end in disastrous consequences."<sup>30</sup> The vote on 23 May passed 125,950 to 20,373 as proclaimed by Governor Letcher. While not official, the west voted

down the referendum forty thousand against to four thousand for, leading westerners to dispute the results Letcher certified.<sup>31</sup>

The Second Wheeling Convention opened on 11 June 1861, presided over by Arthur I. Boreman. Delegates represented thirty-four counties—thirty-two from West Virginia and two from the Old Dominion. Representatives from the remaining eighteen counties (located mainly along the border), including Willey and General Jackson, did not attend due to concerns about secessionist attitudes at home. The convention delegates represented their counties either by virtue of election to the general assembly or as selected for the convention by other means, generally petition or caucus, when unable to hold free elections. Partisans debated important issues such as the new state's name, the exact boundary of the state, legislative apportionment, slavery, internal improvements, and the proposed new state's share of Virginia's debt.<sup>32</sup>

Almost immediately the new state advocates sprang into action, offering a new state resolution on 12 June, although they withdrew it later the same day.<sup>33</sup> On 17 June delegates adopted the Declaration of the People of Virginia. The tenets put forth included: the Virginia Bill of Rights "framed in 1776, reaffirmed in 1830, and again in 1851, expressly reserves this right to a majority of her people" in reference to abolishing a government not responsive to the people; the secession convention violated the state Constitution, therefore making it unenforceable; and, it demanded of state officials loyalty to the state and to the Union.<sup>34</sup> On 19 June, in response to the demands of this declaration, the convention passed an ordinance to vacate disloyal state offices and reorganize. The convention would select a new governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and a five member advisory council to serve for six months or until the state could hold free elections.<sup>35</sup> Legislators in the restored government, as with all other elected officials, were required to take a loyalty oath to the United States Constitution, and would convene 1 July in Wheeling.<sup>36</sup> Finally, before adjourning, the convention selected Francis H. Pierpont as Virginia's restored governor; President Lincoln immediately recognized and supported him as such, as he had done in Tennessee and Missouri.<sup>37</sup>

The month of July 1861 witnessed dramatic changes for Virginia's western counties. On the Fourth of July, the U.S. House seated the state's new congressmen. On 9 July the Restored Assembly appointed officials to the remaining state offices and elected Carlile and

Willey as the state's new senators. On 11 July the Senate vacated Virginia's seats when nobody showed up to claim them. This cleared the way for the Senate to accept the appointments and seat Carlile and Willey on a thirty-five to five vote. Finally on 22 July, the Restored Assembly rejected, for the moment, a proposed new state bill.<sup>38</sup>

On 6 August 1861 the adjourned session of the June Convention reconvened. Amid fear that a new state would be tolerant of slavery, the convention created a select committee to deal with questions concerning the proposed new state. To this select committee, each county would send one representative. The next day, by a vote of thirty-nine to twenty-five, the committee rejected a resolution to postpone the creation of a new state. On 8 August Carlile proposed two resolutions: the first called for a new state made up of thirty-eight western counties and any others that voted to join; the second authorized preparation of a Constitution for the voters to accept or reject on 4 October. Despite the growing momentum toward statehood, the committee rejected the resolutions thirty-seven to thirty-five. The General Assembly, on 10 August, received an ordinance passed by the convention to hold a referendum on dividing the state—from southwestern Virginia through the Kanawha Valley, east to Fairfax and Prince William counties, to the intersection of the Potomac River. This proposed state would use the June Convention modification of the Virginia Constitution. After much debate and a tabled motion to create the new state with West Virginia's current boundaries, less five mountain counties, the Restored Assembly and Second Wheeling Convention agreed to a compromise proposal of thirty-nine core counties with an additional eleven border counties to vote for inclusion. The convention approved this compromise on 20 August;<sup>39</sup> the legislature followed suit passing the proposal to create the state of "Kanawha" on 26 August.<sup>40</sup>

During an election on the referendum held 24 October 1861, voters in Virginia's western counties approved separation from Virginia by a vote of 18,408 for to 781 against.<sup>41</sup> Due to Confederate control in the region, the referendum also provided for the inclusion of seven border counties if they approved the issue during elections held at a later date. This established a mandate for westerners to complete a Constitution for the state on 26 November.<sup>42</sup> Of interest, the draft Constitution changed the name of the state from Kanawha to West Virginia. For some time a contentious issue, this settled the name debate once and for all. The draft Constitution now completed, the time for the people to act had come.

On 3 April 1862, western Virginians headed for the ballot box, easily ratifying the Constitution of West Virginia 18,862 for to 514 against. Voters in six of the border counties also approved ratification leaving only three for future consideration.<sup>43</sup>

On 6 May 1862, Governor Pierpont gathered the General Assembly of Restored Virginia in Wheeling (not Richmond) to approve a bill granting West Virginia statehood. The legislature passed the measure on 13 May. The act named forty-eight counties to West Virginia and made provision for three to join later if voters adopted the West Virginia Constitution.<sup>44</sup> Part of the odd shape of the state lay in the handy work of Peter G. Van Winkle, who worked hard to ensure the eastern panhandle made it into the final version of the state to keep the B&O railroad entirely within West Virginia's boundaries. This accounted for two of the three counties that would vote later.<sup>45</sup> West Virginia had now passed all but one of the constitutional hurdles toward statehood. Under the *Luther v. Borden* interpretation of Article IV section iv, the federal government recognized the Restored Government's legitimacy. This moved West Virginia statehood to the provisions of Article IV section iii:

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; ... without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.<sup>46</sup>

Congressional approval awaited as the final hurdle.

On 29 May 1862, Senator Willey introduced a West Virginia statehood bill in the United States Senate. Within days, debate broke out over the issue of slavery in the state. In an attempt to gain passage, Willey offered an amendment whereby voters of the state would amend their newly approved Constitution to provide for freedom to children born of slaves after 4 July 1863.<sup>47</sup> While easing some tension in the Senate, the Willey Amendment created a firestorm at home. An editorial in the *Clarksburg National Telegraph* blared,

What right has Congress to impose such terms ... None-  
And we trust the people of West Virginia will not stoop

to *buy* a New State. We have made our request, let Congress either refuse it or grant it.<sup>48</sup>

Peter G. Van Winkle wrote to Willey:

But I do not like to have that ... forced down my throat by outsiders. I opposed emancipation in the Convention ... did not wish to have it supposed that slavery caused ... our desire for separation. Whenever the new State is established I shall have no hesitation in advocating gradual emancipation.<sup>49</sup>

Senator Carlile viewed the Willey Amendment as “congressional dictation” believing conservatives wanted a state on their own terms. In a speech before the Senate, he stated:

The people of West Virginia not only desire admission into the Union, but they wish to preserve their Liberties under the Constitution of the United States. They shall never consent that this Government shall prescribe for them a form of Government. ... [There is a] sincere belief that the disposition to interfere with the rights of states exhibited by this Congress has prolonged the War; that if persisted in, the war becomes a war of infinite duration ... [and that] the constitutional Union our fathers formed will be lost to us and our posterity forever.<sup>50</sup>

On 14 July the Senate passed the statehood bill with the Willey Amendment twenty-three to seventeen without Carlile’s support.

The House viewed the statehood issue in a far different light. Although introduced in early June, debate did not begin until December. Whigs and Democrats felt uncomfortable creating a new state. Fear arose that Virginia would get four senators. To the Electoral College, Virginia would send fifteen electors while West Virginia would send six to eight. Admitting a state sliced from one in rebellion would establish a dangerous precedent; Virginia should be readmitted whole.<sup>51</sup> The Honorable Martin F. Conway, of Kansas, raised the issues of the Electoral College and precedent in a speech before the House.

Regardless, the House passed the bill on 10 December by a vote of ninety-six to fifty-five.<sup>52</sup> An editorial in the *New York Times* argued the Restored Government did not represent all the people (less than one-fifth), and, therefore, had no authority to allow separation; it also raised the question of West Virginia's share of Virginia's debt.<sup>53</sup>

Congress reported the bill to President Lincoln on 23 December. Lincoln turned to an evenly divided cabinet for guidance. Postmaster General Montgomery Blair felt the Commonwealth had not consented, as the Restored Government did not represent enough voters. Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells concurred that the new provisional regime neither controlled the state nor spoke for her people.<sup>54</sup> Attorney General Edward Bates called it an "original, independent act of Revolution." He questioned the legality of the Restored Government, the Constitutionality (state and federal), and the effect on future Reconstruction plans.<sup>55</sup>

On the pro side, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton believed that the state met the Constitutional requirements. He also found statehood to be in the best interest of the Union. Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase counseled that, while the legislature may not represent the east, it did represent all not in the act of rebellion. Secretary of State William Seward agreed that loyal citizens chose the new government. The old government gave up its rights when it seceded. He argued that the duty of the government is to protect loyalty, wherever it may be found.<sup>56</sup> Finally, the fate of West Virginia rested in President Lincoln's hands. After much thought he concluded:

The division of a State is dreaded as a precedent. But a measure made expedient by a war, is not precedent for times of Peace. It is said that the admission of West Virginia, is secession, and tolerated only because it is our secession. Well, if we call it by that name, there is still difference enough between Secession against the Constitution, and Secession in favor of the Constitution. I Believe the admission of West Virginia into the Union is expedient.<sup>57</sup>

With that, on the last day before a pocket veto, he signed the bill.

The Restored Assembly of Virginia passed acts on 31 January 1863 giving Berkeley County and 4 February 1863 giving Jefferson

County permission to join West Virginia.<sup>58</sup> On 26 March 1863, by a vote of 26,632 to 534, West Virginians approved the Willey Amendment to change the state's Constitution.<sup>59</sup> Voting on 28 May 1863, the people of (Restored) Virginia approved West Virginia's annexation of Berkeley and Jefferson counties. On 20 June 1863, the restored government of Virginia formally handed over the reins as Arthur I. Boreman took the oath of office as governor of the Union's thirty-fifth state. With West Virginia accepting annexation of Berkeley (August 5, 1863) and Jefferson (November 2, 1863) counties, followed by Congressional approval on March 12, 1866, West Virginia statehood, with its current boundaries, became finalized.<sup>60</sup>

The means of the creation of West Virginia had a striking similarity to President Lincoln's plan for the future restoration of the seceded states. Key to the President's plan were the provisions that a state needed to ratify Constitutional Amendments abolishing slavery and that ten percent of the population had to pledge loyalty to the Union. West Virginia accomplished both of these. Further legitimizing not only West Virginia's existence, but Reconstruction as well, in 1870 the Supreme Court ruled in favor of West Virginia. Virginia, disapproving of the so-called Restored government that ruled part of the commonwealth during the Rebellion, had challenged the Mountain State's separation from the Old Dominion as unconstitutional without Virginia's approval. Upholding the ten percent idea, the Court ruled that the restored government of Virginia in 1862 legitimately governed the state and could therefore consent to West Virginia's creation.<sup>61</sup>

## **Notes**

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2 *Ibid.*, 14.

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5 *Ibid.*, 85-94.

6 *Ibid.*, 129-30.

7 Moore, 13-17.

8 Rice, 97-101.

- 9 Moore, 2-11.
- 10 Ibid., 24-6.
- 11 Ibid., 29-31.
- 12 Ibid., 28-31.
- 13 Ibid., 29-32.
- 14 Ibid., 37-9.
- 15 "The Position of Virginia," *New York Times*, 19 April 1861, 5:1.
- 16 Moore, 40.
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- 23 Moore, 44-8.
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- 26 Moore, 59-60.
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- 29 Moore, 60.
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- 31 "Important from Virginia," *New York Times*, 20 April 1861, 4:6; Riccards, 553.
- 32 Moore, 79-80.
- 33 "Affairs in Western Virginia," *New York Times*, 13 June 1861, 8:1.
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- 36 Moore, 80-1.
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- 38 Moore, 83-8.
- 39 Ibid., 129-34.
- 40 Boyd B. Stutler, "Mr. Lincoln and the Formation of West Virginia," *Lincoln Herald*, 60 (1958), 6.
- 41 Woodward, 18-19.
- 42 Stutler, 7.

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- 43 Woodward, 19. Although *House Report 6* of the 1st session of the 39th Congress lists the vote as having taken place on 3 May, all other sources state April.
- 44 Rice, 146.
- 45 Riccards, 553-5.
- 46 U.S. Congress, *Constitution of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1787), Art. 4 sec. 3.
- 47 Moore, 195-7.
- 48 Editorial, "We Are Opposed To Congressional Dictation," *Clarksburg National Telegraph*, 13 June 1862, in Richard O. Curry, ed., "Ideology and Perception: Democratic and Republican Attitudes on Civil War Politics and the Statehood Movement in West Virginia," *West Virginia History* 44 (no. 2 1983): 139.
- 49 "Peter G. Van Winkle to Waitman T. Willey, 7 June, 1862," in Curry, 139.
- 50 Curry, 135-9.
- 51 Riccards, 555-6.
- 52 "Making New States," *New York Times*, 16 December 1862, 5:2.
- 53 Editorial, "Existence of a State- How it is known," *New York Times*, 18 December 1862, 4:3.
- 54 Riccards, 556-7.
- 55 "The Case of West Virginia," *New York Times*, 27 December 1862, 2:3.
- 56 Riccards, 557.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 558.
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- 60 *House Journal*, 39 Congress 1 session (1866), 1243 12 March.
- 61 Riccards, 560.



# **Michael Tow**

## **Samuel H. Dalton: Mississippi Slave, Union Sailor, Murphysboro Citizen**

When one thinks of African Americans during the Civil War, one tends to think of slaves awaiting their liberation. However, African Americans had a much larger role throughout the war, not just through their liberation, which came to be one of the war's aims for the Union. From their status of chattel property at the beginning of the war, African Americans became important tools for both the Union and the Confederacy. Both sides sought to reap the benefits of their labor either on the battlefield or in the cotton field. Today, however, the contributions of African Americans, both during and immediately after the war, are all but forgotten. Samuel Dalton is one such forgotten African American who contributed to the Union war effort, and afterward, proved to be an honorable citizen in one southern Illinois community.

Samuel H. Dalton's life started many miles from Murphysboro, Illinois, and under equally distant circumstances. Samuel Dalton was born the son of a slave mother in 1839 in either Virginia or Mississippi.<sup>1</sup> Being born to a slave mother under the institution of slavery unfortunately made one a slave as well.<sup>2</sup> As a slave, Dalton worked as a field hand, first in Virginia, and later in Bolivar County, Mississippi.<sup>3</sup> The term field hand referred to a slave, usually a male, who performed any of a group of tasks that were not necessarily agricultural. These tasks changed with the seasons. Records from the Wheeless Plantation, near Yazoo City, Mississippi, reflect the tasks common to slaves designated as field hands.<sup>4</sup> In the fall, these tasks included picking and bailing cotton, repairing roads, hauling bricks, hunting, harvesting corn, and clearing pasture. In the late fall and winter, a field hand could be found "knocking down the old [cotton] stalks, repairing fences, clearing new ground, ... burning brush," or hauling the bales of cotton to market.<sup>5</sup> When spring came, field hands were expected to plow, plant, and hoe the cotton.

Depending on Dalton's age upon his arrival in Mississippi, he would have performed any of the above-mentioned tasks or the tasks reserved for children. Greenwood Leflore, one Mississippi slave owner, classified his slaves under the age of thirteen as children.<sup>6</sup> All of

Leflore's slaves between the ages of thirteen and forty were considered adults and expected to perform the same jobs. The duties of slave children obviously differed among plantations, but most children began picking cotton around the age of five or six. The next duty of many young slaves was "water-toter for the hoe and plow gangs," and from there, "they graduated to scattering cotton-seed, knocking down old cotton stalks, ...and so on, to full field work."<sup>7</sup>

Presently, the names of Dalton's owner and the plantation he was enslaved on are not known. Also not known are the jobs performed by Dalton, who was described as five-feet, six-inches tall, with dark complexion and hair the color of wool.<sup>8</sup> All that is known about Samuel Dalton's life in antebellum Mississippi is that, in 1860, he was one of 9,078 slaves in Bolivar County.<sup>9</sup> These slaves would all be free within the next five years.

On 12 April 1861, the Civil War began when Fort Sumter was attacked by General P.G.T. Beauregard and several Confederate batteries.<sup>10</sup> Although it has never been agreed that slavery caused the Civil War, it is clear that both sides fought because of it. The Confederacy fought to preserve slavery, and the Union, though initially fighting to keep the nation united, came to fight for the termination of slavery. The transformation of the North's fight for the Union to a fight to end slavery was hurried by the military service of blacks.<sup>11</sup>

Before the Civil War, blacks were by no means unknown to the American military. There is much evidence of American military efforts having benefited from black non-combatants ever since the American Revolution.<sup>12</sup> What is significant about the Civil War is that, for the first time, blacks played a significant role in battle. Before this time, blacks had participated in all facets of the American Army short of actual combat. In 1861, the Washington, D.C. correspondent of the *Anglo-African* reported the number of blacks that were employed by the Union Army in Washington, D.C., the center of the Union war effort. He reported:

Five hundred men find employment each day in the Quartermaster's department. ... Numbers of our young men have taken officers' messes. Some have staff officers of the various commands. Others attend exclusively to the horses of the army officers. Large numbers find employment in our hotels, boarding-

houses, and restaurants. Barbers and hackmen are doing a thriving business, and ... work [is given] to any number [of] drivers, porters, assistant packers, and salesmen.<sup>13</sup>

The reporter continued by telling of the thousands of black men employed as woodcutters around various forts in Virginia. Likewise, in March 1862, Vincent Coyler, Superintendent of the Poor for the Department of North Carolina, described the architectural abilities of several black men under his command:

In the four months that I had charge of them, the men built three first-class earth-work forts. ... A number of the men were good carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, &c., and did effective work in their trades at bridge-building, ship-joining, &c. A number of the wooden cots in the hospital, and considerable of the blacksmith and wheelwright work was done by them.<sup>14</sup>

Coyler even had as many as fifty free blacks employed as spies, scouts, and guides.

Despite all of these duties entrusted to blacks by the Union Army, blacks could still not serve as soldiers as late as March 1862. This had been the case since 18 February 1820, when the Army issued a General Order forbidding the recruitment of blacks.<sup>15</sup> However, as the war waged on, after March 1862, Union officials realized the importance of slaves to the Confederate war effort. Slaves were being used in the Southern cotton fields, armories, shipyards, and ironworks while the white men were off fighting. In fact, the ability of the Confederates to wage war was based on slave labor.<sup>16</sup> This realization, when paired with two other factors, led the Union to put forth the Second Confiscation Act and the Militia Act, in July 1862. These acts "formally adopted emancipation and the military employment of fugitive slaves as weapons of war," as well as abandoning the General Order forbidding black troops.<sup>17</sup>

The first factor that hurried the Union's reversal of their policy toward black troops was a series of military upsets pulled off by the Confederacy during the fall of 1862.<sup>18</sup> These Confederate upsets began on 30 August at the Battle of Second Manassas where Union forces

outnumbered Confederates by eight thousand troops.<sup>19</sup> Despite their disadvantage in numbers, the Confederacy, under General Robert E. Lee, defeated the Union forces led by Major General John Pope, crossed the Potomac River, and in early September, launched the war's first offensive on Union ground.<sup>20</sup>

The second and more important factor was the success of black trial regiments at Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend, both in Louisiana, and Fort Wagner, South Carolina, in the summer of 1863.<sup>21</sup> The Union victory at Port Hudson "completed the Union conquest of the Mississippi."<sup>22</sup> This victory was obtained on 8 July 1863, with the guidance of Major General Nathaniel P. Banks. At Fort Wagner, the all-black Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment, which was the subject of the film *Glory*, was chosen to lead the attack against the Confederate batteries guarding the entrance to Charleston Harbor.<sup>23</sup> These three victories dispelled the common belief that black men were useless in battle.<sup>24</sup>

After proving their worth, blacks were allowed to serve in the Union Army. They readily accepted their duties and coveted the chance to confront their old masters and liberate their fellow bondsmen. However, black soldiers were not able to perform their duties as equals to white soldiers. Instead, they faced discrimination in the military in much the same way they did under slavery or in civilian life. Black soldiers were "organized into separate black regiments, paid at a lower rate than white soldiers, denied the opportunity to become commissioned officers, [and] often ill-used by commanders whose mode of discipline resembled that of slave masters."<sup>25</sup> Members of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts not only campaigned against the Confederate Army at Fort Wagner; they also campaigned against the federal government for equal pay, as promised to them by Massachusetts governor John A. Andrew.<sup>26</sup> This struggle for equal pay provoked James Henry Gooding, a member of the Fifty-fourth, to write President Lincoln, asking him, "Are we Soldiers, or are we Labourers?"<sup>27</sup> Gooding also reminded the president that he was born free and not a slave.<sup>28</sup>

In June 1864 a compromise was forged in the U.S. Congress on the issue of equal pay. Republicans initially favored compensating the black soldiers for their service up to June 1864, while Democrats were altogether against the idea of equal pay.<sup>29</sup> After the compromise, the War Department began to pay black soldiers the same wages white soldiers were receiving. By this time, however, many blacks had grown

tired of discrimination by the United States Army and were fighting the war from aboard the gunboats and steamers of the United States Navy.

Conditions for blacks in the Union Navy were far different from conditions in the Army. Black sailors had served on ships during battle in both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Historian C.R. Gibbs writes of many early American military engagements in which the American Navy benefited from the service of black sailors.<sup>30</sup> It is known that at least seventy-five black men served in the Virginia Navy during the Revolution, drawing the attention of Continental Army General George Washington who wrote in 1779 of the service of these black men as pilots.

At the close of the War of 1812, and for several years after, black sailors comprised, at times, as much as twenty percent of American naval forces.<sup>31</sup> On 3 March 1813, the United States specifically provided for the enlistment of free blacks into the Navy.<sup>32</sup> After the passage of this act, high numbers of blacks, both free and slave, flocked to navy recruiting stations to enlist. As a result, in 1839, Acting Secretary of the Navy, Isaac Chauncey, was prompted to write the Commander of the Boston Naval Office, John Downs, requesting that he not "enter a greater proportion of free colored persons than five percent of the whole number of white persons" in the recruitment stations under his command.<sup>33</sup> Chauncey also directed Downs not to admit any slaves into the Navy.

The five-percent limit of black sailors was generally adhered to until the Civil War, when totals reached eight percent, or roughly 9,596 black sailors.<sup>34</sup> Herbert Aptheker, accomplished historian of African Americans during the Civil War, most completely explains the reasons for this huge increase in the number of black sailors. The first and most obvious reason for this increase is that the Union Army did not allow blacks to serve until late in 1862.<sup>35</sup> The second reason was based on intelligence. Realizing the vast amounts of information runaway slaves could provide, the Navy began permitting these runaways to join as early as July 1861.<sup>36</sup> Aptheker states, "The greatest single source of military and naval intelligence, particularly on the tactical level, ... was the Negro."<sup>37</sup> This fact was attested to by Commander Oliver S. Glisson, of the *Mount Vernon*, who wrote his superior, Flag-Officer Silas H. Stringham, on 15 July 1861, asking what he should do with the runaway slaves he had encountered who possessed information concerning ammunition shortages in Mathews County, Virginia.<sup>38</sup> The answer to

this question eventually came from Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles. He replied that it

is not the policy of the Government to invite or encourage this class of desertions, and yet, under the circumstances, no other course than that pursued by Commander Glisson [taking them in and feeding them] could be adopted without violating every principle of humanity. To return them would be impolite as well as cruel ...<sup>39</sup>

Navy officials applied Welles's answer to all encountered runaway slaves, and on 20 September 1861, Welles declared that all contrabands [runaway slaves] would be enlisted by the Navy with the rank of "boys" and paid ten dollars per month, the same as white sailors with equal rank.<sup>40</sup>

Discriminatory pay practices were the third reason, according to Aptheker, that blacks preferred the Union Navy over the Army. In the Union Army, boys ranging from age twelve to eighteen and the infirm were to be paid five dollars per month, and able-bodied men were to receive ten dollars per month, the amount all Union sailors received. In reality, however, young and infirm black soldiers were only paid one dollar per month, and able-bodied men only received two dollars per month. The Army's excuse for withholding the black soldier's pay was that the remaining pay was used to help support women, children, and the disabled. However, this money only went to women, children, and the disabled if the black men who had earned it displayed what their white superiors deemed "good behavior."<sup>41</sup>

The fourth and most important reason blacks sought enlistment in the Union Navy instead of the Army was the serious shortage of manpower faced by the Navy as a result of immense expansion. Over the course of the war, the Union Navy went from a force of seventy-six vessels to nearly seven hundred.<sup>42</sup> To fill this need, the Navy made several enlistment landings, in which a portion of a ship's crew would accompany a doctor ashore to perform a short physical to determine which contrabands would provide the best services on board the ship. The best ones were selected and enlisted.<sup>43</sup> One such landing occurred on 21 July 1862, at Port Royal, South Carolina, and produced ninety new enlistments for the Union Navy.<sup>44</sup> These landings proved so successful

that the Army began requesting the services of contrabands from the Navy.<sup>45</sup>

In 1995, Joseph P. Reidy, head of the African American Sailors Research Project at Howard University in Washington, D.C., submitted an essay to the Twelfth Naval History Symposium in which he described the typical former slave who enlisted in the Union Navy.<sup>46</sup> Reidy described these men as tending to be “field laborers rather than house servants, ... [and] from along the Mississippi River and its tributaries.”<sup>47</sup> Samuel Dalton clearly matches this description. Dalton’s military muster record indicates his occupation as “fieldhand” and that he was from Bolivar County, Mississippi, bordered on the west by the Mississippi River.<sup>48</sup>

At age 24, Samuel Dalton enlisted in the Union Navy on 30 September 1863, at White River Station, Mississippi, and was assigned to the *USS Juliet*.<sup>49</sup> The *Juliet* was a wood-burning, stern-wheel steamer fitted with six guns and placed in the Mississippi Squadron, under the command of Rear Admiral David D. Porter.<sup>50</sup> Up to Dalton’s date of enlistment, the *Juliet* patrolled the Yazoo River, escorting other ships and troops to various points along that river.<sup>51</sup> On 30 October 1863, one month before Samuel Dalton first appeared on the muster rolls of the *Juliet*, that ship was “disabled again” at White River Station, Mississippi.<sup>52</sup> Could Dalton have approached Acting Ensign Matthew K. Haines, then the commander of the *Juliet*, seeking protection from his master as many slaves had?<sup>53</sup> Was Dalton recruited as a result of an enlistment landing while the *Juliet* was stalled? Either of these are possible, since it is known that the *Juliet* was stalled at White River Station, and one month later, Dalton appeared on the muster rolls of that ship.

While Dalton served aboard the *Juliet*, that vessel operated in the vicinity of Alexandria, Louisiana, on the Red River.<sup>54</sup> Before going to the Red River, however, the *Juliet* was called on to transport Army Major General William Tecumseh Sherman to Vicksburg, Mississippi. The *Juliet* arrived at Memphis with Sherman on board on 10 January 1864, with ice damage to the hull and rudders.<sup>55</sup> On the night of 13 January, a fire in the pilothouse further damaged the *Juliet*, rendering it unable to carry Sherman to Vicksburg. The *Silver Cloud* was chosen to transport Sherman the rest of the way.<sup>56</sup>

In late April 1864, the *Juliet*, along with several other ships of the Mississippi Squadron, came under attack when Confederate artillery

consisting of four cannon opened fire. The attack was so intense that Rear Admiral Porter mistook the number of cannon as eighteen, calling the attack “the heaviest fire [he] ever witnessed.”<sup>57</sup> As a result of the attack, the *Juliet* lost fifteen men and was put out of commission until 6 September 1864.<sup>58</sup> After this massive attack, Dalton and others previously serving aboard the *Juliet* were transferred to the *USS Hastings*, a paddle-wheel steamer with eight guns.<sup>59</sup> Dalton served aboard the *Hastings* for six months, from June 1864 to December 1864.<sup>60</sup> The *Hastings* performed the same duties as the *Juliet* in the Red River.<sup>61</sup> While in the Navy, Dalton served as a First Class Boy, the Navy’s lowest rank, for one year before being promoted to the rank of Ordinary Seaman.<sup>62</sup>

After serving fifteen months in the Union Navy, aboard two Mississippi gunboats, Samuel Dalton was discharged at Cairo, Illinois, sometime in late 1864.<sup>63</sup> His next appearance in southern Illinois records is not until 1870, when he married Mary S. Stanton on 24 March in Murphysboro.<sup>64</sup> The 1870 Federal Census listed Dalton as living in Carbondale Township on 10 June.<sup>65</sup> Also in the household was a daughter, Georgianna, born the previous November in Louisiana.<sup>66</sup> It is unknown if she was a natural daughter of Dalton’s or a stepdaughter. After this listing of Mary and Georgianna, they disappear from any known records. It is suspected that Mary died, but what happened to Georgianna? Another possibility is that mother and daughter returned to Louisiana, where both were born.

Samuel himself disappeared from the record books after 1870.<sup>67</sup> The Federal Census returns for that year are the lone reference to him living in Carbondale, and the last known record of Dalton for seventeen years. It is possible that he went to Richmond, Virginia, after 1870, for his obituary states that Richmond was his home prior to living in Murphysboro.<sup>68</sup>

In 1887, Dalton reappeared and bought a house and lot for one-hundred fifty dollars from the estate of Civil War General John A. Logan in Murphysboro.<sup>69</sup> It is very ironic that Dalton would come to Murphysboro after being a slave for the first twenty-four years of his life, and serving in the Union Navy for the next fifteen months, to purchase his home from the estate of the very man who had written the bill fining blacks who entered Illinois. The man was John A. Logan, and the bill became the infamous Black Laws of 1853. Although Logan would later change his views, during his tenure in the Illinois legislature from 1852-

54 he reasoned that it was “never intended that blacks and whites stand in equal relation.”<sup>70</sup> Governor Richard Yates repealed this law in 1865, when Union victory was inevitable.<sup>71</sup>

In 1891 Dalton joined the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Post #728.<sup>72</sup> The Grand Army of the Republic was a social organization founded by Doctor Benjamin F. Stephenson in 1866.<sup>73</sup> The suggestion for the organization came to Dr. Stephenson from Reverend William J. Rutledge, “tent-mate and bosom companion of Dr. Stephenson.”<sup>74</sup> Rutledge believed that “the soldiers so closely allied in the fellowship of suffering, would, when mustered out of the service, naturally desire some form of association that would preserve the friendships and the memories of their common trials and dangers.”<sup>75</sup> The GAR held regular meetings for its surviving members, marking the graves of deceased members, and caring for their surviving family.

When Samuel Dalton moved to Murphysboro, the city already had one GAR post. It was the Worthen Post #128, and when Dudley Bostick, another honorably discharged Union sailor applied for membership in 1887, he was turned down on the basis of race.<sup>76</sup> Though the charter of the GAR made no mention of racial discrimination, Bostick’s denial was not uncommon.<sup>77</sup> The Worthen Post’s denial of Murphysboro’s black veterans led them to petition the state to obtain a charter for their own GAR post. On 31 October 1891 the charter was granted to Murphysboro Post No. 728 (Colored).<sup>78</sup> Samuel Dalton was one of the twenty-two charter members. On 8 July 1899 Murphysboro Post #728, with eleven members, filed its last report to GAR headquarters.<sup>79</sup> One year later, in 1900, the surviving members of the Worthen Post voted unanimously to accept the survivors of Post #728.<sup>80</sup> It was thirteen years after Dudley Bostick had originally applied.

While in Post #728, Dalton rose to the grade of veteran, the highest of the three membership grades, and served as the head of two positions. The grade of veteran was only obtainable after eight months of membership, two months as a recruit and six months as a soldier.<sup>81</sup> As a veteran member, Dalton was eligible for appointment to any of the post’s offices. By the end of 1892, Dalton had been appointed Officer of the Guard.<sup>82</sup> He served this position through 5 July 1893.<sup>83</sup> The second position Dalton was appointed to was that of (honorary) Surgeon.<sup>84</sup> It is unknown how long Dalton served this position, for the July 1899 report was the last one sent to GAR headquarters.

With a home of his own, a military pension, and membership in one of the city's social organizations, Samuel Dalton, now age fifty-two, was ready to give marriage another try. On 21 September 1892 he married thirty-two year old Lumisa Howell in his home.<sup>85</sup> The marriage was performed by Henry Guy and witnessed by Samuel White, both fellow black Civil War veterans living in Murphysboro.<sup>86</sup>

In 1900, the Federal Census taker visited the Dalton residence at 1610 Oak Street.<sup>87</sup> This census provides much information about Dalton's life in Murphysboro. The census indicated that his occupation was a day laborer and that he had been unemployed for four of the last twelve months, likely the winter of 1899-1900. The family's only steady income was Dalton's military pension, which paid eight dollars a month. Samuel himself stated that he could write, but not read. Also living with Samuel and Lumisa were Julia Brown (Lumisa's sister), James Brown (Julia's son), and Frederick Adkin (listed as Lumisa's nephew). These five people were all living in the same two-room house with attached kitchen. These relatives of Lumisa could have provided valuable information about Samuel and Lumisa had they left any records behind.

Over the next thirty-six years, as many as seven people lived in the Daltons' house at one time or another. Samuel himself lived there until he died on 7 June 1920, from a cerebral hemorrhage.<sup>88</sup> He was buried two days later in Tower Grove Cemetery in a grave that remains unmarked. In 1994, the Department of Veterans Affairs, at the request of P. Michael Jones's sixth grade students, placed grave markers in the cemeteries of all of Murphysboro's forgotten African-American Civil War soldiers.<sup>89</sup> Lumisa continued to live there until July 1936 when she moved to Chicago and deeded the property to Viola and Roy Johnson, also of Chicago, for one dollar.<sup>90</sup> It is presumed that Lumisa and the Johnsons were related, given the fact that she sold them the property for so little. In addition, Lumisa retained the right to live in the house until she died, on 11 December 1937 in Chicago.<sup>91</sup>

Until 1993, the only known remnants of Samuel Dalton's life in Murphysboro were his house at 1610 Oak Street, very general legal records, and two census returns. These sources told little about who he was and even less about how he lived. Dalton's home and property were desirable possessions of the General John A. Logan Museum, not for its yet-to-be-discovered historical significance, but for demolition to make way for more museum-sponsored activities. The museum's purchase of the property was completed in 1993, and the demolition

began shortly thereafter with the removal of the interior walls. At this point, the house of Samuel H. Dalton became one of the most significant sources of historical evidence for any of Murphysboro's forgotten soldiers. Upon removal of the first layers of drywall it was found that at one time the walls were papered with old newspapers from Murphysboro. This discovery piqued the interest of the museum's staff and further research was done on the house to determine the years of both Samuel Dalton's residence and the newspapers. By matching stories from the newspapers in the house to microfilmed and reprinted copies of the originals, it was determined that the newspapers dated from 1888 to 1902, the fourteen-year period in which Dalton lived in the house. This discovery meant that the museum had actually purchased the only preserved artifact from any of Murphysboro's twenty-five African-American Civil War veterans.

To accommodate this new discovery, demolition plans for the Dalton House were scrapped in favor of restoration plans. These new plans called for the house to be restored to its Dalton-era condition, with newspaper covered walls and the absence of electricity, running water, or indoor plumbing. It was during this restoration that a wealth of knowledge was uncovered about the way the Daltons, and other poor families, lived in Murphysboro during the turn of the century. As the interior wall was being removed under the window in the east wall of the house, a small cache of artifacts was found. These artifacts were apparently a few of Dalton's meager possessions that were, for some reason, sealed up in the wall when the interior walls were added around 1902. This mysterious finding included a small wrench, a broken adjustable wrench used as a hammer, a comb, a spoon, and the most interesting item, a worked stone tool known as a Mississippian hoe. Could Dalton have found this Native-American tool while he was a field hand in Mississippi, or did he find it after he came to southern Illinois? More importantly, why was it, along with the other objects, hidden in the wall? These and several questions remain about the time Dalton spent in Murphysboro as a former slave, Civil War veteran, property owner, day laborer, and member of one of the city's social organizations, the GAR.

Currently, the restoration of the Dalton House is continuing along with the interpretation of the items found in and around it. The value of this house as a historical artifact was not known until it was nearly too late. Without it, the story of Samuel H. Dalton would never

be told. The restored house offers current generations a chance to revisit a historic period when many faced restrictive economic conditions. In a much broader context, the study of Samuel Dalton and his house gives a voice to a people who, like Dalton, were freed from the institution of slavery, fought to maintain their freedom and the freedom of others, and then were sadly forgotten by their families and history.

## Notes

- 1 Samuel Dalton consistently cited Virginia as his state of birth in every Federal Census in which he was enumerated. However, both his military muster record and pension record indicate Bolivar County, Mississippi, as his state of birth. Given the source of the census information, Dalton himself, the former is believed to be correct. For an example of census returns, see Valerie Phillips Gildehaus, *Index to the 1870 U.S. Census, Jackson County, Illinois* (Murphysboro, IL: Jackson County Historical Society, 1996), 25. For Dalton's military record, see the National Park Service's site "African American Sailors in the Union Navy," available at [http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/navydetail.cfm?id\\_no=Dal0015](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/navydetail.cfm?id_no=Dal0015); Internet; accessed 31 October 2002.
- 2 Robert F. Engs, "Slave Life," *The Confederacy* (New York: Macmillan Library Reference, 1998), 989.
- 3 The presumption that Dalton was born in Virginia, as were both of his parents, leads one to believe that he was sold to an owner in Mississippi after being enslaved in Virginia. This study begins with Dalton's life in Bolivar County, Mississippi, since nothing is known, for certain, of Dalton's early life in Virginia. Amy Cooper, Adam Rogers, Jonathan Saupe, and Nicole Etherton, "Samuel H. Dalton, 1839-1920," published in: P. Michael Jones et al., *Forgotten Soldiers: Murphysboro's African-American Civil War Veterans* (Murphysboro, IL: General John A. Logan Museum, 1994), 32.
- 4 Charles S. Sydnor, *Slavery in Mississippi* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1965), 10-11.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 11.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 20.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 65.
- 8 Cooper et al., 32.
- 9 Tom Blake, "Bolivar County, Mississippi, 1860 Slaveholders and 1870 African Americans," available at <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~ajac/msbolivar.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 October 2002.
- 10 John Niven, *The Coming of the Civil War, 1837-1861* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson Inc., 1990), 140-1.

- 11 Ira Berlin, Joseph P. Reidy, and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Freedom's Soldiers: The Black Military Experience in the Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), viii.
- 12 C.R. Gibbs, "Blacks in the Union Navy," *Negro History Bulletin* 36, no. 6 (1973): 137-9.
- 13 James M. McPherson, *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted During the War For the Union* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), 143-4.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 144.
- 15 Herbert Aptheker, "The Negro in the Union Navy," *Journal of Negro History* 32, no.2 (1947): 174.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 17 Berlin et al., 6.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 9-10.
- 19 A. Wilson Greene and Gary W. Gallagher, *National Geographic Guide to the Civil War National Battlefield Parks* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1992), 121.
- 20 Greene and Gallagher, 123.
- 21 Berlin et al., 14.
- 22 Greene and Gallagher, 33.
- 23 Kevin Hillstrom, Laurie Collier Hillstrom, and Lawrence W. Baker eds., *American Civil War: Almanac* (Detroit: UXL, 2000), 212.
- 24 Berlin et al., 15.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 26 Donald Yacovone, "The Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment, the Pay Crisis, and the 'Lincoln Despotism,'" published in: Martin H. Blatt, Thomas J. Brown, and Donald Yacovone, eds., *Hope & Glory: Essays on the Legacy of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 36.
- 27 Kevin Hillstrom, Laurie Collier Hillstrom, and Lawrence W. Baker eds., *American Civil War: Primary Sources* (Detroit: UXL, 2000), 93.
- 28 Hillstrom et al., *American Civil War: Primary Sources*, 92.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 95.
- 30 Gibbs, 137.
- 31 Aptheker, 171.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 173.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 David L. Valuska, *The African-American in the Union Navy: 1861-1865* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993), 83. Before Valuska's study of the percentage of black sailors in the Union Navy, Herbert Aptheker's number of 29,511, or twenty-five percent, was the universally accepted number of black sailors in the Union Navy during the Civil War. Aptheker's pioneer

study of the Union's black sailors was conducted by counting the number of black sailors aboard three randomly selected ships, the *New Hampshire*, the *Argosy*, and the *Avenger*. Aptheker discovered that twenty-five percent of the crews of these ships were black, so from that number, he estimated that 29,511 blacks served as Union sailors during the Civil War. See also Aptheker, 179.

35 Aptheker, 174.

36 *Ibid.*, 174-5.

37 *Ibid.*, 194.

38 United States Naval War Records Office, *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion* ser. 1, vol. 6 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1897), 8-9. Cited as ORN in future references.

39 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 6, 10.

40 *Ibid.*, 252.

41 Aptheker, 176.

42 *Ibid.*, 177.

43 C.R. Gibbs, 138.

44 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 13, 208-09.

45 Aptheker, 178.

46 Joseph P. Reidy, "Black Jack: African American Sailors in the Civil War Navy," published in: William B. Cogar, ed., *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Twelfth Naval History Symposium* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 213.

47 Cogar, 215.

48 "African American Sailors in the Union Navy," available at [http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/navydetail.cfm?id\\_no=Dal0015](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/navydetail.cfm?id_no=Dal0015); Internet; accessed 31 October 2002.

49 Conflicting information exists regarding Dalton's service record as well. His muster record, as presented by "African American Sailors in the Union Navy," indicates the above date, while records obtained by P. Michael Jones, co-author of *Forgotten Soldiers*, indicate this date as 5 July 1863. Given the incompleteness of records obtained by Jones, the dates given by "African American Sailors in the Union Navy" will be honored.

50 ORN, ser. 2, vol. 1, 116, 519.

51 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 23 describes the *Juliet's* operations in this area.

52 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 25, 525.

53 Aptheker refers to several slaves seeking protection from their masters on page 181 of his article.

54 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 26 describes operations of Rear Admiral Porter's gunboats in the Red River Campaign.

55 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 25, 687-8.

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- 56 Ibid., 688-9.
- 57 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 26, 75.
- 58 Ibid., 76; and ORN, ser. 2, vol. 1, 116.
- 59 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 25, xv.
- 60 "African American Sailors in the Union Navy," available at [http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/navydetail.cfm?id\\_no=Dal0015](http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/navydetail.cfm?id_no=Dal0015); Internet; accessed 31 October 2002.
- 61 ORN, ser. 1, vol. 26 describes operations of the *Hastings*.
- 62 Cooper et al., 32.
- 63 Conflicting dates also exist for Dalton's discharge. Information obtained by Jones has this date as 16 October 1864, while according to the U.S. Navy, Dalton was still aboard the *Hastings* in October 1864.
- 64 Marriage License, issued 24 March 1870, "Samuel Dalton and Mary S. Stanton," obtained from Jackson County Clerk, Murphysboro, Illinois, page 390 of marriage register.
- 65 Valerie Phillips Gildehaus, *Index to the 1870 U.S. Census, Jackson County, Illinois* (Murphysboro, IL: Jackson County Historical Society, 1996), 25.
- 66 Cooper et al., 33.
- 67 It is possible that Samuel Dalton was simply overlooked or misnamed in the 1880 Census. There is at least one instance, in 1900, in which he is listed as 'Samuel Dawson.'
- 68 "Old Soldier Dead," *Daily Republican Era*, Murphysboro, Illinois, 9 June 1920, p. 3.
- 69 Property Deed, "Mary S. Logan, et al. to Samuel Dalton," obtained from Jackson County Clerk, Murphysboro, Illinois, Book 28.
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# **Sarah K. Tripp**

## **The Rebirth of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan**

On Thanksgiving night in 1915, William Joseph Simmons and fifteen followers held a ceremony on top of Stone Mountain in Atlanta, Georgia. With a fiery cross burning in the night, an American flag waving in the wind, and a bible open to the twelfth chapter of Romans, Simmons declared the rebirth of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).<sup>1</sup> What started off as nothing more than a small secret fraternity, based only in Alabama and Georgia, would develop into a nation-wide organization that still exists today.<sup>2</sup>

The first few years of Klan recruitment proved to be unsuccessful, only attracting about two thousand new members. But in 1920, Simmons joined forces with Edward Clarke and Elizabeth Tyler, two individuals who were known for their organizational and promotional skills. By 1921 Clarke, who was now head of Klan propaganda, sent out more than two hundred Klan recruiters. In only eighteen months, the Klan had recruited more than one hundred thousand new members. They had established chapters in the Midwest, Southwest, and on the West coast. A year later the Klan was nearly one million strong.<sup>3</sup> By 1924 the Klan reached its peak with an estimated five million members nation wide.<sup>4</sup>

The Klan's success in recruiting new members could be attributed to Clarke's and Tyler's idea of appealing to Americans through existing fears and prejudices.<sup>5</sup> During the early 1920s, racial tension throughout the United States had grown significantly. In 1919 race riots erupted in such cities as East St. Louis, Chicago, and Tulsa and African Americans no longer retreated when confronted with white hostility and violence. White racists resented all African Americans who refused to be intimidated and who advocated racial equality. Klan recruits also played upon the fears of those who disliked the newer immigrants and who believed they threatened America, politically and economically. Fears of economic competition, combined with a full-blown recession after World War I, made Klan recruitment even easier.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to preserving America for whites, Klan leaders argued that immigrants and African Americans contributed to the nation's moral decay. When Congress ratified the eighteenth Amendment many believed it would rid the United States of prostitution, gambling, and theft—all of which had been on the rise. But

the prohibition of alcohol only resulted in bootlegging, mob violence, and organized crime. Inadequate law enforcement resulted in the proliferation of bootleggers, and some Americans turned to the Ku Klux Klan to restore moral order. For a number of people, then, the Ku Klux Klan appeared to provide answers to all of these challenges. They were looking for something to bring America back to “normalcy”; the Klan was their solution.<sup>7</sup>

The Klan’s stated principles were founded on patriotism, Christianity, and their idea of “one hundred percent Americanism.”<sup>8</sup> They aimed to solve the recent problems by strengthening the Protestant church and establishing a more patriotic society. They also sought to perfect the public school system and most importantly preserve the United States as a “Protestant Christian Nation.” In order to be a member of the Invisible Empire you had to be a white male, 18 years old, and a Protestant.<sup>9</sup>

Klan members believed it was their duty as Christian men to “protect the home, the chastity of womanhood” and uphold the law by assisting the authorities whenever they were not doing their jobs. The Klan claimed to stand for morality. They vowed to punish any man who took advantage of a young woman, by provoking her to drink or have sex. In an attempt to strengthen the public school system, they campaigned for more aid and for reading of daily scripture.<sup>10</sup>

The Klan may have claimed to be a force for morality, but their racism and prejudices produced more violence. The KKK used the recent state of mind of many Americans to “merely awaken smoldering prejudices.”<sup>11</sup> Among those ostracized by the Klan were Catholics, Jews, African Americans, immigrants, and any American who did not believe their particular vision of “one hundred percent Americanism.”<sup>12</sup> From the Klan perspective, Roman Catholics threatened the very government of the United States, for they were, according to the Klan, on a papal mission to restore the Holy Roman Empire. The KKK blamed Jews “for unfair competition and religious cohesiveness” and also for not being Christians. Therefore, according to the Klan, Jews were also not one hundred percent American. The Klan regarded all newer immigrants as mentally incapable and unable to be productive citizens, who were corrupting the American heritage and tradition. And the KKK singled out African Americans as “animal[s] that preyed on white women and threatened white supremacy.”<sup>13</sup>

The Ku Klux Klan used intimidation and violence to further their cause for “pure Americanism.” In 1921, eighteen newspapers across the country released a study done by Rowland Thomas of the *New York World*. The report claimed that the Klan had been involved in “four murders, forty-one floggings, and twenty-seven tar and feather parties.”<sup>14</sup> However, between the years of 1889 and 1930, they were reported to be involved in three murders (724 people were lynched by predominantly white mobs, many of whom were Klansmen). Of the total number lynched, four out of every five were African Americans.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, between 1882 and 1930, one African American was lynched every week. Despite denials, they routinely lynched African Americans for a range of reasons; sometimes they claimed African Americans were merely “obnoxious” or “uppity,” other times because they “argued with a white man.”<sup>16</sup> There were also many instances in which blacks, accused of a crime, were dragged from jail and hanged, even though they had not yet been convicted. Despite denials, the Klan used lynching to punish, terrorize, and also to ensure white supremacy within their communities. The Klan lynchings and mob violence produced outcries from the African-American community. Ida Wells, for example, an advocate against lynching, wrote in 1928, “No torture of helpless victims by heathen savages or cruel red Indians ever exceeded the cold blooded savagery of the white devil under lynch law.” And although there was a slight decline of lynching during World War I, within a year after the war ended, seventy black people were hanged. Indeed, on one occasion ten black soldiers, who had just returned home and were still in uniform, were lynched by a white mob. Between 1919 and 1922, 239 black lynchings were recorded while others went unreported.<sup>17</sup>

Not only were blacks lynched, they were many times beaten, burned, and then photographed hanging from nooses. Although not all participants in lynch mobs were Klan members, evidence suggests that many were. The KKK also used other tactics to intimidate and to drive people from communities or ensure their particular “moral code.” Cross burnings were the most common badge of Klan activity.

Klan recruiters found eager members outside the South as well. During the 1920s the Klan grew significantly in the Middle Western states of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. Some white people turned to the KKK in response to the Great Migration of African Americans to the urban north in World War One. Also, many white urban Protestants felt threatened by religious and ethnic minorities, particularly in Chicago,

East St. Louis, and Indianapolis, where there were a number of Catholics, Italians, Germans, Russians, and Czechs. By 1924, the KKK had established charters in forty-five states. In 1924 the Klan was especially strong in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, accounting for forty percent of the total Klan membership. Between 1915 and 1944, Illinois had an estimated ninety-five thousand Klan members and ranked fifth out of forty-nine states, in terms of Klan membership.<sup>18</sup>

The Ku Klux Klan first became active in Illinois in the summer of 1921. With over one million Catholics, eight-hundred thousand immigrants, one-hundred twenty-five thousand Jews, and one-hundred ten thousand African Americans, Chicago was certainly a target for Klan violence. Despite the fact that Chicago's number of Protestant white males made up only fifteen percent of the total population, the Klan had no trouble recruiting new members. The Klan made itself public in Chicago at an initiation ceremony on 16 August 1921, in which ten thousand Klansmen applauded the induction of 2,376 new members. Over the next two years, the Klan established twenty units in Chicago. The earliest were in Englewood, Woodlawn, and Kenwood, which were predominantly areas that were being overwhelmed by the migration of the African Americans from the South. Targeting ethnic areas, the KKK also set up units in Irving Park, Austin, Garfield, Logan Square, and Morgan Park. The Klan was not restricted to the city alone. Many chapters were also established in such suburbs as Chicago Heights, Joliet, Aurora, and Tinley Park. The Klan even branched out into Springfield, Rockford, and Champaign. The Klan movement throughout northern Illinois continued to gather momentum, recruiting anywhere from forty thousand to eighty thousand members.<sup>19</sup>

Klan recruitment in Illinois was primarily done through the local churches. Klan members visited many churches, usually dressed in their customary white robes and hoods, offering donations in an attempt to depict the Invisible Empire as a moral and respectable organization. The Klan also paid school children to obtain the names and addresses of all Protestant classmates. The Klan would then mail flyers to mothers, encouraging Klan support. Klan rallies were also a useful recruiting tool. One of the Klan's largest rallies took place in northern Illinois on 19 August 1922. Highly publicized, the rallies reaffirmed the Klan's growing strength in numbers. During this rally, twenty-five thousand Klansmen observed the initiation of 4,650 new recruits. Drawing from all types of occupations, the Chicago area Klan recruited sixty-seven

percent of its membership from white-collar workers and forty-three percent from blue-collar workers.<sup>20</sup> Racism crossed class lines and within the Klan's doctrine, these men found safety and confidence.

As the Klan grew in strength in northern Illinois, the rate of violence also increased. The first recorded incident of violence occurred on 15 June 1922, when three Klan members flogged a chiropractor, who had allegedly abused a teenage girl. The second recorded incident occurred on 7 February 1923 when a young woman was abducted by Klan members who "cut crosses in her leg, back, and arms." She was apparently attacked for her recent conversion to Catholicism. The young woman later denied that she had been abducted by Klan members. The third event took place on 17 October 1924. Klansmen had been leaving threatening notes on the front door of "the largest colored church in America," and two months later it burned to the ground.<sup>21</sup>

Although the majority of Klan members lived in the northern part of the state, many southern Illinoisans also took up the oath of the Klansmen. Such counties as Williamson, Franklin, Johnson, Perry, and Pulaski also reported Klan activity.<sup>22</sup> The KKK made its first appearance in southern Illinois on 20 May 1923, at the First Christian Church of Marion. One week later, the Klan held its first gathering near Marion. Nearly two thousand Klansmen were present for the initiation of new members from Williamson County and Franklin County. Later in July, over a thousand Klansmen gathered in Carterville for the initiation of several hundred more men eager to take the oath. Over the next three years the Klan held rallies all over southern Illinois, preaching their doctrine and recruiting new members.<sup>23</sup> In the summer of 1924, the KKK held two rallies in Johnson County. The *Vienna Times* reported that there were approximately "900 members of the Klan in Johnson County and that there was an organization being perfected in Vienna."<sup>24</sup> The Klan also visited several churches throughout the area. In January of 1925, the KKK appeared twice in Goreville, presenting churches with donations and words of praise for their good work in the area.<sup>25</sup> One month later the Klan presented four churches in West Frankfort gifts of the same sort.<sup>26</sup>

Although there were obvious and intense racial issues in the southern parts of the state, primarily in Pulaski County, Klan members also particularly targeted bootleggers in southern Illinois. Williamson County, the most Klan dominated area in southern Illinois, especially experienced the brutality and hatred characteristic of the Ku Klux Klan.

With a twenty-three percent Italian population in Herrin and numerous bootleggers and speakeasies throughout the county, Williamson County became the center of attention when violence erupted in 1924. Many people had become frustrated with the law enforcement's failure to rid the county of the illegal distribution of alcohol. In an effort to put an end to bootlegging and "clean up" the county, the Klan hired S. Glenn Young, an ex-prohibition agent, to lead the way. When Young arrived in Williamson County, he deputized a number of Klansmen and began conducting raids in hundreds of roadhouses, bootlegging establishments, and even private homes. During these raids by Klan members, who saw themselves as extra-legal groups, many alleged and guilty bootleggers, several of whom were Italian, were beaten and arrested. Over the next few months, led by Young, the Klan began to take over authority in the county. They patrolled the streets with guns in hand, conducting raids and arresting citizens without even evidence of wrongdoing. Despite the fact that the Klan had no official authority, they continued to establish themselves as lawmen. The Klan's intimidation divided the county between those who supported the Klan and those who did not. And that division created much bloodshed, corruption, and murder.<sup>27</sup> On several occasions the governor had to call in the state militia to cease the gunfire and restore order in Williamson County. Between 1923 and 1926, twenty men were murdered as a result of the Klan wars, including the KKK ringleader S. Glenn Young.<sup>28</sup>

Ultimately the Klan's violent tactics contributed to its demise. Also important were disputes over Klan leadership and power, negative newspaper exposure, and a series of sex scandals—all combined to fully undermine any claim to moral superiority.<sup>29</sup> In northern Illinois, the exposure of Klan members when thousands of Klansmen names, addresses, and occupations were published in the Anti-Klan newspaper called *Tolerance*, eliminated their cloak of secrecy and led to their decline.<sup>30</sup> The death of S. Glenn Young dealt a serious blow to the Klan of southern Illinois. The Klan wars in Williamson County had left the area devastated and numb, and contributed to the Klan's disappearance.<sup>31</sup> After 1926, Klan activity throughout the state died down considerably.

Although the Klan in the United States continued to decline during the Great Depression, it reemerged during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, and then again in the 1980s. Still existing in various forms, the Klan, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2001, has 109 active organizations in the United States,

with about fifty-five hundred to six thousand members.<sup>32</sup> The Center also noted the existence of three units in Illinois: the Imperial Klans of America located in Litchfield and Prospects Heights and the Knight of the White Kamellia located in Belleville.<sup>33</sup>

Not only smaller in size, the Klan has also undergone other types of changes. Catholics, for example, are no longer counted among the enemies and are welcomed into the organization. Additionally, the Imperial Klan of America, which is based in Illinois, argues that “the very first responsibility of our government is to protect the welfare of Americans ... not some other 3<sup>rd</sup> world country.” They also believe that drug testing should be administered to welfare recipients, that America should do away with affirmative action programs, support strong measures to keep aliens from crossing the borders, and promote legal bans on homosexuality and interracial marriages.<sup>34</sup> The American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan even suggest that all immigration should stop until all Americans have jobs. They also call for the banning of abortion, except in instances in which the mother’s life is in danger, and affirm that all convicted drug dealers should receive the death penalty.<sup>35</sup> Although each organization has distinctive missions and goals, Ku Klux Klan members across the country remain united in their cause to further white supremacy through bigotry, hatred, and brutality.

Although the KKK continues to deny allegations of hate-motivated violence, recent events prove the Klan’s involvement in several acts of violence and intimidation. In 1981, for example, an African-American teenager was abducted, beaten, cut up, and found hanging dead from a noose. Henry Hays, an Alabama Klan member, was convicted for the murder and executed in 1997. This was the first time in eighty-four years that Alabama had executed a white man for the murder of an African American.<sup>36</sup> Also three Illinois Klan members were sentenced to prison terms for plotting to assassinate Morris Dees, founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center, while he spoke at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in 1998.<sup>37</sup> One of the men convicted, Wallace Weicherding, had recently been fired from his job as a prison guard in Hillsboro, Illinois.<sup>38</sup> He had apparently been distributing KKK material in hopes of recruiting new members as well as of promoting a Klan rally that would feature a speech delivered by a Klan leader and a cross burning.<sup>39</sup> Also in 1998, the Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan were ordered to pay 21.5 million dollars for their role in a conspiracy to burn down the Macedonia Baptist Church in South Carolina.<sup>40</sup>

Throughout the nation, the Klan continues to make its presence known. In Illinois alone there were eight cross burnings in 1996, one of which occurred in West Frankfort.<sup>41</sup> In Murphysboro, in June of 2001, the letters “KKK” were spray-painted on an African-American woman’s vehicle. A few blocks away racial graffiti was also spray-painted on a church parking lot.<sup>42</sup> Recently, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported, “A cross is burned nearly every week, most typically at the homes of interracial or black families.” The Klan still uses this terror tactic in an effort to intimidate a specific group or individual and chase them from the community.<sup>43</sup>

Although the Ku Klux Klan is still an active organization in the United States, it is also losing ground to other white supremacy groups. Older Klan members are becoming involved in militia movements and other anti-government groups, which generate more money and larger crowds. Younger members are drawn to more radical and violent groups, such as the Racist Skinheads or the Black Separatists.<sup>44</sup> An intelligence report done by the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2001 confirmed 676 active hate groups in the United States.<sup>45</sup> Even though each hate organization is distinguished by specific criteria and ideology, all function for the same purpose of promoting white supremacy.

In California, Alabama, and Illinois, there has been a recent push to unite all white-supremacy groups. A Klan gathering in southern Illinois in 1997 sought to recruit new members by “showing unity with other white supremacy groups.” They proved unsuccessful, despite efforts to promote the KKK as “a must for any racist in good standing.”<sup>46</sup> Although the Klan has recently lost membership to a number of other racist organizations, one can never overlook a faction that has survived for over a century. The devastation caused by the Ku Klux Klan will never be forgiven or forgotten.

## **Notes**

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# **Jessica Benton**

## **Women's Participation in Baseball: The All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League**

In the minds of many Americans, baseball conjures mental pictures of lazy summer days at the ballpark. The poignant aroma of dirt, grass, and sweat sends us back to our younger days when life was simpler. The crack of the bat on the ball reverberates in our ears. Together, these ideas shape the portrait of baseball as we know it. Not surprisingly, this baseball is considered synonymous with the male gender. Women have forever been portrayed as the weaker sex and incapable of exerting themselves. Women who did enjoy physical activity were looked down upon in society. The same thought processes carried over into the area of sports. This paper will tell the story of the forgotten women who played this sport despite the social and cultural boundaries that attempted to restrict their involvement. An emphasis will be placed on the All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League and its participants. Social repercussions of the ladies' involvement in the league are discussed as well as the atmosphere in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century.

The second half of the 1800s established a precedent for women's athletics. A small group of Victorian ladies stepped beyond their expected social roles and embraced the opportunity to participate in baseball. Not only were these women players, but they were also umpires, managers, and coaches. These "delicate flowers" were capable and willing to slide into bases and hurl baseballs at the catcher. The factors that had previously prohibited physical activity in middle-class women did not have as much support as they had in previous times. Until this time women were "seen as biologically frail and in need of protection."<sup>1</sup> Motherhood and complete devotion to a husband were the only acceptable activities for women. Having children was a gentlewoman's purpose and every ounce of her energy was required for the care of her offspring. The image society presented was a dainty, pale, and delicate woman who hardly seemed the type to exert herself outside the home.

For women to play any sports at all in the stifling environment of the Victorian age is surprising. A number of factors reinforced the Victorian image of a frail, homebound woman. Unfounded medical

theories stressed that women were the fairer sex. Ladies' fashions were designed to restrict movement in order to ensure the safety of the reproductive organs. Corsets were designed using whalebone stays laced so tightly that waists were restricted to a mere eighteen inches. Because the internal organs were compressed into such a miniscule space, they realigned themselves. Women of this time suffered from constricted breathing and limited mobility, which resulted in fainting spells. Their fashionable dresses were designed with tight bodices and generous skirts reaching to the floor, which caused any activity to be strenuous. These factors combined to reinforce the belief that women were feeble.

For the majority of American society, the 1890s were a time of uncertainty, although many women found the decade to be a period of growth and accomplishment. The depressions of 1873 and 1875, massive immigration into the United States, industrialization, and urbanization caused great social and economic changes in American society. These social changes fostered the environment necessary to provide new opportunities for American women. The women's suffrage movement, invention of the safety bicycle, changing medical attitudes about health and fashion, technological advances that provided more leisure time, and the establishment of women's universities all played a part in this progressive atmosphere. In 1890 thirty-six percent of all professional workers were female. The changing face of American society reflected not only a land of immigrants, but also a new breed of educated factory workers.

Along with the expanding female workforce, a number of doctors began to understand that tight corsets and lack of exercise were contributing factors in fragility of women. Dioclesian Lewis and some of his contemporaries encouraged Victorian ladies to practice physical activities such as walking, skating, and gymnastics. This effort to incorporate exercise into women's lives crossed over into the educational field. The founders of the first female universities endorsed these ideas and required exercise for their students. These factors paved the way for early women's athletics.

These changes happened in conjunction with the "Golden Era" of baseball in the 1880s. Baseball was an assimilation tool that enabled the masses of immigrants entering the country to learn traditional American values. Baseball became the national pastime in this period. In 1889 Mark Twain proclaimed, "Baseball is the very symbol, the

outward and visible expression of the drive and push and struggle of the raging, tearing, booming nineteenth century.”<sup>2</sup>

Baseball began as a gentleman’s sport and a social event played at private men’s clubs. Women were invited, not as participants, but as “cheerleaders” for their husbands. During the Civil War soldiers played baseball to keep their minds off the bleak atmosphere of the war. Forty thousand soldiers attended a game played on Christmas Day in 1862. Baseball clubs charged admission and recruited players. Soon the business of baseball was born. In 1871, the National Association of Professional Baseball Players became the first professional league. Sixty-two years later women developed a league of their own.

The baseball craze that hit the United States in the 1880s caused a stir in the women’s colleges. The game was an exciting social activity that exposed them to physical activity and the fresh air. College administrators were skeptical, but allowed ladies to play ball for two reasons. First, the game was seen as a social activity where different dorms and clubs played one another, and second, the administration was grateful to have the young ladies interested in exercise. Vassar had the earliest teams, with baseball eights in 1866.<sup>3</sup> The baseball eights resembled the baseball teams of today with the exception of the number of outfield players; two instead of three. Although Vassar and its contemporaries permitted baseball to be played amongst their own students, intercollegiate sports were not allowed. By the late 1890s educators feared that the competitive spirit bred with the participation in sports would cause women to develop manly features. The Victorian ideal of femininity stopped the small amount of progress women made in baseball.

America was forever changed with the attack of Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. All across the United States citizens prepared for food, clothing, and gasoline shortages. American “bread winners” were sent across the oceans to Europe and the Orient. Husbands, fathers, and sons were dying in the name of liberty. On the home front, women were called out of the kitchen and into the fields and factories. “Rosie the Riveter” symbolized a woman’s ability to take over a man’s job.<sup>4</sup> Females stepped in and filled vacant positions in all areas, some of which were on baseball teams. The social and economic changes during World War II somewhat mirror the changes of the 1880s when women began to embrace the opportunity to leave the home and find outside employment.

With the drought of talented male baseball players, the major and minor leagues began to flounder. Philip K. Wrigley feared what baseball would become if the war drained the league of all its players. Wrigley, the owner of the Chicago Cubs and a marketing genius, did not want to see baseball disappear. He decided to try unique marketing tactics with an experimental new league. In 1943, softball was the most popular participatory sport in America, with women being the most active participants in the game.<sup>5</sup> Where much of society saw tough, manly softball players, Wrigley saw money. He believed women could play in their own baseball league and be successful with the right advertising. His ingenious plan required changing the game of softball into a hybrid of fast-pitch softball and baseball and transforming the image of the ball player from a physical oddity to an attractive lady who possessed athletic skills. The All American Girls' Professional Baseball League grew from his vision.

Wrigley began by organizing, recruiting, and finding homes for his experimental teams in four medium-sized cities close to Chicago. Each city was expected to raise \$22,500 and Wrigley promised to match the amount in order to fund the team. Racine (the Bells) and Kenosha (the Comets) in Wisconsin, South Bend (the Blue Sox) in Indiana, and Rockford (the Peaches) in Illinois responded to the prodding from Wrigley. Players were recruited from all over the United States and Canada, and in the late 1940s the recruiting was expanded into Cuba. Cubans found the idea of women's baseball especially exciting. Baseball was a chance for the girls in Cuba to become sports heroes.<sup>6</sup> Many young girls in the United States were plucked right off the farm as in the case of Earlene Risinger. She grew up playing ball, "just with boys on cow pastures of Oklahoma."<sup>7</sup> Players were typical American girls—students, teachers, clerks, models, librarians and secretaries. The women were expected to meet the highest standards of femininity, appearance, and behavior while maintaining a level of skill comparable to that of their male counterparts. Wrigley believed that fan appeal would be guaranteed if the girls could play baseball with the ability of men, but resemble the ideal female portrait as explained in the League manual.

Every effort is made to select girls of *ability*, real or potential, and to develop that ability to its fullest power. But no less emphasis is placed on femininity, for the reason that it is more dramatic to see a feminine-type

girl throw, run, and bat than to see a man or boy or a masculine-type girl do the same things. *The more feminine the appearance of the performer, the more dramatic her performance* [emphasis in the original].<sup>8</sup>

To appeal to the fans—men and women, young and old—importance was placed on outward appearances. Granted, the league allowed women to compete and showcase their skills, but society continued to demand that females never lose their womanly charms.

After many strenuous rounds of competition, the remaining women were assigned to a team. Their salaries were unbelievably high compared to forty dollars a week, the average salary during the time. The players could expect to earn anywhere from fifty-five to one hundred and fifty dollars a week. Many women saw the league as a fantasy, where they got paid to do what they loved, an experience few of their sisters enjoyed. In the first year of the league, only sixty-four women fit Wrigley's mold. Dorothy "Dottie" Schroeder, one of the select few, was the only girl who played all twelve seasons for the league. She became a standout performer and fan favorite for the South Bend Blue Sox, the Kenosha Comets, the Fort Wayne Daisies, and the Kalamazoo Lassies.<sup>9</sup> To be standout performers and fan favorites the All-Americans were required to attend charm school and wear revealing uniforms.

The public's impression of the players was of utmost importance. Much planning went into the design for the uniforms. The short skirts and satin underpants were designed by Otis Shepard. Shepard was the poster artist responsible for many of Wrigley's billboards.<sup>10</sup> The uniforms resembled belted tunics, with flaring skirts that could easily be hemmed to suit the great variety in height exhibited by the players. They were short sleeved and buttoned up the left side. Satin semi-shorts were worn underneath the skirts and socks were worn rolled up to just beneath the knee. The outfits served Wrigley's purpose, but left much to be desired for protection on the field. The bulging skirt handicapped the pitcher's wind-up as she brushed her hand past her hip. Many "strawberries" were acquired when the skirt failed to protect legs when sliding into bases. Needless to say, the skirts were impractical from an athletic standpoint.

Chaperones and charm school worked in conjunction to mold the ball players into the ladies they were expected to be at all times. Chaperones were integral parts of each team. They were expected to

enforce the feminine code, be the girls' confidantes, provide moral support, act as mother figures and friends, and serve as the link between managers and players.<sup>11</sup> The chaperones were expected to act as surrogate parents because many of the ball players were young girls under the age of eighteen. To reinforce discipline, fines were set at ten dollars for ejection from a game and fifty dollars for appearing publicly in sloppy attire.<sup>12</sup> Chaperones made sure the girls did not smoke, drink, curse or wear slacks in public. Make-up was required and it was the chaperones' job to make sure lipstick was properly applied. Charm schools taught these ladies the fundamentals of proper appearance and manners.

During spring training the players would practice all day and attend charm school at night. Helena Rubenstein's cosmetics company sent associates to lead the charm school. Rubenstein was the feminine ideal of the time, and Wrigley once again saw opportunity. He used her first-class image as another publicity stunt to give the league a classy name. Charm school taught the girls how to do everything from apply rouge to attract a date. Each player received a manual entitled *A Guide for All American Girls* that was the epitome of all things female and dainty. The book listed beauty tools, daily cleansing routines, and tips on how to properly appear in public. The ladies were each required to have cleansing cream, lipstick, rouge, deodorant, face powder, hand lotion, and hair remover in a beauty kit at all the games.<sup>13</sup> The "after game" beauty routine described how to clean and apply makeup for the autograph sessions. As an afterthought the journal reminded the girls to clean any cuts, abrasions, or minor injuries. For these women the emphasis was always on "proper feminine appearances" to sell the goods to the fans. Society enjoyed the girls for the novelty, but many people still believed the woman's place was in the kitchen.

Women during World War II took on roles previously reserved for men. Many women wholeheartedly embraced the opportunities presented to them. They relished the newfound freedom of participating in baseball. But with the success of the league also came criticism. Women not involved in the league found the girls' independence a threat. Female baseball players faced condemnation from even their closest friends. People not involved in the league were unsupportive when women stepped outside their role of "homemakers" and into baseball cleats.

Another common attitude was one of apathy. Many Americans had no idea a women's professional baseball league ever existed. Most people assumed women's only place in baseball was in the stands or in the women's leagues. Some determined females attempted to play baseball on men's teams. When Eleanor Engle, a twenty-four year old stenographer, was signed to the all-male Harrisburg Inter-state League team, the response was less than welcoming. Harrisburg's manager responded to the signing with a forceful, "She'll play when hell freezes over."<sup>14</sup> Baseball was considered a man's sport and a woman's participation was considered interfering. Opponents claimed that dugout language would have to be monitored because it was far too vulgar for a lady's delicate ear. Special dressing rooms would have to be provided and males could not perform at their full potential for fear of hurting a woman on the field.<sup>15</sup> The fans' reactions show how little access women had to baseball outside their own league.

Despite the controversy sparked by the women's league, it was successful for nearly eleven years, from 1943 to 1954. The league's popularity was at an all time high in 1948 when nearly a million fans frequented the ballparks. The All American Girls' Professional Baseball League flourished in towns of 50,000 to 150,000 people where the teams were considered "hometown proud."<sup>16</sup> In early 1950 the league began to decline for a variety of reasons. The men returned home from the war and picked up where they had left off. Television was becoming the predominant source of entertainment and televised the Major League games. However, the women's games were not shown and the female league could not compete with the publicity. And finally, the management of the league became decentralized, causing disorganization, without leadership and direction.

Today, the story of women in baseball needs to be told. Memories of the "diamond gals" quickly faded after the disbanding of the league. The ladies went back to the farms and offices. Many got married and started families. News coverage slowly faded away and the fans found new heroes. It seemed that America no longer needed these women who played for the love of the game. Until the release of the movie, *A League of Their Own* in 1992, few people remembered that women had ever played hardball. In November 1988, the Baseball Hall of Fame opened an exhibit devoted to the women of the All American Girls' Professional Baseball League, in response to a campaign on behalf of the remaining All-Americans.<sup>17</sup> The country apparently wants to

forget women's contribution to baseball. There is no mention of the league or any of the athletes in the *Baseball Encyclopedia: The Complete and Official Record of Major League Baseball* or in *Total Baseball: Baseball's Ultimate Biographical Reference*. Some of the players themselves do not see a positive outlook for the future of ladies and baseball. When asked if women should have their own league now, Earlene Risinger stated, "I doubt if anyone will come up with the money to form one. However, we do have many excellent softball players out there."<sup>18</sup> Females have been confined to softball as a substitute for baseball. These women realize that baseball will never be seen as a women's sport, or even a dual-gender one. Dottie Schroeder later reflected, "It was nice while it lasted and I would not have missed it for the world. But that's the past ... and it'll never come around again."<sup>19</sup>

## Notes

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# **Mark R. Baum**

## **Critical Mass: The Crisis of American Intervention at Dien Bien Phu**

For nearly three months in 1954, in a remote valley in northwest Vietnam, there transpired a battle as pivotal and intense as Gettysburg, Normandy, or Stalingrad. The desperate struggle for Dien Bien Phu, between paratroops and Legionaries of the French Union Army of Indochina and the communist Vietminh produced a decisive victory for the latter, effectively sealing the fate of French Indochina. Dien Bien Phu represented a unique juncture in history, a crossroads where the destiny of a colony that had struggled for over a thousand years for its freedom was manifested at the expense of a nation that seemingly had little left to lose. The battle marked the end of an era for France's Southeast Asian Empire, and established America as the primary caretaker of democratic Indochina. Moreover, the heated debate concerning intervention revealed rifts not only between post-World War II allies, but in the American military and political power structure as well. Coming close on the heels of Korea, Dien Bien Phu provided another test of America's containment policy and pushed the nation to the brink of warfare to thwart communism again. The harrowing siege, one of the bloodiest and most protracted engagements of the wars for Vietnam and the crisis of American intervention at Dien Bien Phu, became the catalysts for the two decades of strife and warfare that followed in Southeast Asia. <sup>1</sup>

Following Japan's surrender in 1945, France's far eastern colonies that had been under Japanese occupation during World War II were returned to their European benefactors. This return to empirical colonialism occurred much to the chagrin of many Vietnamese, particularly the Vietnamese Independence League, led by Ho Chi Minh. Despite the League's attempts at political bargaining to gain autonomy, the negotiations collapsed and it became apparent that France had no intentions of granting the colony freedom. Their political means having been exhausted, Ho Chi Minh and his compatriots began a campaign of guerilla warfare in 1946, designed to force the French to relinquish their control over Indochina. Thus began the First Indochina War.

By 1953, the French retained a most precarious hold over the eastern quarter of northern Vietnam; their defenses stretched thin around the key Red River Delta cities of Haiphong and Hanoi. The remainder of northern Vietnam, save for a few isolated French garrisons,

was under the control of Ho Chi Minh and his militant communist insurgent forces, the Vietminh. The French had been desperately seeking a decisive victory for more than seven years, launching numerous operations and establishing a series of jungle outposts to draw the Vietminh into battle and relieve the immense pressure on the Red River security zone. The French were convinced that they could achieve victory by luring the Vietnamese into a conventional set-piece battle, where the Europeans could deploy their armor and aircraft, weaponry of which the French enjoyed a monopoly, without impediment. To facilitate such a battle, the terrain had to be agreeable; wide-open expanses of gently rolling countryside like that of western Europe were the most preferable but, unfortunately, were in short supply in northern Vietnam. The only such feasible terrain in northern Indochina was by the Red River Delta, where the French had constructed a series of outposts and static defense systems dubbed the "DeLattre Line." But, initiating a large scale, potentially decisive battle in the midst of the Delta security zone was out of the question, once again necessitating that the French fight on disagreeable terrain.

Despite the topographical limitations in the remainder of the country, the French attempted to establish fortified outposts throughout the rugged terrain of northern Vietnam. These remote fortifications, christened "hedgehogs," were constructed along highways and Vietminh interdiction and supply routes.<sup>2</sup> Despite their isolated nature and subsequent propensity for encirclement and siege by the communists, the French used the jungle forts to combat the Vietminh on terrain of their own choosing, rather than risking ambush by venturing into the jungle in search of the elusive "Reds." The hedgehogs were hardly impregnable redoubts, however, and had to be routinely abandoned because they were overrun or were in serious danger of being overwhelmed. Despite their vulnerability to siege and difficulty in defense, the hedgehogs were France's only option in the inhospitable territory.

With the dire circumstances facing them in the late summer of 1953, Generals Henri Navarre and Rene Cogny, Commander-in-Chief and Northern Region Commander, respectively, of French forces in Vietnam, developed plans to establish an isolated base in the valley of Dien Bien Phu, located in northwest Vietnam, near the Laotian border. The valley was to serve as an "airhead," an airstrip surrounded by interlocking defensive strongholds manned by infantry, further

supported by entrenched artillery, and covered from the sky by close-air support warplanes. The Generals' ambitious plans called for fourteen battalions of colonial troops, Legionnaires, and paratroops to occupy the valley, supported by seven artillery batteries, and one armored regiment, amounting to roughly ten thousand troops. Observers pointed out that there were incredible risks in occupying the remote valley. Firstly, it was two-hundred twenty nautical miles from Hanoi,<sup>3</sup> placing it at the edge of the French aircraft's operational range, a major factor considering that the garrison was accessible only via air, complicating re-supply, reinforcement, and fire support operations. Additionally, only 107 total aircraft were available in the colony, but due to maintenance and operational losses, only about seventy planes were ever operational simultaneously.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, during the rainy season, the valley received an average of five feet of rain, fifty percent more precipitation than any other valley in northern Indochina.<sup>5</sup> Ringing the valley were mountains that towered two to six thousand feet above the floor, and were a fractured tangle of ravines, gorges, and impenetrable foliage. Finally, the fourteen battalions of combat troops were not sufficient to defend the seventy-five square miles of valley floor; in fact the French did not have enough troops in Indochina to occupy the valley floor. A minimal perimeter around the valley would have required fifty battalions of seven-hundred men, of which the French had only six in Vietnam.<sup>6</sup>

Navarre was convinced that Dien Bien Phu was the ideal locale to conduct a large-scale operation to curb Vietminh infiltration in the area and then bait communist main force units into a conventional, western-style battle. He cited the battle of Na-San in 1952 as a favorable precedent, where a French hedgehog endured communist human wave assaults for weeks, kept alive by airpower and artillery. Under the command of Colonel Christian DeCastries, Operation "Castor" was launched on 20 November 1953, and marked the beginning of the occupation of Dien Bien Phu. After engaging and dispatching several companies of Vietminh that were in the valley, the new tenants immediately set to fortifying the valley. Engineers repaired and lengthened the small existing airstrip, permitting cargo planes to ferry in bulldozers and other equipment to begin construction of the primary fortifications. The defensive system consisted of seven strong points (all bearing women's names, supposedly inspired by DeCastries' mistresses) with interlocking fields of fire, entrenched artillery batteries, and ringed

with a maze of concertina barbed wire. The transformation of the pastoral valley yielded an impressive sight, reportedly inspiring one visitor to liken the fortress to Verdun. When dusk began to fall on 13 March 1954, ten thousand French and colonial troops occupied the jungle bastion, their orderly, geometric positions still unscarred by battle. Then, in a matter of minutes, the valley was ablaze, as great geysers of shattered earth swallowed up the French positions. The communist artillery exacted a terrible price on the paratroops and Legionnaires, who had scarcely taken shelter when Vietminh human wave assaults slammed headlong into their pulverized trenches, beginning a relentless onslaught that would not subside for nearly three months.

The high command in Hanoi was stunned by the ferocity and organization of the Vietminh attack, for Navarre and Cogy had never envisioned the communists being able to summon the massive amounts of material and men they had concentrated at Dien Bien Phu. In fact, General Vo Nguyen Giap had managed to assemble an army ten times as large as what Navarre and Cogy had anticipated. The communist general had more than one hundred thousand troops at his disposal, fifty thousand combatants, and fifty-five thousand logistical personnel.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the Vietminh moved more than eight thousand tons of supplies over mountain trails with bicycles and a small number of antiquated Soviet trucks, exceeding the French's airlifted total of six thousand tons.<sup>8</sup> It was yet another tally on the lengthy list of French miscalculations.

The initial week of battle was a sobering wakeup call for the French, as the first powerful thrusts of the Vietminh attacks shattered the myth of the impregnability of Dien Bien Phu, and drew the attention of wary D.C. and Parisian officials. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director Allen Dulles reported to President Eisenhower that his agency estimated that the defender's odds of holding out were even at fifty-fifty,<sup>9</sup> while French Foreign Minister George Bidault characterized the state of the stronghold as "a deadly trap."<sup>10</sup> French General Paul Ely, Chief of the General Staff for National Defense, was summoned from Paris to provide a situation report for a select group of high-ranking national security figures. Gathering at Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Admiral Arthur Radford's residence on the evening of 20 March, Army Chief of Staff General Matthew Ridgway, Ely, Radford, and Vice President Richard Nixon engaged in an agitated and largely pessimistic discussion about the state of the embattled fortress. Ely affirmed Dulles's estimation of the garrison's odds, but made no indication that

his government sought to widen the conflict by requesting American assistance to aid the far eastern forces. Ely's only requests were of material nature; Paris had provided him with a laundry list of weaponry and equipment that they determined the French forces required.

In the wake of Ely's briefing, the top U.S. officials were split over what response would be required if the situation at Dien Bien Phu declined to the point that American intervention would be necessary. J.C.S. chairman Radford was the most vocal proponent of intervention in Indochina; he began a courtship of General Ely immediately after the dinner party, and methodically impressed upon the Frenchman that the U.S. would bail out the garrison with airpower if necessary.<sup>11</sup> The Admiral predicted that the French could lose the battle at any time and that such a defeat would open the floodgates for a communist takeover in Indochina. In truth, Radford had more calculated objectives; he had long sought a more substantial American role in Vietnam, and looked for an opportunity to test his interpretation of the "New Look," the use of atomic weapons in a conventional capacity.<sup>12</sup> Whenever possible, Radford played up the significance of Dien Bien Phu and its relation to the domino effect, attempting to sway the J.C.S. and President Eisenhower in favor of intervention under the guise of containing communism.

General Ridgway, on the other hand, was unabashedly opposed to intervention in Indochina. Responding to Ely's request for additional material aid, the Chief of Staff commented that it was a waste "to support a war that was conducted only half-heartedly by the French, and had no substantial prospect of decisive victory."<sup>13</sup> He was dismayed at the prospect of committing American forces to Indochina, and argued that such an undertaking would result in a war of attrition more costly and protracted than Korea. Ridgway was convinced that air strikes against Indochina would not be decisive, but rather preliminary, to the eventual commitment of ground forces.

Bridging the gap between the Admiral and General was Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who was not opposed to intervention, but rather the time and conditions of intervention. In a 26 March cabinet meeting, Dulles insisted that the battle for Dien Bien Phu represented only the slightest of military importance, and that the administration should not allow it to detract from the primary goal of securing all of Indochina.<sup>14</sup> The Secretary theorized that if the U.S. were to intervene and preserve Dien Bien Phu, the French would cut their

losses and move directly to the bargaining table at Geneva to extricate themselves from the conflict with the leverage gained by a victory at Dien Bien Phu. It was Dulles's intention to intervene conditionally, requesting independence for Indochina, French cooperation with American military advisers, and a promise to continue fighting until they won the war in exchange for intervention.<sup>15</sup> Dulles was prepared to intervene when the political details were confirmed; he opposed immediate, unqualified action to save Dien Bien Phu.

By 27 March, the situation at Dien Bien Phu had deteriorated significantly, to the point that the French began to raise the serious possibility of American intervention on behalf of the beleaguered garrison. The defenders had surrendered three of the original seven strongpoints, and then had been pushed off two makeshift strongpoints, while another to the south, where the majority of the tank corps was stationed, was cut off. The communist artillery had destroyed all the French aircraft and helicopters stationed at the fortress and cratered the runway. Flak coverage over the valley was so intense that veteran pilots deemed it to be more ferocious than the flak over Germany during World War II. The French artillery commander, Colonel Charles Piroth, who before the battle had boasted that his batteries would flatten the outlying hills if the Vietminh were to occupy them, committed suicide after the majority of his guns were disabled by the communists, the remainder too feeble to offer any meaningful resistance. The flak forced cargo planes to drop their supplies from ever increasing altitudes, thus guaranteeing a sizable portion of their payloads would fall into enemy hands. As demoralizing as the supplies falling just beyond their decimated ranks was, more disturbing were the labyrinth of enemy trenches slowly enveloping the fortress.

The creeping tendrils of the Vietminh trench system signaled the end of Giap's first phase of battle, as he transitioned from costly human wave attacks to slow strangulation of the fortress. The shift in tactics was accompanied by the monsoon storms of the rainy season, which conspired with the trenches to produce a scene reminiscent of the First World War's Western Front. DeCastries even requested that he be provided with the French field manuals pertaining to trench warfare (unrevised since 1916).<sup>16</sup> When the fighting entered its second phase on 30 March, the Vietminh pummeled the fortress with renewed vigor. The airstrip fell, along with a pair of strongholds. The swollen Nam Yum River overtopped its banks and flooded the southern French positions,

and men and material were swallowed by the soupy quagmire produced by the incessant downpours. After receiving the bleak reports from the front, Navarre cabled Paris on 3 April to ask that the War Council appeal for American intervention at once.<sup>17</sup>

General Ely convened France's top military leaders on the evening of 4 April in response to Navarre's cable to discuss the grave situation that faced them if Dien Bien Phu was to fall, and their options to prevent such a catastrophe. After extensive deliberation, the War Council recommended that Premier Joseph Laniel and Foreign Minister Bidault tender a request with U.S. Ambassador Douglas Dillon to intervene with "Operation Vulture," airstrikes on the Vietminh positions around Dien Bien Phu. Laniel stressed that immediate intervention was necessary, "before the end of the week," and that "only this operation can save the garrison at Dien Bien Phu."<sup>18</sup> "Vulture" was to consist of two principal components, a conventional bombing strike by B-29 Superfortresses and four hundred carrier based fighter aircraft utilized to provide air cover.<sup>19</sup> The ninety-eight Superfortresses stationed on Okinawa and at Clark Field in the Philippines would deliver fourteen hundred tons of bombs onto the hills surrounding Dien Bien Phu and the rear echelon and supply columns supporting the communists. The fighters would be launched from the carriers *Wasp* and *Essex* to defend against possible retaliatory strikes by Chinese MiG's, which could be intervening on behalf of their communist brethren. "Vulture" was immediately controversial and fraught with peril, because of potential political and military ramifications. The French hinted that one strike would probably not be sufficient to break the siege, and therefore the U.S. may have to conduct reprisal raids, extending their military commitment. If the Chinese were to become involved in the conflict and provide ground forces and air support, a situation much like Korea could unfold, and a wider U.S. role would be required.

Washington reacted with mixed emotions to the French request. Radford was encouraged, as it finally looked as if his plan for intervention would come to fruition; Ridgway was incensed, as to him it was an invitation for disaster; while Dulles was frustrated, his plans for metered, conditional intervention were now compromised. The most important opinion, however, resided within the confines of the Oval Office. When Dulles called and informed President Eisenhower of the French request, the commander in chief took the news badly. He considered the solicitation to be another in a long line of French "whims"

for aid, which they expected to be satisfied. Eisenhower fumed over French handling of the war and American aid, and suggested that Dulles look into some other way to help the French, but he said, "We cannot engage in active war."<sup>20</sup>

Ike was still determined to prevent the dominoes from falling in Southeast Asia, however, and to ensure that Vietnam was not the trip, he sought to provide some type of framework for support of the French. Eisenhower and his staff drafted a trio of guidelines, that if secured would greenlight some form of intervention. American involvement would be contingent upon three conditions: (1) United States intervention would be part of coalition action with Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines; (2) the French would accelerate their independence program for democratic Vietnam; and (3) the French would remain in the Indochina War until its culmination.<sup>21</sup> To many observers it appeared that Eisenhower was providing the platform for intervention, but in reality his actions were calculated for a different effect. Having long been champion of the "middle way," the soldier president hoped his conditional guidelines would produce either of two conciliatory results: military action justified by a multinational coalition; or a lack of allied support that would render intervention impossible. The latter was most preferable for Ike, who sought to circumvent and stall intervention by placing an insurmountable roadblock in its path, allowing him to transfer and assign responsibility to another party. Eisenhower was confident that the proposal's complexities and demands would stall the issue long enough to prevent the U.S. from having to intervene at Dien Bien Phu. As purveyor of the intervention proposal, he appeared to be taking a proactive approach, but was actually skirting the issue. If his stalling tactics did not work and the conditions were met, he could simply defer the matter to Congress, whose permission was necessary for a strike regardless. Either way Eisenhower hoped to avoid the controversy of having to make the decision to intervene.

As a precaution, however, military advisors were immediately consulted as to whether "Vulture" or a similar operation was feasible and if it would have a serious impact on the battle. Secretary of State Dulles dispatched General Joseph Caldara, Chief of the United States Far East Air Force Bomber Command, to Hanoi to assess the situation and determine whether "Vulture" could get off the ground. For nearly three weeks, Caldara made aerial observations of the battlefield and concluded that a B-29 strike would have to be extremely precise due to the

extensive intermingling and close proximity of the rival forces. "Smoky Joe" produced a litany of requirements to perform the surgical strike and pointed out that such an operation would require organization on an almost unprecedented scale. The French would need to provide several key elements: radar coverage to monitor the whole of northern Vietnam and adjacent Chinese airspace, precisely positioned high visibility smoke markers to demarcate targets, and mobile response teams to extricate U.S. airmen in the event that they be forced down.<sup>22</sup> The Americans would have to coordinate an operation the likes of which had rarely been undertaken. BomCom's typical missions in Korea usually involved only forty-five to sixty B-29s, operating against static, strategic targets; now they were being asked to attack poorly defined tactical targets with almost twice the aircraft and at more than triple the range.<sup>23</sup> Despite the uncertainties involved, General Caldara wrote in his official report that "Vulture" could have effectively destroyed the entire enemy force.<sup>24</sup>

In the meantime, Eisenhower's appeal for united coalition action went unheeded, as the British would not consent to becoming involved in a colonial dispute and were not willing to provoke the Chinese or Russians into entering the war either. The United States, lacking the endorsement of their primary ally and unwilling to bear the financial and military brunt of the intervention, further stalled the French until mid-April, when Secretary of State Dulles officially informed France that the United States could not undertake "Vulture" without allied support. The President had accomplished his goal of stalling the issue, but with Dien Bien Phu still alive, was not out of the woods yet.

The crestfallen French appealed to the Americans to reconsider, but Ike reiterated that his terms had been unfulfilled and the U.S. would not intervene without coalition support and congressional approval. Desperate, the War Council asked for a loan of twenty B-29s to be piloted by French pilots. The National Security Council dismissed the proposal, deeming the French "incapable" of flying the Superfortresses effectively.<sup>25</sup> Unable to convince the Americans through diplomatic means to intervene, the French then resorted to coercion in an attempt to force the Yankees' hands. With the Geneva Conference negotiations fast approaching, the French suggested that if Dien Bien Phu were to fall, they would have to agree to the communists' terms, no matter how egregious. Foreign Minister Bidault threatened that Geneva would be won or lost depending on Dien Bien Phu, and France would negotiate a settlement without regard for D.C. if America stood by passively.<sup>26</sup>

While the French innuendos did present a threat to American foreign policy interests, President Eisenhower and the majority of his cabinet dismissed the comments as last ditch attempts to draw America into the conflict. Dulles sensed that the French were serious and that if the U.S. wanted a dominant role in Indochina, Dien Bien Phu had to be preserved, because the French had resigned hope of prevailing in the battle for their colony. The Secretary of State turned one hundred eighty degrees; he believed that if democracy was to have a future in Southeast Asia, immediate intervention was now necessary.<sup>27</sup>

But, with all avenues to intervention seemingly closed, Dulles made a radical proposition to the French. In a conversation with General Ely a week after "Vulture" was ruled out, the Secretary mentioned the possibility of supplying the French with a pair of atomic bombs to be used against the Vietminh.<sup>28</sup> It was never Dulles' intention to actually lobby for atomic weapons to be authorized or deployed, though. The Secretary knew "the psychological effect would be tremendous"<sup>29</sup> on the eve of the Geneva Conference and may have provided the leverage necessary to negotiate a settlement that was favorable to American foreign policy interests. The proposal was simply a last ditch attempt to rally the faltering French and intimidate the Vietminh at Geneva. The subject of atomic intervention had been previously broached by Admiral Radford who had proposed to drop three tactical atomic bombs around Dien Bien Phu and on Vietminh supply dumps along the Chinese border.<sup>30</sup> To the desperate French, the bombs were not out of the question. They contended that the blast radius would be small enough not to impact the garrison, would destroy the majority of Vietminh personnel, and dissuade the Chinese or Soviets from entering the fray with the show of force. The Americans pointed out that the blast may not consume the fortress, but the thermal radiation would disperse quickly and claim as many French as Vietminh. Not to mention that detonating atomic bombs would undoubtedly spur the Chinese and the U.S.S.R. to retaliate, perhaps with atomic weapons in the case of the latter nation. The idea of dropping the bombs was ultimately shot down by Premier Laniel, who realized the French were not prepared to take on the responsibility, and conceded that, even with the fate of Dien Bien Phu and the whole of Indochina in the balance, it "was out of the question."<sup>31</sup>

Ultimately, the French were left to fend for themselves and the garrison struggled to survive for another eight days before the Vietminh

overran the final central stronghold on 7 May. The ravaged valley was the final resting place for nearly ninety-two hundred French Union servicemen, while another thirty-six hundred were missing in action.<sup>32</sup> The Vietminh are estimated to have suffered a staggering twenty-three thousand casualties at Dien Bien Phu, a total that would not be exceeded until the Tet Offensive of 1968.<sup>33</sup> The communists took 16,554 French and colonial troops prisoner. Less than three thousand survived to be repatriated just two months later, which raised serious questions about the humanity of their captors.<sup>34</sup> Despite the magnitude of the battle and its direct impact on the pair of tumultuous decades that followed, it was the pivotal events of those years that overshadowed Dien Bien Phu. The French signed a cease-fire agreement at Geneva, and withdrew from Vietnam. Soon after, they forfeited their colonial possessions in Africa after engaging in a protracted guerilla war there. The U.S. became directly involved in Vietnam, supplying financial aid and military advisors to the democratic South, eventually committing combat troops and marshaling a war against North Vietnam, which lasted for a dozen years and claimed nearly sixty thousand American servicemen. President Eisenhower was unable to avoid controversy; along with the conclusion of the hostilities, there ensued a furious barrage of finger pointing every bit as intense as the communist artillery. The French blamed the Americans, maintaining that B-29 strikes would have defeated the Vietminh and relieved the garrison. The Americans blamed the British, chastising them for not allying themselves with their French and American comrades. Thus was lost the most important aspect of the battle: shrouded in the political blame game were the tactical, strategic, and political lessons of Dien Bien Phu. The French defeat should have refuted western military beliefs that it was possible to conduct a conventional war against guerilla forces, and reinforced the need for troop mobility and rapid strike and response tactics. The Vietminh's ability to transport massive amounts of supplies and concentrate large amounts of troops and heavy weaponry, despite diligent French aerial monitoring and attacks, demonstrated a high level of logistical organization and efficiency on the part of General Giap and his subordinates. Finally, the overall failure and enormous expense of maintaining isolated outposts in inhospitable terrain begged western strategists to formulate a new approach for luring guerilla forces into a favorable battleground. The Vietminh's resolve and nationalistic desire signaled that they would not rest until Vietnam was united under a

communist government or until they had been completely vanquished. Dien Bien Phu attested to the fact that if the U.S. was going to dislodge Ho Chi Minh and his communist legions, they would have to be dedicated to conducting total war. It was these lessons, provided by the tremendous sacrifice of ten thousand French Union troops, that served America well less than a decade later, when its own troops set foot on Vietnamese soil, to renew a fight that might have been finished in a small valley in northwest Vietnam just a few years before.

## Notes

- 1 The best general introduction to the intervention crisis is Bernard Fall, *Hell In A Very Small Place* (Philadelphia: Lippincott Company, 1967), 6.
- 2 Bernard Fall, *Street Without Joy* (New York: Shocken Books, 1972), 56.
- 3 Fall, 6.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 130.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 39.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 52.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 452.
- 9 Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate For Change* (New York: Doubleday Press, 1963), 344.
- 10 George Bidault, *Resistance*, Trans. Marianne Sinclair (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1965), 195.
- 11 Melanie Billings-Yun, *Decision Against War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 37.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 35.
- 13 Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier* (New York: Harper, 1956), 276.
- 14 Billings-Yun, 58.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 59.
- 16 John Prados, *The Sky Would Fall: Operation Vulture: The U.S. Bombing Mission in Indochina, 1954* (New York: Dial Press, 1983), 83.
- 17 Henri Navarre, *Agonie de l'Indochine, 1953-54* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1956), 242, as cited in John Prados, *The Sky Would Fall: Operation Vulture: The U.S. Bombing Mission in Indochina, 1954* (New York: Dial Press, 1983)..
- 18 Joseph Laniel, *Le Drame Indochinois* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1956), 84-5, as quoted in John Prados, *The Sky Would Fall: Operation Vulture: The U.S. Bombing Mission in Indochina, 1954* (New York: Dial Press, 1983).
- 19 Prados, 147.
- 20 Billings-Yun, 107.

- 21 Prados, 111.
- 22 Fall, *Hell*, 306.
- 23 Prados, 147.
- 24 Joseph Caldara, *Memorandum for the Record* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 1966), 2.
- 25 Billings-Yun, 109.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 106.
- 27 Arthur W Radford, *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: The Memoirs of Admiral Arthur W. Radford*, Ed. Stephen Jurika (Stanford: Hoover Press, 1980), 403.
- 28 Prados, 152.
- 29 Lawrence S. Kaplan, Denise Artaud, and Mark R. Rubin, eds. *Dien Bien Phu and the Crisis of Franco-American Relations 1954-55* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1990), 114.
- 30 Billings-Yun, 120.
- 31 Paul Ely, *Memoires* (Paris: Librarie Plon, 1964), 223, as quoted in John Prados, *The Sky Would Fall: Operation Vulture: The U.S. Bombing Mission in Indochina, 1954* (New York: Dial Press, 1983).
- 32 Fall, *Hell*, 484.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 487.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 438.



# **Rivanna J. Abel**

## **The Civil Rights Movement: The Impact of Two Organizations**

Social movements in the United States rarely have the far-reaching impact of the Civil Rights Movement. Spanning the better part of the 1950s and 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement became the nation's Second Reconstruction. As with the Reconstruction that followed the Civil War, Americans in the twentieth century saw drastic revisions in their everyday lives. Voter registration drives increased black participation at the polls; sit-ins and marches integrated public facilities; *Brown vs. Board of Education* mandated that separate was inherently unequal in educational facilities. There are many explanations for why the changes that occurred during the Second Reconstruction would not be as short-lived as those of the First Reconstruction. However, the main explanation for this was that the Civil Rights Movement was created, led, and organized by African Americans at the grassroots level rather than Northern white interest groups, often liberals who wanted reform to forward their own careers.

This explanation of the movement has guided my exploration of two main organizations of the Civil Rights Movement, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The purpose of this paper is to identify and trace the origins of these civil rights organizations, outline their outstanding actions, and examine their impact on the Civil Rights Movement.

The Civil Rights Movement was a cumulative response and fight against the economic and political decisions made by the nation's federal and local governments. This fight was initiated long before the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, and began with the creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP, 1909), and such movement halfway houses as the Fellowship of Reconstruction (1915) and Highlander Folk School (1931).<sup>1</sup> The NAACP and the movement halfway houses, though important in their own right, can be followed through the twentieth century and into the SCLC and SNCC. The SCLC adopted the NAACP's initial premise of multiracial harmony, as well as the intellectual assumption that reform must be attacked from a philosophical standpoint. This led the SCLC to adopt non-violence as its means for social change. The SCLC was not as

elitist as the “Talented Tenth” that comprised the NAACP, but consisted mainly of African-American middle-class citizens.<sup>2</sup> These were Southern blacks interested in ending the racial caste system that was so ingrained in the Southern states with the top-down model that the U.S. court system offered. The SCLC abided by the laws already in place and worked to pass other and more powerful laws, such as the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, to end racism.

The SCLC, similar in many ways to the NAACP, diverted from the path paved by the former organization in two primary ways. First, the SCLC worked at the grassroots level to implement change, rather than on the level of legalities. Second, the SCLC was headed by religious men rather than secular ones. This difference in leadership led to a difference in philosophy, but encouraged similar class divisions in the SCLC as those present in the NAACP. Whereas the NAACP relied heavily on the few upper-class and wealthier middle-class African Americans to test the courts, thus disregarding the masses of lower middle-class and blue collar African Americans, the SCLC made attempts to draw in the lower classes to their local struggles for equality. However, the boycotts and marches that became the hallmark of the SCLC continued to be time-consuming and expensive for the lower classes, just as litigation was too costly when previously offered by the NAACP. The SCLC also alienated those African-Americans unwilling to fight non-violently, and those who felt that the position of non-violence correlated with the ineffective moderation already offered by the United States court system.

Moderation was useless in the fight for civil rights at the turn of the twentieth century when the NAACP made it their strategy, and it should have ceased by the 1950s when the Civil Rights Movement came into the national spotlight. Like the NAACP lawyers, who understood that the changes desired by lower-class black people would have to be acquired gradually, black preachers and organizers of the SCLC knew that change would not come overnight. The systematic barring of blacks from employment opportunities, homes, and schools because of their skin color could not be rescinded by legislation alone, but would require action on the part of African Americans. Thus, the SCLC's ability to use direct action against the racism practiced in the U.S. grew from but was not wholly dependent upon the legal precedents set forth by the NAACP in the first half of the century.<sup>3</sup> Hence, with the introduction of the SCLC, religion would no longer be an opiate to the masses.

The SCLC was a tightly knit organization of black ministers from across the South, who had access to blacks through networks created by Protestant churches in America. The SCLC was formed in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama to facilitate the Montgomery Bus Boycott. During this protest against a segregated transportation system, nightly mass meetings were held to mobilize, encourage, and reassure blacks that their goals were far greater than the local struggle. Black people refused to ride the buses and walked to their destinations, or were driven in established car pools. African Americans realized they could not accept the partial freedoms that the nation's upper-class whites were allowing minorities access to. In the struggle for civil rights, it was the poor and oppressed black people who were buying their own freedom with their minute finances, and working-class African Americans who emptied their pockets to keep the SCLC functioning.

After a year of weary feet, the Montgomery Bus Boycott came to a successful close, which pumped new life into the Civil Rights Movement. The SCLC's dynamic speaker and leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., became the spokesman for the entire Movement, promoting a non-violent philosophy. The nightly mass meetings continued even after the success of the bus boycott, and Dr. King traveled across the South to participate. He was able to mobilize people because of their similarities, such as religious affiliations, and belief that the racial caste system was wrong, immoral, and unjust. This mobilization led to protest action in major cities across the South throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Following the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the SCLC entered Birmingham (1963) and Selma (1965), Alabama.

Birmingham, Alabama was home to three-hundred fifty-thousand people in the 1960s, with almost forty percent of them African Americans.<sup>4</sup> Fred Shuttlesworth, the minister of Bethel Baptist Church and founder of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR), was heavily involved in the creation of the SCLC.<sup>5</sup> In 1963, the ACMHR had been waging war against the Birmingham segregated social and economic systems for nearly a decade, and Shuttlesworth strongly felt that the only way to completely desegregate the city was to call in the SCLC and combine the forces of Birmingham's black population with Dr. King's leadership.<sup>6</sup> Project C, as SCLC's Birmingham effort came to be known, began in April 1963.

The plan of attack was a three-pronged initiative that was to begin with sit-ins in the department stores downtown, move to protest

marches throughout the economic centers of the city, and end with the implementation of a biracial school desegregation commission.<sup>7</sup> In addition to these immediate gains, the Civil Rights workers in Birmingham meant to use the city as an example for the rest of the nation. Birmingham had become “the country’s chief symbol of racial intolerance” and the SCLC felt that if Birmingham capitulated to the non-violent confrontation of the movement, then other cities in the South would not be difficult to desegregate.<sup>8</sup> Birmingham was a success for the SCLC. The immediate effect of the three-pronged attack was to efficiently separate the political from the economic structures within the city. Birmingham business leaders, and their Northern outlets and corporate managers, quickly found that segregation was less profitable than integration. The long term motivation of Birmingham’s success was the initiation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.<sup>9</sup>

The SCLC then proceeded to attack Selma, Alabama because of its systematic racial discrimination against blacks. In the spring of 1965, Selma’s blacks outnumbered the white population. In contrast, only three percent of the African Americans were registered to vote.<sup>10</sup> SNCC sent organizers to Selma in 1961 to register voters, but due to biased registration procedures, SNCC made little progress getting black people to the polls.<sup>11</sup> Thus, it was with reservations that Selma’s organizers asked Dr. King and the SCLC to come to the city and put an end to the racial discrimination.

With the move of the SCLC into Selma, national media coverage was focused on the city unlike any that SNCC had been able to muster in the previous two years. Again, SCLC did not enter the city simply to desegregate locally, but to impact the nation as a whole. The SCLC’s main purpose was to organize African Americans to vote. This led to marches dominated for the most part by black schoolteachers and their students.<sup>12</sup> These professionals had college degrees and were in charge of educating the black children of Selma. Yet, at the county courthouse, the registration officers often failed these men and women on the voter registration examinations, citing illiteracy as the reason. The SCLC was present in Selma for less than three months, but their short stay helped to usher in the Civil Rights Act of 1965, also known as the Voting Rights Act.

The Selma experience also marked a turning point in the Civil Rights Movement. The moderation that Dr. King used in 1955 to garner support from middle-class blacks and whites across the nation seemed

useless in 1965 to the masses of blacks whose social standing was that of working- and lower-class status. Despite his charisma and effort, Dr. King could not reach the black youth and those African Americans who felt that the time for moderation had ended.

It was difficult for African-American high school and college students to see that legal precedents had to be set before the system of racial injustice could be changed. They wanted direct action, such as sit-ins and protests, to dismantle the hypocritical system they were forced to endure. After learning about and witnessing wars for freedom, they were tired of living in a nation where they could not vote, hold political office, and were denied access to hotel accommodations and restaurants. This generation wanted changes implemented in American society that would positively impact all classes of African Americans, not only the middle and upper classes. They joined in the picketing of chain and local stores that used discriminatory hiring practices and mistreated black customers, and took these demonstrations beyond the limits of Dr. King's and the SCLC's initial plans. This younger generation was not satisfied with handshakes or compromises that Birmingham and Montgomery had created, and they demanded policy implementation and immediate change, such as that seen in Little Rock, Arkansas.<sup>13</sup> As the Highlander Folk School had realized a generation earlier, these young men and women also recognized the dire need of African-American participation in the political system. It was apparent to SNCC students that participation in the political sphere heightened the possibility of changing the unjust system.

SNCC filled the generational gap that the SCLC was unable to bridge. SNCC was comprised of college students and had no hierarchy of officers. It began as independent organizations of black college students across the United States, all of whom relied on non-violence as a tactic to enact change. SNCC was organized by Ella Baker, a major mover and shaker, but behind the scenes. Baker began her protest career as soon as she received her degree from Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, in the mid-1920s. She moved to Pittsburgh, where she helped develop the Young Negro Cooperation League during the 1930s, and by 1943 she was the Director of Branches for the NAACP. Baker's belief that "movement organizations should not be built around leaders ... [that] for peoples movements to be effective, participants must encourage and build local leadership among the masses ..." became readily apparent with the formation of SNCC.<sup>14</sup>

In April 1960, Ella Baker called a meeting of university and college students at her alma mater where the integrated organization of SNCC was born.<sup>15</sup> The students came together in direct response to the unfilled needs of African-American youth. SNCC members participated in all types of direct action, such as sit-ins and marches, waiting in lines at the court house to register to vote, and providing transportation for black voters on election days. They maintained Freedom Schools to educate Southern blacks about the importance of voting and how to interpret their respective state constitutions, enabling Southern blacks to pass the voter registration examination.<sup>16</sup> SNCC was one of the most active of these civil rights organizations, particularly during the summers when the students were on vacation.

Before its incorporation by Ella Baker, SNCC participants began to retaliate against the racist system of the United States. In 1960, college students across the nation began sit-ins at lunch counters and restaurants across the South. Sit-ins were not a new form of action. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s there had been sporadic sit-ins throughout the northern and border states.<sup>17</sup> Hence, the sit-in movement of the 1960s proved to be different not because of the use of direct action, but because of the location and sudden explosion in the number of protests being conducted. College students wanted immediate change in their surroundings, and sit-ins produced that change. Once SNCC was organized, the sit-ins led to other non-violent direct action, such as participation in the Freedom Rides of 1961, and voter registration campaigns held throughout the 1960s.

The Freedom Rides, organized by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), first began in 1947, under the title "Journey of Reconciliation." This was a journey of CORE members through states in the upper-South, including Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas to reconcile black and white interstate bus riders. This first bus ride was uneventful compared to both the intent and experience of the riders on the second trip, which took place in 1961. The passengers, referred to in 1947 and 1961 as the Freedom Riders, first targeted the seating on interstate buses where the riders reversed the seating rules so that blacks sat in the front seats and whites in the back seats. In 1961, the Journey was renamed the Freedom Ride, and the riders were to test not only the seating on the buses, but the integration of bus terminals. The route was extended to include Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

The Freedom Ride began in Washington, D.C. and moved quickly through the states of the upper-South. The trip was slated to take thirteen days, with all of the CORE participants flying home from New Orleans on 17 May 1961. Due to excessive violence inflicted on the Riders by white Southerners as the busses traveled through the Deep South, including the states of Alabama and Mississippi, the Freedom Ride was extended throughout the entire summer of 1961. Thirteen CORE members left from Washington, D.C. the first week of May. By Mother's Day, SNCC began adding their members to replace those of CORE who had been wounded or arrested during the Ride. By August, 328 Freedom Riders, many of them SNCC students, were in Parchman State Penitentiary in Mississippi.<sup>18</sup>

SNCC's most productive summer was that of 1964. "Mississippi called it an invasion, [but] blacks called it the Freedom Summer."<sup>19</sup> It was during this summer that Mississippi blacks were organized under the leadership of Bob Moses, a black SNCC veteran from New York, and Fannie Lou Hamer, a black middle-aged Mississippi native. Bob Moses, a philosophy major who studied pacifism and the existentialists, began working with the students of SNCC as soon as the sit-in movement began in 1959.<sup>20</sup> One of SNCC's early destinations was Mississippi, and Moses was a member of the first SNCC contingents sent to the state. Fannie Lou Hamer, the youngest of twenty children born to a sharecropper, and a timekeeper on a sharecropping farm herself, found her niche amidst the hard working students of SNCC in the summers of 1962 and 1963.<sup>21</sup> Hamer lost her job and her home after she attempted to register to vote, but her time-keeping hours were rapidly replaced as she began to spend her days with the members of SNCC. Hamer helped to integrate SNCC, and fought especially hard to bring Northern white college students into Mississippi for the Freedom Summer.

Prior to the Freedom Summer, SNCC spread into the small towns and cities of Mississippi, became part of the local population in order to encourage grassroots level leadership, and worked untiringly to register African Americans to vote. In 1961, SNCC based themselves in McComb, Mississippi, just north of the Louisiana line.<sup>22</sup> As SNCC workers implemented door-to-door campaigns to encourage McComb's black residents to vote, they met immediate resistance from white Mississippians. As punishment for recruiting Mississippi blacks to the ballot box, SNCC organizers became quickly accustomed to spending their nights in jail.<sup>23</sup> SNCC worked for three years on voter registration

campaigns before the final thrust of action in 1964 produced Freedom Summer.

Throughout the summer of 1964, SNCC conducted Freedom Schools and registered voters with the help of "nine hundred white volunteers," who were primarily from the North.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, they formed the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), and using the guidelines of the Democratic National Convention, selected sixty-eight delegates to attend the fall convention in Atlantic City.<sup>25</sup> The MFDP delegates were the only representatives of any Southern Democratic party to be elected without racist restrictions, and to have an integrated composition. The MFDP was refused seats at the Democratic National Convention, but was successful in registering eighty thousand Mississippi blacks, and proving that they did indeed want to vote. It was not apathy that kept African Americans from the polls, but racism and intimidation by Mississippi whites.

While the SCLC focused on encouraging state and federal politicians to introduce and pass civil rights legislation, SNCC worked to eliminate injustice at the grassroots level. The participants in SNCC often experienced the brunt of white anger and backlash as a result of their two main weapons: direct action and voter registration. These were the most inflammatory to the Southern white community, which demanded blacks stay in their place according to Jim Crow laws. In theory, the legislation that the SCLC encouraged would enact immediate change, but it was actions such as the Freedom Rides and Freedom Summer that affected the most immediate conversion within American society. Although both of these organizations depended on the same mass of people for support, each had individual strategies to bring to the battlefield of civil rights.

The Civil Rights Movement was more than the two organizations discussed in this paper. It was a social movement that impacted the entire nation and left marked changes on the society from which it emerged. Although none of the Civil Rights organizations was created spontaneously or without the aid of members from the other civil rights groups, each left a distinct mark on the movement. And yet, without their collective effort, the Civil Rights Movement would not have been as successful, because each organization attracted a different constituency of the black population. It was only as a whole that the groups were able to mobilize African Americans in what history deems

the Civil Rights Movement, or the Second Reconstruction of the United States.

## Notes

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- 1 A movement halfway house is an established group or organization that is only partially integrated into the larger society, because its participants are actively involved in efforts to bring about a desired change in society. Thus, FOR and the Highlander Folk School were both halfway houses, because the purpose of both organizations was to train members in ways to change society. FOR, which originated in England, branched over to the U.S. in 1915. Glenn Smiley, a former national secretary of the organization, tells that the purpose of FOR was to eliminate war and the occasions of war, and to change the attitudes that dominant social groups held toward minority groups through pacifism. The Highlander Folk School was founded by Myles Horton in 1932. Horton's philosophy was the idea that oppressed people know the answers to their own problems and the teacher's job is to get them talking about those problems, to raise and sharpen questions, and to trust people to come up with the answer. Both of these halfway houses were integrated. Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 139, 157, 142.
- 2 The Talented Tenth, advocated by W.E.B. DuBois, were the exceptional men of the black race. DuBois argues that unless the masses of African Americans are given leadership training by the Talented Tenth, they will remain masses of disease and crime, the happy rule. This happy rule will drag down the exceptions, as culture ever was and ever will be filtered down from the top. DuBois advocated higher education with well-trained teachers to solve this imbalance of talent, and to make carpenters into men, not men into carpenters. W.E.B. DuBois, *The Talented Tenth in The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of To-Day* (New York: James Pott and Co., 1903), 14-16.
- 3 The NAACP, in the first half of the twentieth century, centered its attention on eliminating legalized racism such as the White Primary and the poll tax. The lawyers of the NAACP then shifted their attention to integrating the United States, with such landmark cases as *Smith v. Allwright* and *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. The 24th Amendment, passed in 1964 in the form of the Civil Rights Act, built upon both of these prior cases. Steven F. Lawson, *Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South 1944- 1969* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 55, 132, 299.
- 4 Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer, *Voices of Freedom* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), 123-4.

- 5 In June 1956, the NAACP was outlawed in Alabama by the white power structures of that state. Shuttlesworth organized a meeting of Birmingham community members to discuss alternatives to the NAACP, and the ACMHR was born. The ACMHR was a church-related organization with the top leadership positions held by ministers. The ACMHR was financed and supported by the black Christians of Birmingham. Morris, 69.
- 6 Hampton, 124-5.
- 7 Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1954-1969* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), 121-2; Morris 250-1.
- 8 Morris, 251.
- 9 The 1965 Civil Rights Act assured that a sixth grade education meant literacy, that the attorney general could litigate franchise suits before a trio of judges, and it prevented registrars from denying citizens the right to vote based on slight errors in the registration exam. The act also had clauses that dealt with public accommodations, employment, and education. Lawson, 299.
- 10 Sitkoff, 174.
- 11 Until the passage of the 1964 and 1965 Civil Rights Acts, the following procedures were used to limit the electorate: poll taxes, literacy tests, and the White Primary. Intimidation, coercion, and mob violence were also used.
- 12 *Eyes on the Prize*, "On the Bridge to Freedom: Selma, Alabama 1965."
- 13 Racial discrimination, in the form of a segregated public school system, was brought to a halt in Little Rock during the 1957-1958 school year. This was accomplished by force; federal marshals were called into the city to escort the black students to school, through the school hallways, and to quell the mob violence that broke out in retaliation of the desegregation. Hampton, 35-52; *Eyes on the Prize II*, "Fighting Back, 1957-1962."
- 14 Morris, 102-4.
- 15 Morris, 216-8; Hampton, 61.
- 16 Freedom Schools were based on the same premise as the Highlander Folk School. That is, SNCC activists sought to teach Southern men and women to read, to comprehend politics, and to actively fight for their political rights by using the concrete knowledge of the people rather than abstract concepts.
- 17 Hampton, 53. There were sporadic sit-ins throughout the 1940s and 1950s. These were generally in the northern states, and used to enforce existing integration laws. James Farmer from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) led several successful sit-ins in Chicago during the organization's early years. James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart* (New York: Arbor House, 1985), 106.
- 18 Hampton, 94.
- 19 *Eyes on the Prize II*, "Mississippi: Is this America? 1962-1964."
- 20 Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: Quill William Morrow, 1984), 289.

21 Ibid.

22 Hampton, 141.

23 Farmer, 1, 8-10; Hampton,95.

24 Sitkoff, 166.

25 Ibid., 168.



# **Janelle A. Murray**

## **Murder on Lynch Street**

Jackson State College is a predominately black university in the white dominated state of Mississippi. Running through the middle of the college campus is a public road called Lynch Street, named after John Ray Lynch, Mississippi's first African American congressman.<sup>1</sup> Lynch Street connects downtown Jackson, Mississippi to white neighborhoods on the other side of campus. The street became a center for racist comments and slurs in 1965. It was common for white citizens driving down the street to shout racist comments to the college students standing near the road. Usually, the students were walking between class and their dorm rooms when they were bombarded by racial slurs. The students grew tired of the constant harassment and, as a result, Lynch Street became the center of student riots during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

In May of 1970, groups of students gathered in front of Alexander Hall, which lies next to Lynch Street, in protest against the deaths at Kent State, the constant harassment students experienced from citizens of the town, the war in Vietnam, and President Richard Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia. The first day of the riot, on May thirteenth, five students were arrested and the newspapers were filled with false interpretations of the day's events. The next day, 14 May, would become a haunting memory for the college students who would later describe the episode as "pre-planned." The events of the night were, and are to this day, controversial; the reports of the students and the police are contradictory. It is a subject that has rarely been talked about since it occurred in 1970.<sup>2</sup> However, the final result of the incident is clear. Two African-American men, one a high school student and one a college student, were killed and twelve more black students were injured by gunfire discharged by city police and highway patrolmen. Regardless of whether the police or the students told the truth about the events of 14 May, the evidence shows that the police overreacted and the deaths and wounds of the students could have been avoided.

As at other colleges during this time period, students at Jackson State College were frustrated with the "hopeless" war in Vietnam. They also became angry when President Nixon decided to invade Cambodia. President Nixon addressed the nation in April of 1970 and told those watching that Americans had to launch an attack on Cambodia to clear

out the North Vietnamese enemies. Nixon's announcement angered the students because they did not want to see the war expanded or be involved in another battle of politics with other countries. Furthermore, students were outraged about the murder of students at Kent State earlier in May. The tension of the Vietnam War and Cambodia, the murders at Kent State, and the constant racist comments and intimidation by white citizens led to the two-day protest in May.<sup>3</sup>

On 13 May, about 300 students and those known to citizens as "corner boys" – people who were not students of Jackson State but hung out on the corner of Lynch Street – congregated for a peace protest in front of Alexander Hall and Stewart Hall, the female and male dormitories, respectively. It was not uncommon to see three hundred students on the lawns in front of the dormitories and the college's student center, which was between the two dormitories. Many students would go outside to the lawns to escape the heat and they would hang out with their friends to rap and talk. On this particular night, they were simply standing outside when a white motorist drove by. A couple of students, who were in front of Stewart Hall, threw rocks at the driver. Because of this, officials thought the students would become disruptive. The mayor then ordered roadblocks to be set up on Lynch Street to contain the students and keep vehicles from driving down the street.<sup>4</sup> The National Guard was also called in to help prevent occurrences like this at the campus. The only real disturbance occurred between 11:15 PM and 11:30 PM when a few students ignited a small fire on the roof of an ROTC building on campus. Eventually the crowd died down after midnight and five students were arrested.<sup>5</sup>

The following day, 647 National Guardsmen were still stationed on Lynch Street.<sup>6</sup> Preparing for another eventful night, city patrol cars containing special arms were brought in from police headquarters to the campus to use that night. Before demonstrations or riots started, Thompson's Tank arrived on Lynch Street, carrying troops armed with guns.<sup>7</sup> Thompson's Tank was an armed tank that was supposed to be used for protection. The Report of the Commission on Campus Unrest stated that Thompson's Tank was frequently used on Lynch Street against college students, but had never been used anywhere else.<sup>8</sup>

That same day, some students talked with John Peoples, the President of Jackson State College, for nearly two hours about the events of the previous night. The students told him there really was no single cause for the commotion. They were upset about Vietnam, Cambodia,

and the slayings at Kent State.<sup>9</sup> The students left the meeting with an understanding that they should not bring about a lot of commotion that night. After the meeting, Peoples wrote a letter to the students explaining the need for a peaceful night and then later called the police and asked them to close Lynch Street that night. The police refused to close the public street.<sup>10</sup>

The next day, the campus was calm. The students, still upset, continued with their daily lives. On that night, 14 May, many students were in their dorm rooms or in the library finishing papers and studying for final exams. Other students were in front of Stewart Hall, cheering the “corner-boys” who were throwing rocks at the white motorists driving by.<sup>11</sup> A man drove in front of Stewart Hall and falsely told the students Charles Evers and his wife had been killed. Evers, a black politician, was a hero to many of the students.<sup>12</sup> This news, even though some of them did not fully believe it, caused tension around the campus. A crowd of students formed near Alexander Hall, the women’s dormitory that lies beside Lynch Street, but these students were not the same ones involved in throwing rocks. The crowd consisted of an undetermined number of students ranging from seventy-five to two hundred.

While the students were gathering in front of Alexander Hall, a fire had started, like the previous night, down the street in front of Stewart Hall. Firefighters and police went to the scene. The police and patrolmen, armed with shotguns and submachine guns, noticed the students gathering in front of the dormitory.<sup>13</sup> After the fire was extinguished, they decided to move over to Alexander Hall and they lined up along Lynch Street facing the dormitory. Thompson’s Tank also arrived in the center of the street. The students, many of them near the west wing of the dormitory, noticed the troops approaching. Some students began to leave, while others stayed where they were because they were not doing anything wrong. Many of the women were still in the dorm rooms, carrying on with their normal lives. Some students peered out of their windows, noticing the police and all the students outside.<sup>14</sup> The students supposedly called the police obscene names. The police, who were predominately white, said they were called “pigs” and the students also made sexual references to their wives and daughters being in their dorm rooms with black students.

Someone in the crowd either threw or dropped a bottle, which shattered and made a popping noise sounding like a gunshot.<sup>15</sup> The

police started to fire because they thought they were in danger. The police later claimed they fired because they saw a person with a gun on the third floor stairwell of Alexander Hall. The police opened fire on the students with buckshot for roughly thirty seconds.<sup>16</sup> The students scattered, some running toward the campus, but most ran to Alexander Hall for shelter. Power lines burst, chips of brick and concrete fell on the students, and glass from the windows of the dormitory shattered and fell among the students.<sup>17</sup> Lights in the stairwell were shot out by gunfire. The Associated Press quoted Jack Hobbs, a television reporter who witnessed the shootings, "It was deafening. I thought 'Oh my God, they're shooting these kids.'"<sup>18</sup> After the incident, Alexander Hall was stuck with nearly four hundred bullet holes and shattered windows.<sup>19</sup> Two black men were found dead and twelve were wounded.<sup>20</sup> The twelve wounded students were Fonzie Coleman, Twaine Davis, Climmie Johnson, Leroy Kenter, Gloria Mayhorn, Andrea Reese, Patricia Ann Sanders, Stella Spinks, Lonzie Thompson, Vernon Steve Weakely, Redd Wilson Jr., and Willie Woodard.<sup>21</sup> Many other students had to be treated for injuries from broken glass and hysteria. No police were shot or wounded and Thompson's Tank was free from bullets and bullet holes.<sup>22</sup>

The two men who were killed were Phillip Gibbs and James Earl Green. Gibbs was twenty-one, married, and a father of a one year old. He was shot underneath his left eye, under his left arm, and twice through the head.<sup>23</sup> Green was a seventeen-year old high school student walking home from his job at a grocery store. Green had stopped to witness the commotion from across the street in front of Roberts Dining Hall and was shot through his side, piercing his liver.<sup>24</sup> Twelve other students were injured; two were in critical condition. Of the twelve wounded, some were shot inside the dormitory, and some were shot in the mass hysteria outside. Even though the majority of students were not shot, many were hurt, and all had to face the nightmare of the events of that horrific night.

After the wounded students left to go to the hospital, the remaining students slept on the lawns in front of the dormitories. When they awoke the next morning, they saw the destruction caused by the gunfire the previous night. The damage they saw at Alexander Hall was even more horrible in the daylight. Bullet holes flooded Alexander Hall and some were also found in Ayer Hall, a woman's dormitory next door. Stewart Hall, down the street, also had bullet holes in the building.<sup>25</sup>

That day, the FBI came to Jackson State to investigate and report the incident of the previous night.

Reports of the actual events on the night of 14 May have several discrepancies. Many policemen and patrolmen have used these discrepancies as a reason, or excuse, as to why they fired at the students. For example, many police said the students were yelling obscene names at them. The students disagreed with this statement and said they did not yell any comments at the policemen. In this case, the police were probably stating the truth. In the sixties policemen were frequently called names when a large mass of students formed. The police would line up across the street from a group of students because they assumed the group would eventually cause trouble. The students, in reaction, would shout out names towards the police. The extent of the name calling in this case is not determined, but the police cannot justify name-calling as an excuse to open fire on a crowd of students.

The police also claimed that the students were throwing objects at them. The President's Commission on Campus Unrest stated that bottles, bricks, and rocks were thrown at the police, but not as severely as the police had expressed.<sup>26</sup> One of these bottles most likely created the popping noise, or the supposed sound of gunfire heard that night, that caused the police to fire into the crowd. However, these were trained officials and should have known a more appropriate way to handle a situation like this, instead of randomly firing into a huge crowd. Also, some students argue that the popping noise was not the cause of the gunfire rage, but that there was a signal from an officer to fire, confirming Gregory Antoine's report that the rounds of fire were simultaneous.<sup>27</sup> Antoine, a pre-med student, was researching at the Science Hall when he heard the commotion in front of Stewart Hall. He tried to calm down the students and walked over to Alexander Hall with the policemen. The police still believe the students were throwing bricks and bottles at them. However, the disagreement over throwing objects still does not provide justification for openly shooting at students across the street.

The major disagreement between the students and the police concerns whether there was a man armed with a gun in the stairwell of Alexander Hall. The President's Commission on Campus Unrest has found no evidence to prove that there was a man there. In fact when all the windows at Alexander Hall were examined later, all of the windows, including the one on the third floor stairwell, were broken because of

bullets coming into the building, not exiting the dormitory.<sup>28</sup> Only the policemen said they heard shooting. The students did not hear gunfire until the police and patrolmen started to fire at them. Officer Charles Little claimed he saw a black man with a gun in the stairwell, but a student, Stella Spinks, said she was standing at that spot and there was not a man with a gun.<sup>29</sup> Even if there was a man with a gun in the stairwell, the police did not have justification for shooting into the crowd. All of their reasons do not provide a defense for opening fire on unarmed students who were separated from them by a chain link fence. Regardless of whether there was a shooter in the stairwell or whether there were obscene comments coming from the crowd, the police should not have reacted as they did. Their reactions caused the death of two people and wounded twelve others. They created a nightmare for other students as well, which will remain in their lives and memories forever. The police tried to justify their actions, but there was no legitimate reason for them to shoot for thirty seconds at a group of unarmed students.

The police said they felt threatened because they saw a shooter in the stairwell of the dormitory. Two city policemen out of five questioned said they had seen sniper fire, and both were in Thompson's Tank.<sup>30</sup> If the police felt like they were in danger, they should have protected themselves first and then gone after the individual they thought was attempting to shoot at them, not open fire on a crowd. Unfortunately, the police panicked and merely shot into the crowd, some policemen using more than one round. They were using buckshot guns at the time on a crowd with no reason to believe that the crowd would have attacked them. Tear gas could have been used to try to break up the crowd if they wanted to avoid later confrontations. They also could have given a verbal warning to the students or fired a warning shot into the air. However, the police did not employ either of these methods. As a result, two people died.

Even if the police fired because they thought the popping noise from the breaking bottle was a gunshot, they did not all shoot at the third floor of the stairwell where the supposed shooter was standing. Students were shot both inside and outside the building, in the west, center, and east wings.<sup>31</sup> The third-floor shooter also does not account for how Green was shot across the street. There were many bullet marks found in the doorway where students were fleeing to escape the rounds of gunfire. The west wing alone contained 301 separate bullet marks.

One hundred five marks were on the top floor, eighty-three on the fourth floor, sixty-four on the third, thirty-six on the second, and thirteen on the first floor.<sup>32</sup> Shots were fired into nearly every window in the first floor lobby. Windows in many of the students' rooms of the dorm were shattered. As Robert Abbot, a reporter for the *Chicago Defender*, stated in 1970, "The cops seemed to have mounted an attack that one might expect in Vietnam."<sup>33</sup>

The police and patrolmen caused enough damage that Attorney General John Mitchell's reaction was, "And only twelve were struck?" when he reviewed the damage at Alexander Hall.<sup>34</sup> Yet, when the gunfire had ended, the police did not call the ambulances right away. The police and patrolmen picked up their shell casings from the bullets first, or as the students said, they picked up their evidence. After the casings were picked up, then the ambulances were called.<sup>35</sup> Because of this, many students feared there would be a cover-up. As a result, students sat in front of Alexander Hall and would not let anyone enter the building, because they thought they would take more evidence from the scene. The policemen and patrolmen dismissed their responsibilities and tried to clear their names. Picking up shell casings while there were wounded students lying on the ground is problematic at best. Furthermore, when the police did radio for help they called the students "niggers," demonstrating their view that black people are inferior.

On the policemen's behalf, there were reasons for them to be on edge that night. By 1970, the entire nation had been experiencing countless riots, protests, and marches, both non-violent and violent, some of which involved students on college campuses. The state of Mississippi itself experienced many of these events. However, the school year at Jackson State College from 1969 to 1970 had been uneventful in terms of congregations, disruptions, and protests, until the two day incident in May. The police were heavily armed that night with weapons, and even had a tank positioned on Lynch Street, even though there were no prior disruptions that entire school year.

After school ended, President Richard Nixon established a Commission for Campus Unrest in June of 1970. After thirteen days of public hearings, no one was convicted or arrested for the murders at Jackson State College. The commission was designed specifically to find the details of the event, not to place blame on anyone. Because of the riots and the murders, Lynch Street was permanently closed to the

public. A memorial for Green and Gibbs still stands in front of Stewart Hall, but the memories of their lives fades as time passes.

The clear story of Jackson State has not been told and will probably never be told. Until one can uncover missing links and prove the real story behind the misunderstandings, this tragedy will continue to be a misguided story. Two different stories are provided by the students and by authorities. It is unclear whether the police had justification for shooting or if there really was a shooter in the stairwell. However, new information has not developed since the 1970s, so as the information stands now, the police and patrolmen look guilty. They apparently got away with murdering two students and wounding twelve others. They cannot and will not be proven guilty by a court of law, but to the students at Jackson State College, the officials will always be guilty.

## Notes

- 1 Tim Spofford, *Lynch Street* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1972), 1.
- 2 Note: Coverage on the deaths of the students at Jackson State College is very minimal. The events that occurred at Kent State early in May significantly overshadow the events that occurred at Jackson State College later that month. Newspapers that covered a portion of the story sometimes had inaccurate facts about the event, such as the *New York Times'* article entitled, "Jackson Police Fire On Students" in the 15 May 1970 issue. The *New York Times* reported that the shootings had occurred to a lesser degree than what actually took place.
- 3 Spofford, 417.
- 4 *The Report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 417.
- 5 *May 1970: Birth of the Antiwar University* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), 38.
- 6 Lelia Gaston Rhodes. *Jackson State University: The First One Hundred Years* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1979), 176.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 39.
- 8 *The Report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest*, 418.
- 9 Spofford, 56.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 58.
- 11 "The May 1970 Tragedy at Jackson State University: 'Lest We Forget'" Jackson State University Heritage and Historical Sites. <[www.jsu.edu](http://www.jsu.edu)> (31 October 2002).

- 12 "James Earl Green and Phillip Lafayette Gibbs" <[www.heroism.org/class/1970](http://www.heroism.org/class/1970)> (1 November 2002).
- 13 "The May 1970 Tragedy at Jackson State University: 'Lest We Forget.'" 14 Spofford, 69.
- 15 "The May 1970 Tragedy at Jackson State University: 'Lest We Forget.'" 16 Spofford, 56
- 17 Ibid., 72.
- 18 "30 Years Ago Today: Jackson State Deaths Recalled" *Associated Press* (14 May 2000). <<http://www.Commondreams.org>>
- 19 Rhodes, 177.
- 20 *May 1970: Birth of the Antiwar University* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), 38
- 21 "The May 1970 Tragedy at Jackson State University: 'Lest We Forget.'" 22 *The Report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest*, 443.
- 23 Spofford, 6.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid., 82.
- 26 *The Report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest*, 440.
- 27 Spofford, 89.
- 28 *The Report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest*, 443.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Spofford, 98.
- 31 Ibid., 88.
- 32 Rhodes, 177.
- 33 Robert S. Abbot. Big Weekend Edition, *Chicago Daily Defender* (30 May - 5 June 1970), 3.
- 34 Spofford, 133.
- 35 *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest*, 435.



# **Katie Laux**

## **From Bancroft Way and Telegraph Avenue to Woody Hall: Student Demands and University Failures at The University of California at Berkeley and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale**

Six years passed between the Free Speech movement at the University of California at Berkeley and the student protest movement at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (SIUC). Within those six years changes occurred in society that affected both the student participants within their respective movements and the administrations of both Universities as well as the state and local governments in both California and Illinois. However, these changes did not suppress the parallels between student activists at both Universities, or commonalities in the reactions administrations at both Universities had to those protestors. While the main focus of the student movement on each campus differed—free speech at Berkeley, the escalation of the Vietnam War, and the university's ties to the military the main concern at SIUC—the secondary, yet equally significant issues of racism and student alienation, were present at both places. As well, both Universities' administrations, and, in essence, the state and local governments that either controlled or interacted with the institutions, failed in their efforts to resolve all of these issues, both the large and the small. The Berkeley administration failed due to its further alienation of the student body, militant actions toward the student activists and their dishonesty during the Free Speech Movement. The SIUC administration failed due to its militant actions toward the students as well as police brutality toward the student activists.

At Berkeley, the main focus for student unrest became an issue of free speech. In the spring of 1964, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Alex C. Sherriffs brought the issue of forbidding on-campus political lobbying for off-campus issues to "a group of lower level bureaucrats," and throughout July and September, administrators began to discuss the policy.<sup>1</sup> The proposed new policy became reality on 16 September 1964, when a letter from the Dean of Students, Katherine Towle, was issued to students stating that, effective 21 September 1964, no off-campus political activity could be advocated on-campus. According to the letter,

this included the "twenty-six-foot strip of brick walkway at the campus entrance on Bancroft Way and Telegraph Avenue" where students were accustomed to preparing tables for the distribution of advocacy literature and solicitation of donations.<sup>2</sup> "Specifically, section III of the [Regents] policy ... prohibits the use of University facilities 'for the purpose of soliciting party membership or supporting or opposing particular candidates or propositions in local, state or national elections. ...'" Section IV of the policy stated that University facilities "may not be used for the purpose of raising money to aid projects not directly connected with some authorized activity of the University. ..."<sup>3</sup> To students who were actively participating in fund raising and advocacy for off-campus issues, the University had taken away the First Amendment, silencing the rights of socially aware students. For these students, the free speech issue directly correlated with two smaller, yet equally significant issues, racism and the alienation of students from the University bureaucracy.

May 1970 brought turmoil and strife to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale during a time of nationally noted student unrest. And, as at Berkeley, the students at SIUC focused their protest efforts on larger issues. However, the main focus of those demonstrations was not free speech, but rather a combination of local, national, and international events. According to a bulletin from the Chancellor's office at SIUC the "Specific events which stimulated" protests and "served as catalysts for unrest on campus" included the "extension of the [Vietnam] war into Cambodia," and the "deaths of four Kent State students."<sup>4</sup> Outraged students across the nation were galvanized to protest a war that they believed illegal, but the war was not as tangible and visible as the symbols of it that existed on the SIUC campus: the Vietnamese Studies Center, and the Air Force ROTC. The students, in a hand-made flyer, stated their local demands: "off AFROTC" and "off Vietnamese Studies Center." The flyer concluded that both were fundamentally connected to the government through the "military-industrial complex connection with the University."<sup>5</sup> In a flyer demanding classroom strikes, students stated that "ROTC training continues to prepare young Americans to slaughter people of other nations ... and the Vietnamese Studies facilities continue to function as an extension of imperialistic power and a source of painful frustration to all sensitive people who believe in the brotherhood of all mankind."<sup>6</sup> The Vietnamese Studies Center was developed on the Carbondale campus in 1969 in order to develop ways to "reconstruct Vietnam after

the war.”<sup>7</sup> Whatever the motives of the Vietnamese Studies Center, the students did not trust the governmentally-funded project. Student activists “were convinced ... that this was a training center and its purpose was counterinsurgency with CIA funds.”<sup>8</sup> As at Berkeley, students at SIUC utilized the larger issues as a forum to express the smaller, yet equally significant student issues and concerns.

At Berkeley in 1964 the student activists demanded that the racism in society and, specifically the administration, end; nearly six years later the student activists at SIUC stated the same demand, showing that, despite the changes of the 1960s, equality for every American was still a dream. Leaders of the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley had gone to Mississippi in the summer of 1964 to participate in “Freedom Summer.” When these leaders, who fought on the front lines of violence, returned to University life, the University had implemented the policy of no off-campus political issues on-campus.<sup>9</sup> The student leaders believed that the new policy enacted by the administration was purely in reaction to their work in the Civil Rights Movement. According to Mario Savio, a student activist, banning student politics “combined an act of bureaucratic violence against the students themselves with open attack on student participation in the Bay Area Civil Rights movement.”<sup>10</sup> Student leaders believed that the “most meaningful opportunity” they had for political activism was within the Civil Rights movement, and that the administration’s ban on political activity on-campus was a ban on any Civil Rights awareness and Civil Rights activism on-campus.<sup>11</sup> The administration, according to the students, was not forbidding change of racial thought in the South, but it was actively prohibiting racial equality within the local area.<sup>12</sup> The racial make-up of the city of Berkeley was changing due to growth in the city’s African American population and students became aware of their own influence in this change.<sup>13</sup> Student activists at Berkeley saw the Civil Rights Movement as the most influential political issue in 1964, and the only political issue worth fighting for, and when the administration took away their right to lobby for equality, the students viewed this as an attack on the local make-up of the city.

At SIUC, most student activists were not actively participating in the Civil Rights Movement, especially at the national level, but the demand for change, specifically at the local level, within the University and the surrounding community, was present. The student activists demanded an “end to both institutional and individual forms of racism

at SIU.”<sup>14</sup> A student manifesto stated, “Black people are forced to live in ghettos. They are used as sources of cheap labor and openly referred to as ‘niggers’ by townspeople. ...”<sup>15</sup> The administration was not hindering the Civil Rights Movement, nor was it directly impeding racial equality, but the administration and the local government were not attempting to educate local people about racial equality or preparing to make breakthroughs in the treatment of African Americans. At both universities the issue of racism was significant.

The second parallel between the Berkeley Free Speech movement and the SIUC student protest movement is the alienation that students felt at both universities. At Berkeley, the students felt disenchanted because of the administration. A student was known only as a number on his or her admissions and records slip, not as a person. The *Daily Californian* stated, “The incoming freshmen have a lot to learn—perhaps lesson number one is not to fold, spindle or manipulate his IBM card.”<sup>16</sup> The psychological toll of this treatment, the feeling of being a nameless, faceless prisoner at a school, branched out further when the University began to treat the students as identical parts rolling off of a conveyor belt. The administration wanted to create a uniform student body that would, by graduation day, be a uniform workforce. Mario Savio stated that the universities had “become factories to produce technicians rather than places to live student lives.”<sup>17</sup> The implementation of conformity, which made all students at Berkeley feel as though their thoughts, ideals, and values did not matter in the University hierarchy, led to the student body resenting University officials. The assimilation of all creative thought into the perfect, prepackaged human led to the alienation of the student body, and the students at Berkeley blamed the administration for some of this alienation.

A general feeling of alienation at SIUC was partially derived from the administration and partially from the surrounding community. Students craved any significant participation in affairs affecting their lives; however, the administration refused to change the system, leaving students the empty feeling of uselessness. One faculty committee found that “the curriculum, as well as general University policy, reflects a lack of relevance to the lives of the students and the problems of modern society.”<sup>18</sup> The administration’s lack of willingness to change, not only with the times but also for the students, caused dissent and alienation within the student body.

The students were also alienated from the surrounding community. The Carbondale community seemed to blame students for all problems within the community, viewing students as a burden to the community. The image of this burden evolved into dollar signs, as students became monetarily manipulated by surrounding businesses and landlords. The business owners tended to view the students as problematic and violent, without ever acknowledging that the only reason that their businesses were thriving was that the students were their customers. "Merchants tend to look upon students as sources of money, only to be barely tolerated for the sake of their cash; rather than as fellow citizens capable of thought or feeling," stated one student government manifesto.<sup>19</sup> Landlords treated the students in the same manner as the merchants. Large amounts in rent were charged, but the upkeep on the property was poor, and the conditions of the property were deplorable. The landlords overcharged students knowing that they had no other choice but to live in unsanitary conditions, not acknowledging that the students who rented from them paid for the food the landlords ate. A student manifesto stated that rent was, in some cases, greater than in large cities, with conditions that were "grossly substandard."<sup>20</sup> Students at SIUC straddled the position where no one in the University or community seemed to want them physically in Carbondale, but the University and the community wanted their tuition and rent money. This caused students not only to feel unwanted, but also more significantly, to feel used for only the monetary value they could provide.

Another source of alienation at both universities was the inaccessibility of the faculty. At Berkeley, the class sizes swelled to as many as eight hundred students, and the only one-on-one learning experience was in smaller sections supervised by a stressed, overworked graduate student.<sup>21</sup> The faculty also had the added emphasis of the "publish or perish" element, where the professors had to publish research in a certain amount of time or face penalties such as termination.<sup>22</sup> This pressure to publish resulted in the faculty emphasizing research at the expense of undergraduate teaching. Students resented becoming the last priority on the faculty's list of responsibilities. "The undergraduate has become the new dispossessed; the heart has been taken from his education," wrote Berkeley student activist Mario Savio.<sup>23</sup> At SIUC, like Berkeley, the student alienation from faculty stemming from professors emphasizing research rather than

teaching was prevalent.<sup>24</sup> Graduate students also became a source of discontent. Graduate students, at first only responsible for aiding a professor, began teaching courses that professors were responsible for because those professors became too concerned with their research. Therefore, graduate students were left teaching a course as well as taking courses.<sup>25</sup> Another source of student alienation from faculty at SIUC was tenure. Students found that incompetent professors who already obtained tenure could not be fired; therefore students were often left to sit in a class and try to learn from a professor who did not care or know how to teach.<sup>26</sup> Both universities expected their students to attend a college where many professors did not care enough to teach, so they passed the responsibility to graduate students. In essence, these faculty members thought the student body insignificant as compared to their own reputation and research.

*In loco parentis*, translated to "in place of parent," was a system used by both universities to inflict specific rules on the student body that paved the moral road that students were to take while at the universities. At Berkeley, the administration placed rules ranging from restriction on sexual behavior to dorm hours for female students.<sup>27</sup> A possible repercussion for breaking this range of rules was expulsion.<sup>28</sup> The university also had a system whereby if a student were to break the law and get caught, not only would the state authorities press charges and put a student through the judicial system, but the University would also enact disciplinary action.<sup>29</sup> The system of *in loco parentis* was also established at SIUC. At SIUC, the administration completely ignored the students' rights to choose the paths that their lives would take, in both the personal realm and the professional arena.<sup>30</sup> *In loco parentis* did not allow for the students to develop into adulthood by themselves, but rather extended the parental factor into an unmanageable area. According to a bulletin from the Chancellor's office, the administration caused a "failure to encourage or to permit the development of the student as a young adult in free society."<sup>31</sup>

Between the years of 1964 and 1970 the tactics of both the University administration and the protest movement evolved into bouts of conflict marred by violence. At Berkeley, the administration's goal was to silence the students; however, the administration did not want to resort to police violence. The students at Berkeley also did not want a violent confrontation for fear that it would dull the impact of the main issue, free speech. However, as the decade moved forward, student

protestors often resorted to vandalism and a craving to confront police. Likewise, campus administrators opted to answer the new style of student protest with their own brand of violence. By the late 1960s, University administrations resorted to the sanctioning of police brutality. For example, in 1968, Columbia University saw its first example of this change.<sup>32</sup> Administrators attempted to build a gymnasium in Harlem, a predominantly African American neighborhood, while only seventy African American undergraduates attended the University.<sup>33</sup> Demonstrators later captured a hostage and occupied Hamilton Hall, as well as the office of the President of the University.<sup>34</sup> Over two days, one thousand students joined the movement, occupying three more buildings before negotiations between the activists and the administration failed.<sup>35</sup> Eventually, the President of Columbia ordered one thousand police officers to campus, where some students taunted the police before the police pounced.<sup>36</sup> In total, one hundred students were injured and over seven hundred students were arrested.<sup>37</sup> The evolution in student protest activity, from taking hostage a police car in 1964 to taking a person hostage in 1968, as well as the evolution from negotiating to moving in the police in order to regain law and order on campus are evident. In just four years, protest tactics changed, as did control tactics by Universities. By the end of 1970, and many more confrontations similar to Columbia University's, this more brutal method of problem solving proved lethal.

The administrations at both Berkeley and at SIUC failed to reach any of the objectives that they sought. This failure is the result of administration blunders ranging from militancy and alienation at both campuses to dishonesty at Berkeley. Militancy took the form, at Berkeley, of using the police in order to intimidate student activists so that they would end the dissent and return to a life of college conformity. At SIUC, militancy, following the evolution of the times, grew more violent than at Berkeley. Militancy at SIUC surpassed intimidation and led to police brutality in order to end student protests. The alienation at both Berkeley and at SIUC resulted from both administrations setting forth moral standards and, in essence, treating the student body as mindless children. It also resulted from both administrations treating students as identification numbers, as uniform factory parts, and as profits.

Administration militancy, alienation, and lies at Berkeley began directly after the ban of political activity on-campus. After the ban,

students still set up tables on University property, provoking certain University deans. The administration saw rule-breaking at face value; they contended that the students just did not want to obey. When the administration's frustrations grew, Dean Arleigh Williams stated, "Students persisting in 'illegal politics' might be suspended."<sup>38</sup> This administrative action backfired; instead of intimidating the disobeying students, it angered the students, therefore igniting a torch. Students continued to set up tables. At this point, the administration did not realize the motives of the students. As far as the administration was concerned, students again just wanted to ignore the rules; however, the students now had much more to fight for than what the tables were advocating. The students were fighting for the First Amendment right of freedom of speech, which the administration had pulled from them. This "misunderstanding" resulted in an even greater sense of alienation of the students from the administration.

Later, two deans cited five students, Bryan Turner, Elizabeth Gardner Stapleton, Mark Bravo, Donald Hatch, and David Lance Goines for breaking University policy through setting up tables.<sup>39</sup> This led to the indefinite suspension of all five students as well as Mario Savio, Art Goldberg and Sandor Fuchs, for earlier pickets.<sup>40</sup> The students at Berkeley saw this repressive measure of the administration as both militant and alienating. The administration, by suspending all eight students for breaking rules, sent the message to the student body to either follow the rule or leave. Also, the administration's unsympathetic, impersonal message became apparent. As Mario Savio stated, "Students are permitted to talk all they want so long as their speech has no consequences."<sup>41</sup> This mindset led the student activists to gain more support in opposing the administration.

On 1 October 1964, the administration militancy and alienation confronted the student body in the form of more deans on patrol at Bancroft Way and Telegraph Avenue. However, the student body reacted with much more passion and force than just merely setting up tables at the intersection and Sproul Hall. Jack Weinberg, who had graduated from Berkeley one year before and therefore had no fear of being suspended by the administration, and saw no risk of University repercussions, was guarding a table in front of Sproul Hall.<sup>42</sup> When approached by various deans, Weinberg refused to identify himself. Deans Murphy and Van Hoten, along with University police lieutenant Merrill F. Chandler, approached Weinberg, who continued his refusal to

identify himself. The police came and informed Weinberg that he was under arrest for trespassing, and then dragged him to a waiting police vehicle.<sup>43</sup> As Weinberg settled into the police car, a student observer ordered others to “sit down.”<sup>44</sup> Between two hundred and three hundred students squatted around the police car.<sup>45</sup> This incident, in addition to illustrating University militancy, also expressed the University’s alienating of the student body. Weinberg was carried out from behind the table at Sproul Hall, forced into a police car, and arrested in front of at least two hundred students. This incident, in essence, announced that the University would resort to unfeeling, militant police measures to suppress the voice of the students. The students already felt alienated from the administration and when the University chose to send in police who were willing to make arrests, the alienation of the students grew.

The number of students around the police car swelled and the students refused to leave. On 2 October, the second day of the police car hostage situation, the Governor of California, Edmund G. Brown, in response to the protests “made a statement supporting the administration, calling for ‘law and order’” and reiterating that “this is not a matter of free speech but ‘purely and simply an attempt ... to use the campuses of this University unlawfully. ... This will not be tolerated.’”<sup>46</sup> Chancellor Strong stated that students were not demonstrating for free speech, but rather students did not want to follow the rules.<sup>47</sup> By not taking the students’ objections to the policy seriously, the administration showed its underestimation of the student movement. The administration as well as the state government believed that the movement consisted of immature college kids who only wanted to disobey rules, and those beliefs further alienated the student body, and caused the administrative measures to fail. The administration and the state government failed to recognize the truth; college kids wanted justice to redress the wrong that the University committed, not only with the arrests and suspensions, but also with the First Amendment violation, and they would not stop at a police car.

By 5:00 PM on 2 October, the negotiating process began. In order to push the student representatives into an uncomfortable bargaining position, the administration applied intimidation tactics. During negotiations between student activists and President Kerr in his office, his secretary interrupted several times, announcing that, “the [Oakland] cops were ready to move in, and they wouldn’t listen to her when she

told them to hold off longer.”<sup>48</sup> Some of the student negotiators believed that this was the administration playing on student fears, however, the secretary was speaking the truth. The state was pushing the administration to settle the issue. David Lance Goines observed, “If Kerr couldn’t do it through sweet reason, Sacramento was going to do it through brute force.”<sup>49</sup> At 637 Oakland, Alameda and Highway patrolmen were on campus, as well as the Berkeley police. In total, the police numbered 965.<sup>50</sup> Although the police and the students did not confront each other, the threat of violent police action was present. When the students were peaceably sitting around the police car, listening to speeches from the roof of the police car, the police were ready to pounce. This obvious threat of militancy did intimidate the students enough, so that they negotiated and accepted terms that were undesirable.

During the negotiation process, both sides came to agreement on six points. The first was that “the students shall desist from all forms of their illegal protest against University regulation.” The students believed that the word “desist” forced them to stop protesting on that specific day, but it did not bind them from demonstrating on other occasions. The second point of agreement between the students and the administration was the establishment of a committee comprised of students, including Free Speech Movement leaders, faculty, and administrators specifically to discuss and make recommendations to the administration on political activity on campus. The third point addressed Jack Weinberg, and stated that he would be booked, but the University would not press charges against him. The fourth point was that the cases of the eight original suspended students would be heard in front of a faculty conduct committee, not in front of the administration conduct committee, and within one week of the negotiations. The fifth point was that no student groups involved in the protest would have privileges revoked. The students thought this meant that there would be amnesty for all parties involved. The sixth and final point was the establishment of a committee to discuss the possibility of political activity taking place if President Kerr sold the property at Bancroft Way and Telegraph Avenue to either the city or to the student government.<sup>51</sup>

Almost immediately, it became apparent that the University would not honor these agreements. The eight original suspended students declined the usual form of disciplinary measures for students, which would have them justifying their activities to some of the same

deans who originally "cited" them.<sup>52</sup> The students refused this arrangement because under the agreement on 2 October a new committee comprised of faculty, independent from the grasp of Presidents Kerr's hand, would hear the pleas of the eight students.<sup>53</sup> Kerr finally conceded to allow the Faculty Senate to appoint "an ad hoc committee" to consider these cases.<sup>54</sup> This move by Kerr showed the students that he would not apply good faith to the issues resolved at the bargaining table, and served to increase student suspicions. While the committee, later named the Heyman Committee, decided the student punishments, President Kerr "refused to reinstate" the students, even though the Heyman Committee recommended doing so.<sup>55</sup> President Kerr also "insisted that the Chancellor had final jurisdiction and the right to alter any penalties the faculty committee recommended."<sup>56</sup> When the Heyman committee issued its recommended penalties, Chancellor Strong, acting on Kerr's orders, increased the penalties.<sup>57</sup> Point number four of the 2 October pact evolved into lies by the end of the Heyman Committee's existence. President Kerr refused to move without being shoved on the birth of the ad hoc committee. When the committee asked for the reinstatement of the suspended students, he refused, and, along with Chancellor Strong, insisted on throwing the committee's unprejudiced findings aside. The Heyman committee thus accomplished nothing more than wasting time and misleading the students to believe that the administration would treat them fairly. In just one point of the 2 October pact, Kerr and his bureaucracy managed to gain the mistrust of students.

Chancellor Strong's committee, created in order to discuss further political activity on-campus, also crumbled through the weight of lies by the administration. The administration led the students to believe that this committee would be fairly divided into three groups; six students, six administrators and six faculty members. However, the student activists only held four seats on this committee, creating a difficult, if not impossible atmosphere for the activists to achieve any of their outlined goals.<sup>58</sup> According to one of the Berkeley student activists, "The activist students on the committee rejected an administrative proposal for limited political rights on campus, while an activist counter proposal that rights be based on the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution got no support from faculty members or the administrators."<sup>59</sup>

Seeing that the two committees were forever deadlocked, the student activists decided to take action. On 9 November students manned political action tables outside Sproul Hall, therefore defying the agreement between the administration and the students.<sup>60</sup> The result led to certain deans at the University citing, in just one day, sixty-five students manning the tables, while over one-hundred students voluntarily "signed complicity statements," agreeing that they were also guilty. Later, the students who signed the complicity statements were sent disciplinary letters. The student body responded by engulfing the Dean's office with "835 letters...denouncing the administration's violation of Constitutional rights."<sup>61</sup> To further alienate the students, the administration, when teaching assistants began advocating at the tables, did not cite them because the administration feared a strike.<sup>62</sup> Both administrative actions alienated the students. Granted, the students broke the agreement through noncompliance with the 2 October agreement, but the administration's actions alienated the students through singling out undergraduates for harsh disciplinary action, yet taking no action at all toward a group of people who had a so-called legitimate stake in the bureaucratic machine at UC Berkeley.

Toward the end of November, Kerr decided to go forth with disciplinary action against four students, Jackie Goldberg, Art Goldberg, Mario Savio, and Bryan Turner for their involvement with the hostile takeover of the police car. Kerr believed that his "grant of amnesty in the pact of 2 October had excluded the events of the hostile takeover of the car." Acting on Kerr's orders, Chancellor Strong mailed "disciplinary letters" to the four students.<sup>63</sup> This administrative action may have been in response to the students beginning to set up tables, however, the administration's actions were, once again, suspicious. No other student was being persecuted for his or her involvement in the takeover of the police car; therefore the administration was singling out the most public Free Speech Movement leaders. After thousands of students sat around the car, only the four most vocal were in danger of disciplinary action.

In response to the administration's bad-faith bargaining, the frustrations with the failed committees, and their own alienation, the students organized a take-over, through the medium of a sit-in. In early December, more than one thousand students overtook Sproul Hall.<sup>64</sup> The police began patrolling the building. A police officer falsely reported that the students had ransacked an office. This led to a chain of militant events ordered by Governor Brown and endorsed by President

Kerr and the rest of the UC Berkeley administration.<sup>65</sup> After the assistant county prosecutor, Edwin Meese III, received the false report that the students damaged an office, he called the Governor stating that, "they're busting up the place. We have to go in."<sup>66</sup> At 3:00 AM, Chancellor Strong came to Sproul Hall, announcing to the students, once again on Kerr's orders, that the police were ready to make arrests. About two hundred students fled, anticipating the reality of jail.<sup>67</sup> The police moved in. The students forced the police to carry them out, serving two purposes. The first was to slow down the clearing of the building so that students the next morning would see the arrests. Also, the student demonstrators anticipated the brutality that police would use when carrying them out. Passing students would witness the brutality, therefore building more support for the student movement.<sup>68</sup> Passing students witnessed this brutality when male students were being tossed or dragged down the steps of Sproul Hall. One policeman stated, "Take 'em down a little slower, they bounce more that way."<sup>69</sup>

This public brutality combined with the lies and the original police threat from 2 October drew more support for the students. In essence, the students had fought for their rights, while the administration fought for the rules, and the students had won. By the end of the December sit-in, only one-third of the students supported the administration.<sup>70</sup> The lies, militancy, and the alienation had finally forced the administration to concede defeat. On Monday 7 December Kerr announced to a student crowd of between sixteen to eighteen thousand "amnesty in the disciplinary cases" of Jackie Goldberg, Art Goldberg, Mario Savio and Brian Turner and no disciplinary action taken against the students involved in the December take-over of Sproul Hall.<sup>71</sup> However, it was apparent to the students that the University had not accepted the principle of free speech. Mario Savio, after Kerr announced the agreement, sprang to the stage to announce "a noon rally sponsored by the Free Speech Movement at Sproul Plaza."<sup>72</sup> However, before he could make this announcement, police wrestled him to the stage floor and carried him off-stage. In front of sixteen to eighteen thousand students, the police, in front of Kerr, his presence implying his authorization, had muffled free speech by using brutality. The brutality, lies, and alienation culminated in defeat for the Berkeley administration. On 18 December the regents announced "new rules that regulated political activity on campus along the lines laid down by the Free Speech

Movement activists during the tripartite rule committee discussions in October."<sup>73</sup>

Six years later, on a campus far removed from UC Berkeley, another public university, SIUC, found itself engulfed in protest. In reaction to the shooting deaths of four Kent State students by the National Guard and the expansion of the Vietnam War, as well as the ROTC and the Vietnamese Studies Center and the racism and alienation on-campus, SIUC exploded into a violent protest in early May of 1970. On Thursday, 7 May SIUC students demonstrated in downtown Carbondale, on Main Street and Illinois Avenue, directly adjacent to notoriously busy railroad tracks.<sup>74</sup> The police and National Guard detoured traffic.<sup>75</sup> Students obtained a permit from the city to demonstrate; however, when a small number of students began to obstruct the railroad tracks, violence ensued. The city of Carbondale, the University and the state police as well as the Jackson county Sheriffs office and the National Guard met and decided to disperse the student demonstrators.<sup>76</sup> The student demonstrators, numbering approximately fifteen hundred, were taken completely aback by the advancement of the police.<sup>77</sup> The police force assembled, along with the National Guard, and decided to tear gas the student crowd in order to disperse it. According to the newspaper *The Southern Illinoian*, "about forty state police officials fired tear gas into the crowd."<sup>78</sup> The students began to flee toward the University, with police officials in pursuit. Tear gas was, once again, used by the police and the National Guard on the students, who believed they could find refuge on campus.<sup>79</sup> By 11:00 PM, the students who had moved to the student housing on the east side of campus were vandalizing a police vehicle, therefore the police responded with more tear gas.<sup>80</sup> The mayor of Carbondale, David Keene, declared a civil state of emergency. A curfew was implemented, forcing all to be inside their residence from 7:30 PM until 6:00 AM, or be subject to possible arrest. Students who were arrested for curfew violation or other infractions of the criminal code during this period were subject to summary suspension.<sup>81</sup> The Chancellor of SIUC, Robert MacVicar, in response to this riot, forbade all student gatherings of over twenty-five people on-campus. Also, Mayor Keene prohibited the sale of all alcohol for the upcoming weekend.<sup>82</sup> While students had been permitted to protest in accordance with the city and the approval of the administration, the police officials violently attacked the student activists. The use of tear gas was excessive. Tear gas and not billy clubs or bullhorns was used to

separate students from the railroad tracks. Students did become violent while the police officials were tear-gassing them; however, the vandalism in which the students participated was a purely reactive gesture in response to the police brutality. The police violence continued into the next day, Friday 8 May, when an apartment building only occupied by residents was tear-gassed.<sup>83</sup> By Sunday, 10 May all except two hundred-fifty National Guard retreated from Carbondale.<sup>84</sup> However, on 11 May the police violence resumed. A group of student non-demonstrators were gathered and reported being tear-gassed. The police stated "unlawful assembly."<sup>85</sup> By 9:00 PM, the police began to tear gas the east side student housing. In response, the students from the three dormitories began to throw rocks and taunt the policemen.<sup>86</sup>

On Thursday, 12 May one thousand students gathered at Morris Library with the crowd eventually swelling to twenty-five hundred students. The students began to march through the streets of Carbondale. The march led to SIUC President Delyte D. Morris's home where students began to throw rocks, breaking windows. The marchers eventually reached the President's office where MacVicar was, and threw rocks.<sup>87</sup> After the vandalism, the university indefinitely closed down campus, beginning 13 May.<sup>88</sup> In front of a student crowd at Morris Library, President Morris announced that polling places would be designated around campus for students, faculty, and staff to vote in order to see whether the University would remain closed or re-open for the remainder of the spring quarter.<sup>89</sup> The decision, however, would not rest on the shoulders of the voters. The Board of Trustees for SIUC would merely consider the vote, but it had final jurisdiction on the decision.<sup>90</sup>

Raymond Dillinger, Jackson County Sheriff, along with Mayor Keene requested more National Guard. By the evening of 13 May, twelve hundred National Guard were in Carbondale.<sup>91</sup> Along with the newly allocated National Guard, "state police from three districts were ordered into Carbondale to stiffen police units in the city."<sup>92</sup> Also, all liquor sales in Carbondale were once again forbidden. These measures by the local government and endorsed by the administration equated to militancy and further student alienation. The city government, by militarily preparing for the students, led the students to believe that the city and the University were ready and willing to become violent in order to keep the students in the grip of their idea of peace and conformity. With the past history of police violence and the newly called

upon National Guard, the students had reason to believe that they might be violently attacked. The suspension of liquor sales in Carbondale as ordered by Mayor Keene alienated the students. By suspending liquor sales, the mayor and the university implied that alcohol was the main cause for student activism, protest and vandalism, not the real issues.

After the announcement by President Morris in front of Morris Library, the students began to flood the campus, urging others to leave class. By 1:45 PM, fifteen hundred students flooded toward Woody Hall, on the northeast corner of campus; however, only fifty students entered the building. Mayor Keene called the entire Carbondale police force into action, and at 2:00 PM, he requested state police assistance. This over-preparation by the police showed that the University and the local government expected the students to participate in violence and vandalism, not a peaceful protest. Also, the police possessed the correct gear and permission of the local government to stop student protestors at any cost.

By 3:00 PM, students entered Wheeler Hall, where the ROTC was housed. The students began to ransack and vandalize offices. By 4:30 PM, Sheriff Dillinger requested the Governor of Illinois, Richard Olgilvie, to deploy National Guard. At 5:30 PM, three to four hundred students occupied Woody Hall, where police later moved in to clear the building by dispensing tear gas.<sup>93</sup> The militancy and the brutality of the local government, the University administration and the police forces do not compare to the vandalism that the students carried out. The students vandalized property in response to the brutal measures of the police; however, the police, the city, and the university used this vandalism as an excuse to abuse the students. The result of the police brutality and the militancy of the administration and the state and local government was the closing of the school until the beginning of the summer quarter.<sup>94</sup> This period allowed a time for both sides to calm frustrations; however, the lasting legacy of police violence and student blame still exists in Carbondale.

Students in 1964 at Berkeley fought against racism and student alienation, and in 1970, students at SIUC struggled with those same issues. The issues did not change in those six years because the administration and the state and local government did not change. Berkeley administrators and the state and local governments failed to achieve any of their objectives due to dishonest negotiating, militancy in the form of police intimidation, and further alienating of the student

body. President Kerr and his staff failed to fairly implement the decision of the Heyman committee. The administration also failed when Chancellor Strong's committee dissolved. President Kerr also failed in honest negotiating when he ignored the fifth point of the 2 October agreement by deciding to take disciplinary action against four students for their contribution to taking over the police car. Throughout the entire Free Speech movement the Berkeley administration continued to alienate the student body. The Berkeley administration refused to address the issue of *in loco parentis*, and completely underestimated and undermined the motives of the student activists, believing that those students only wanted to break the rules of the University. This alienation allowed Berkeley students to unite as one against the University. This united front led to the defeat of the administration. The administration also failed due to the police intimidation tactics and brutality. The police threat, from the hostile take-over of the police car combined with the image of students being dragged along the steps of Sproul Hall, created more student support. The mounting lies, the further alienation of the student body and the police intimidation and brutality led the Berkeley administration to admit failure.

At SIUC, the administration and the state and local government reacted to the student dissent much like their counterparts at Berkeley. The SIUC administration continued to alienate the student body, and, after the demonstrations began, the University, and local and state government employed police brutality and intimidation; however, the police brutality, like the times, grew more violent. The SIUC administration further alienated students by refusing to accept the reasons why the students were demonstrating. The Vietnamese Studies Center was never taken off campus, nor was the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). Removing those institutions from campus was never even discussed. The administration refused to allow students the opportunity to discuss solutions to the escalating war during classes. These student demands, if met, may have prevented the closure of the University and the events preceding it; however, the administration simply ignored the concerns of the students. The police brutality in May of 1970 also contributed to the failure of the SIUC administration. From the excessive use of tear gas to invading innocent apartment buildings, and attacking a peaceful demonstration, the university, local and state police as well as the National Guard beat down the students.

These two student movements, on the surface, are very different. One concerned the issue of free speech, while the other confronted the Vietnam War, the killings at Kent State and the local affiliations with the national government. However, at the root of both movements stood racism and student alienation. Nothing significantly changed in the years between 1964 and 1970 that erased racism or alienation from these college campuses. The administrations continued to underestimate the student motives, and the refusal to listen to the student body at SIUC mimicked Berkeley. Six years passed and the SIUC administration still degraded student concerns as Berkeley had. Police brutality only changed as society changed. The California state government did not call in the National Guard as the Illinois state government had, and tear gas was not used to control the student activists at Berkeley. However, the intimidation and the violence that emerged at Berkeley did not hinder the SIUC administration from implementing the same strategies, instead, those strategies became bloodier. The attitude toward the students of each administration and the governments surrounding and supporting those administrations did not change. The administrations sought to make the students conform, and when the students refused and demanded to be heard, the administrations simply beat them into submission. The universities' refusal to change refutes the adage that the 1960s changed every aspect of society. Many things changed society during the 1960s, however, the attitudes of the authorities was not one of them.

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