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A surviving legacy: Nonviolent resistance in the Congressional Black Caucus, 2001-2007

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A Surviving Legacy: Nonviolent Resistance in the Congressional Black Caucus

2001-2007

by

Rhone Sebastian Fraser

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Liberal Arts
Department of Africana Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Florida

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Dedication

I dedicate this master's thesis to the new generations of young people who are interested in advancing the cause of civil rights and liberties, making the kinds of changes that the matriarchs such as Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, and many others made. I dedicate this thesis to young people who are devoted to preventing any future "conservative" revolutions of the U.S. House like the one led by Newt Gingrich in 1994 that was governed by an unspoken yet condoned racism. This thesis provides insight on recent and not so recent struggles against ideological racism. More specifically, I dedicate this thesis to the young generation in my family that can now make a difference: my nephew Myles Greene, my dear niece Jordyn Greene, my young cousins Andrei Stephenson, Fitzroy Graham, Jr., and all of my aunts' and uncles' children. I also dedicate this to the following people in the younger generation: Gavin Parboosingh, Sitherine Simmons, Rackeem Sheriffe, Marvin Watson, Brenton Brown, Corbin Brown, and the children of Colin Elphic and A. Dwayne Wilmot. To the younger generation that I taught at Troup Middle School and at Bronx Science who made a point to keep in touch such as Somephone Sonenarong, Breanna Evans, and Matthew Taylor. I sincerely hope this younger generation will be inspired by the ways that the overall liberation struggle for justice continues in the Congressional Black Caucus and will vow to continue this struggle. It is up to those who read this thesis to be the conscience of this country and do our best to arrest the imperialist, colonizing policies of this country.

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A Surviving Legacy: Nonviolent Resistance in the Congressional Black Caucus,
2001-2007

Rhone Fraser

ABSTRACT

Select members of the Congressional Black Caucus through their votes, speeches, arrests and nonviolent forms of protest practice a renewed kind of nonviolent resistance against a neoconservative political agenda advanced by the executive branch of the U.S. government in the past six years. Their practices are nonviolent according to the definition of nonviolence discussed by Martin Luther King, Jr. in his 1962 *New York Times Magazine* article: “we will take direct action against injustice without waiting for other agencies to act...We will try to persuade with our words—but if our words fail we will try to persuade with our acts.” Nonviolent resistance according to this quote means first trying to persuade with words then trying to persuade with direct action. This study will compare nonviolent methods of direct action between 2001 and 2007 and those between 1955 and 1963. The nonviolent methods between 2001 and 2007 resist the neoconservative policies that are based on the same assumptions as those in the civil rights movements between 1955 and 1963. The identification of five comparisons in particular proves a continuing tradition of nonviolent protest identified as a ‘surviving legacy’ of resistance against neoconservative policies. First, Rosa Parks’s refusal to give

up her seat on a city bus is comparable to U.S. Representative Barbara Lee's refusal to support the military invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. Second, Daisy Bates's commitment to ensuring a quality public education for the Little Rock Nine is comparable to U.S. Representative Chaka Fattah's efforts to improve the Philadelphia public school system. Third, the organizing work of Ella Baker in creating the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in 1960 is comparable to the organizing work of Maxine Waters in creating the Out of Iraq caucus in 2005. Fourth, the appeals to the U.S. Constitution of James Farmer and the Freedom Riders serves as a foundation for John Conyers' appeal to the U.S. Constitution in his lawsuit against George W. Bush. Fifth, the strategy of getting arrested to call attention to unjust foreign policies within the past five years is comparable to the "jail, no bail" strategy during 1962 and 1963. The major point of this thesis is to argue the existence of a concerted strategy of nonviolent resistance practiced by specific Congressional Black Caucus members. The thesis will compare nonviolent resistance in the 21st century to that of the early 1960s.

Chapter One: Introduction

In this thesis, I argue that there are comparable instances of nonviolent activism from two groups of peoples in U.S. history: civil rights activists between 1955 and 1963 and specific Congressional Black Caucus members between 2001 and 2007. These two time periods of 1955 to 1963 and 2001 to 2007 include significant civil rights activism. 1955 to 1963 is a period that is part of what is popularly known as the modern civil rights movement. According to Julian Bond, it is a time period when “an ever-widening group of Americans marched, picketed, and demonstrated to bring about an end to legal segregation.”¹ The most effective demonstrations during this movement occurred nonviolently according to many civil rights historians such as Howard Zinn. The time period from 2001 to 2007 could be conceptualized as a post 9/11 civil rights movement where a comparable kind of nonviolent activism exists, as this thesis aims to prove. This could be conceptualized as a post 9/11 civil rights movement because it is a movement that includes the consideration of how U.S. society has changed since 9/11. This post 9/11 movement has in fact been influenced by the events on September 11th, because without such events, George W. Bush would not have had a legitimate reason to acquire Congressional approval to invade Iraq and Afghanistan in September of 2001. This thesis argues that Barbara Lee’s single vote against this war is part of a post 9/11 civil rights movement that ultimately seeks societal changes that are similar to those of the civil rights movement.

This post 9/11 civil rights movement ultimately aims to bring about an end to emerging race and social class warfare which, over the past fifty years, has led to gross wealth and income disparities across social classes. This thesis will discuss how a specific group of Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) members ultimately aim to end the social class warfare and will compare the methods of nonviolent resistance from 2001 to 2007 with those occurring from 1955 to 1963. Those who played major roles in the civil rights movement from 1955 to 1963 provided important lessons on protest. In fact, what the stalwarts of the civil rights movement have provided us, along with the critical passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is what Clayborne Carson calls ‘a surviving legacy’ of resistance against disenfranchisement when he describes the work of a very significant civil rights organization in 1960, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC:

SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee] workers failed to resolve the enduring dilemmas that had perplexed earlier radicals and revolutionaries, but they provided a surviving legacy. This legacy is most evident among black people in the deep South communities where SNCC became enmeshed in strong local struggles. Local black leaders who gained new conceptions of themselves as a result of SNCC’s work carried on political movements after SNCC workers departed and the excitement of protest subsided.²

This surviving legacy that allowed blacks in the South to carry on political movements is most needed to revive all Americans today from what Cornel West calls “seductive lies, comforting illusions”³ which is arguably a more intense repetition of the environment in 1960s that King described as a “deadening complacency.”⁴ By identifying acts of protest -- such as Barbara Lee’s 2001 vote against the war in Iraq and Charles Rangel’s 2004 arrest -- as nonviolent, this study hopes to remind Americans about the seriousness of this time in its similarity to the civil rights movement and inspire

the challenge of what we see clearly today as a “deadening complacency.” The definition of nonviolent resistance assumed in the period from 1955 to 1963 is specifically public protest in the form of marches or organizing. The definition of nonviolent resistance as it pertains to the period from 2001 to 2007 is specifically publicized political resistance, through voting or through public protest or publication, against the policies of the George W. Bush administration.

In discussing Rosa Parks, this thesis will focus on public transportation and how Parks’ experiences were similar to Barbara Lee in her treatment after what was seen as a largely unpopular act. In the second chapter, this thesis will also focus on public education as a site of major struggle that both Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah fight in order to provide a quality education for African American students. In the third chapter, this thesis will focus on political organizing by Ella Baker from the 1930s up to 1960 and compare such organizing to that by Maxine Waters. Another site of struggle is the practice of book publishing which is discussed in the fifth chapter that presents John Conyers’ published work, *George W. Bush Versus The U.S. Constitution*. This work illustrates an example of how one can use book publishing to continue the civil rights struggle. Each chapter however might discuss one or more of the aforementioned sites of struggle. For example, Daisy Bates not only works within public education, she also works as a political organizer in order to accomplish her goal of integrating Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

From 2001 to 2007, nonviolence will be examined in the context of the U.S. Representative as a nonviolent protestor. This study will examine various manifestations of non-violent resistance by black legislators in the U.S. House of Representatives

between 2001 and 2007. These are highly public leaders whose actions are widely covered in local and national media. Thus systematic documentation of their public actions is available.

Statement of Purpose

This thesis will make comparisons of historically significant instances of nonviolent resistance in two time periods: from 1955 to 1963 and from 2001 to 2007. This thesis argues that there are five significant similarities between incidents of nonviolent resistance from 2001 to 2007 and from 1955 to 1963; these similarities are made in order to prove the existence of significant nonviolent resistance in the twenty first century. First, Rosa Parks' refusal in 1955 to relinquish her seat on a city bus is identified as an act of nonviolent resistance similar to U.S. Representative Barbara Lee's refusal to vote in 2001 for the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. Second, Daisy Bates' organizing efforts in 1957 to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, is identified as an act of nonviolent resistance similar to U.S. Representative Chaka Fattah's work in drastically improving the graduation and college attendance rates in Philadelphia's public schools in 2003. Third, the organizing work of Ella Baker in creating the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in 1960 is comparable to the organizing work of Maxine Waters in creating the Out of Iraq caucus in 2005. Fourth, the work of organizing the 1961 Freedom Rides and using the U.S. Supreme Court rulings as a rationale to achieve integration is similar to the appeals to George W. Bush to heed the U.S. Constitution by U.S. Representative John Conyers with his 2006 publication of *George W. Bush Versus The U.S. Constitution*. In this fourth similarity, African Americans use the courts or legal system to demand implementation of the law.

The Freedom Riders were trying to hold the South accountable to the Interstate Commerce Commission ban on segregated interstate bus facilities while John Conyers is trying to hold George W. Bush accountable to the U.S. Constitution. Fifth Sheila Jackson-Lee and Charles Rangel's arrests in 2006 and 2004 are similar to Ruby Doris Smith Robinson and Martin Luther King's arrest in 1961 and 1962.

Frameworks For Study of Nonviolence

The instances of activism from 1955 to 1963 will be defined as nonviolent according to the framework established by a definition of nonviolence established by Martin Luther King and affirmed by James Lawson. During a telephone interview, Mr. Lawson, stated that nonviolence consists of two parts: persuasion and protest. King wrote in a 1962 *New York Times* magazine article that “we will take direct action against injustice without waiting for other agencies to act...We will try to persuade with our words—but if our words fail we will try to persuade with our acts.”⁵ For example, Daisy Bates' decision to help send nine African American students to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas was an act of nonviolence because she took direct action against racial segregation without waiting for other agencies to act. The instances of activism from 2001 to 2007 will be identified as nonviolent according to the framework outlined by Gene Sharp in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. Here “action” is considered a more general term that is committed to nonviolence; nonviolent resistance is a form of nonviolent action.

Events or historical incidents will be identified as nonviolent according to a framework for nonviolent action outlined by Gene Sharp in his book entitled *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. Sharp's framework for nonviolence is established in nine basic

steps. These nine steps are: investigation of alleged grievances, a formulation of desired changes, publicity of the grievances, efforts at negotiation, a clarification of minimum demands, concentrating direct action on the weakest points in the opponent's case, publicity of developing issues by the nonviolent group, the pursuance of different kinds of direct action, and finally issuing an ultimatum. These nine basic steps are outlined in the ninth chapter of *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* entitled "Laying the Groundwork for Nonviolent Action." These nine steps exist within the binary method that both James Lawson and Martin Luther King mention in their definitions of nonviolence. This binary method consists of nonviolence having two parts: persuasion and protest. Protest is basically direct action. The first five steps of Sharp's basic steps are within the persuasion element of Lawson and King's binary nonviolent method. The last four steps of Sharp's basic steps of nonviolence are within the protest element of Lawson and King's binary nonviolent method. Altogether these nine basic steps also constitute the framework of nonviolent resistance that will be used to define the acts of protest by those protesting within the civil rights movement and those Congressional Black Caucus members who protest between 2001 and 2007.

Resistance in this context is specifically concerned with any political action within or outside a legislative body that resists the policies of the neoconservative George W. Bush administration that has tried to reverse the gains achieved by the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Since the passage of these laws, African Americans have made considerable progress in their participation in electoral politics. This progress includes running for office in local, state and national elections. Political scientists Hanes Walton and Robert C. Smith write that Civil Rights and Voting Rights

Acts affected social change in two ways: they remedied or compensated African Americans to some degree for past discrimination, and they created diversity in education, employment, and government contracting.⁶ The neoconservative policies are defined as such because they aim to reverse these gains. This thesis focuses on the ways in which resistance against these neoconservative policies are defined as nonviolent.

Historical Overview

The overall nonviolent resistance within a post 9/11 civil rights movement is markedly different from the modern civil rights movement from 1955 to 1963. This post 9/11 civil rights movement contains isolated incidents of protest that are not as related and chronologically close as the student sit in movements of the 1960s were. This post 9/11 civil rights movement is not only fighting against policies of a presidential administration in an executive branch; it is fighting against the policies of the other two branches of the U.S. government: legislative and judicial. Both these branches from 1965 to 2007 have considerably reversed the gains of civil rights movement.

For the majority of this time period, African Americans have served in the U.S. Congress under a Republican president. Republican presidents such as Nixon and George H.W. Bush (or Bush 41, the first President Bush) during this time have tried to reverse the gains of civil rights movement by trying to eliminate Affirmative Action. Also, during the twelve years of Democratic presidential power between 1970 and 2007, the legislative branch has had a Republican majority with goals similar to those of Republican presidential administrations. Perhaps the most significant and recent Republican control of the legislative branch has been from 1994 to 2006 where they wielded considerable control in passing laws that restricted gun control, enforced

minimum mandatory sentencing that disproportionately incarcerated more African American men. This change in the U.S government has resulted in a large retreat from the gains of the civil rights movement because it perpetuated and continues to perpetuate race and social class disparities. Political scientists Hanes Walton and Robert C. Smith write that in 1994 when the Democrats lost their majority in the U.S. House, they also lost their capacity as a unified minority within the majority to develop legislative packages that balance liberal and conservative elements in a coalition that could get the support of the Democratic majority.⁷ This conservative movement was potentially weakened with the Democrats regaining a majority in the U.S. House after the 2006 congressional election. However a post 9/11 civil rights movement has proved itself increasingly relevant in the face of a significant retreat to the right by the judicial branch of the U.S government as well. Between 1969 and 1991, Presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan and Bush appointed seven justices to the U.S. Supreme Court, most of who are highly conservative judges whose decisions did not aim to continue the significant civil rights gains intended by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

By the late 1980s, as a result of these appointments, the U.S. Supreme Court has begun to retreat on civil rights in their decisions concerning school desegregation, voting rights, affirmative action, employment, and government contracting. Both Walton and Smith write that the current U.S. Supreme Court is leading the attack against the civil rights gains.

This thesis will present a post 9/11 civil rights movement from 2001 to 2007 through the work of select Congressional Black Caucus members whose nonviolent resistance acts aim to protect the civil rights gains of 1964 and 1965. The use of

nonviolent action became popularized during its use by Mohandas Gandhi in the early twentieth century. Gandhi describes nonviolent resistance in the form of *satyagraha* as a mental and physical commitment to civil disobedience. In his autobiography, Gandhi distinguishes the nonviolent resister as one who actively obeys laws in society before they choose to deliberately disobey certain laws:

a Satyagrahi obeys the laws of society intelligently and of his own free will, because he considers it to be his sacred duty to do so. It is only when a person has thus obeyed the laws of society scrupulously that he is in a position to judge as to which particular rules are good and just and which [are] unjust and iniquitous.⁸

Gandhi's position foreshadows the commitment to the protest phase of nonviolence to which both Lawson and King allude. According to Aldon Morris, it was Glenn Smiley, a white Methodist minister, who taught King about resistance. Smiley once said "the role that I played...with Martin was one in which I literally lived with him hours and hours and hours at a time, and he pumped me about what nonviolence was."⁹ Smiley also used a book by Richard Gregg entitled *The Power of Nonviolence* to teach nonviolent resistance to King. Richard Gregg worked directly with Gandhi and in this book writes that "the West will be utterly unprepared and helpless in the face of well-disciplined, thoroughly organized and wisely led nonviolent resistance especially if it is accompanied by an equally thorough temporary non vindictive economic boycott."¹⁰

Statement of Research Questions and Methodology

These examined similarities essentially constitute four case studies. In each of these case studies exists an analytical framework that examines the social construction of socioeconomic class and gender, and the role of the national and international media. Each case study will answer the following four research questions. First, why exactly is

the work of a select CBC member defined as nonviolent? Second, how do the nonviolent strategies of the modern civil rights movement and the actions of the Congressional Black Caucus members compare and contrast? Third, in what ways if any do religious beliefs, social class, gender, and the media influence the use of nonviolence by these figures? Fourth, what lessons about how to practice nonviolence can we learn today from each of these case studies? The major methodological strategy for this research included the use of case study comparisons. Each case study included at least one individual from the modern civil rights movement and at least one individual who was or is a current member of the Congressional Black Caucus between 2001 and 2007. Individuals from each era were selected for this analysis based upon the criteria of the amount of accessible material that was perceived to show nonviolence. Individuals from the modern civil rights movement were selected based on their perceived influence on the eventual passage of the Voting Rights Act. Rosa Parks was selected because of her role that is popularly seen to trigger the modern civil rights movement. Daisy Bates was selected for her role in fighting for federal enforcement of *Brown v. Board*. Ella Baker was selected for her role in organizing the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee whose combination of direct action and voter registration transformed the South and had a significant influence on the eventual passing of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. James Farmer was selected for his leadership of the Freedom Rides, which was a nonviolent protest strategy that relied on the U.S. Supreme Court rulings to justify integrating segregated buses and bus counters.

Individuals from the Congressional Black Caucus during the post 9/11 civil rights movement were selected based on their work's perceived similarity to figures of the civil

modern civil rights movement. This similarity is evidenced by newspaper articles and other journalistic materials. Barbara Lee was chosen to be compared to Rosa Parks because she was the only U.S. Representative to initially vote directly against the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. Chaka Fattah was chosen to be compared to Daisy Bates because Fattah worked diligently, like Daisy Bates, to ensure a quality public education not only for nine students but for an entire group of public school students in the Philadelphia public school district. Fattah was also chosen to be compared to Bates because he was the original co-sponsor of the GEAR UP program, a program designed specifically to prepare students from lower socioeconomic classes for postsecondary education. Maxine Waters was chosen to be compared to Ella Baker because of Waters' influence in organizing not only other members of Congress in her Out of Iraq caucus but also organizing many Americans to begin to organize on their behalf to protest the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. John Conyers was chosen to be compared to James Farmer because of his reliance on the U.S. Constitution in opposing the policies of the Bush administration in their allowing torture. Charles Rangel and Sheila Jackson-Lee were both chosen to be compared to Martin Luther King, and Ruby Doris Smith Robinson respectively because of the former pair's use of the jail in strategy in order to call attention to the genocide in the Sudan. All the reasons for discussing these select Congressional Black Caucus members is evidenced by journalistic material.

The methodological procedure used for each comparison or case study contained journalistic material that included primarily archival data which included books, journal articles, newspaper articles, news program transcripts, film transcripts, and personal interviews. The kinds of books used in this thesis were largely biographies that provided

specific information on how individuals such as Daisy Bates and Ella Baker protested in a nonviolent way. The information about how each modern civil rights leader practiced nonviolence came from their personal memoirs in the case of Daisy Bates, James Farmer, and Martin Luther King. More information about these leaders also came from personal biographies in the case of Daisy Bates, Ella Baker, and Rosa Parks. The information about how each select CBC member practices nonviolence came from personal interviews or specific newspaper articles of news program transcripts as well as recent encyclopedias in the case of John Conyers. The background of Chaka Fattah came from a personal interview with Representative Fattah himself where I asked him about how he thought elements of his upbringing influenced his desire to improve public education, if any. The background of other CBC members largely came from the works of Lavern Gill's *African American Women in Congress* or Maurine Christopher's *America's Black Congressmen*. The wide range of archival research helped create a large resource of information which allowed for many astounding similarities to be identified between these two time periods.

Chapter Two: A Comparison of Similarities between Barbara Lee's Vote Against the Iraq Invasion with That of Rosa Parks' Refusal to Relinquish her Seat in 1955

A Brief Background of Barbara Lee and Rosa Parks

Both Barbara Lee and Rosa Parks stood alone in support of issues that were extraordinarily meaningful to them personally. This chapter will compare both women in order to argue that Barbara Lee continues a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance from Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat in 1955. What makes an examination of Barbara Lee, a female member of the Congressional Black Caucus, significant is her experience as an African-American woman. This study of her nonviolent resistance considers her experience of "being born black in America and [being] a woman and experiencing injustice, segregation, and racism and sexism."¹¹ It is from this experience that her nonviolent behavior in voting against the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan deserves a respectful academic study, especially considering the brutal racism that Barbara Lee, her mother, and grandmother experienced. Barbara Lee said that she can remember the story "over and over again" of her mother who was pregnant with her and according to Lee: "when she was in labor, they refused to let her in the hospital because she was black and really left her to die and finally my grandmother somehow got my mother admitted and she was to have a caesarean section but it was too late, and so they had to take me using forceps and I had a scar above my right eye for many years...so I literally came into the world fighting to survive...that's what I knew and this is all I know."¹² On February 3, 2003, Barbara Lee was interviewed by Fergal Keane about her

vote against the invasion of Iraq. This was the first significant act of nonviolent resistance against the Iraq invasion particularly because Barbara Lee was the only member of the U.S. Congress, House and Senate, to vote against the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan.

In a similar way, Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery Bus on Thursday, December 1, 1955, was perhaps the single most important act of nonviolent resistance that triggered the Montgomery Bus Boycott, eventually leading to more local protest movements that were part of a greater civil rights movement. There are two key similarities between Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat and Barbara Lee's refusal to be complicit in a military invasion: their acting on their religious beliefs, and their representation of working class interests. While Rosa Parks was trying to end race and social class warfare by fighting racial segregation on city buses, Barbara Lee was trying to end race and social class warfare by fighting the disproportionate numbers of black and Latino youth who makeup the U.S. military that invades Iraq and Afghanistan. A discussion of these two similarities followed by a close reading of their experiences in these nonviolent acts clarifies their significance.

A Comparison of the Experiences During Nonviolence by Barbara Lee and Rosa Parks

In their nonviolence, both Parks and Lee were representing the interests of a socioeconomic class that was lower than the socioeconomic class that they belonged to at that time. At the time of her nonviolent act, Parks was a seamstress married to an active member of the NAACP, a group that attracted more middle class than working class blacks at the time. The NAACP had a huge influence in using a civil rights case that they believed would inspire the nation and end institutional segregation. In fact, a

working-class woman, Claudette Colvin, along with an unidentified elderly woman, refused to give up her seat before Parks. Just before her court date however, it was feared that Colvin was pregnant. Fearing the white press would portray her as just a “bad girl” trying to cause trouble, the NAACP decided it would be foolhardy to appeal Colvin’s case to a higher court. She was not the right person in whom the NAACP could invest money, time, and the great hope of ending segregation. That person, in the eyes of the NAACP and the sexist social mores they appealed to, would have to be above reproach.¹³ Therefore, Parks in her refusal to relinquish her seat was representing the interests of the working class. Her protest was opening a door to the possibility of ending not only institutional segregation for all blacks including the working class; her protest was opening a door to the possibility of ending institutionalized discrimination, and brought active protest against injustice to a new level by raising the consciousness of oppressed peoples; inspiring them to take their fate, their condition, in their own hands instead of relying on the whim of a segregated, racially discriminating society.

At the time of her nonviolent act, Lee was and currently still is, a U.S. Representative which afforded her a certain socioeconomic status that is higher than most people in her congressional district’s constituency. There were other factors besides her higher socioeconomic status that obligated her to vote against a war that would send a disproportionate number of African-Americans and Latinos to the military invasion. Compared to other black U.S. Representatives whose congressional districts also include a high number of African-Americans and Latinos, she probably felt a stronger sense of urgency to do her part to protest the invasion of Iraq. This sense of urgency was perhaps compelled by the longstanding history and legacy of her Oakland-area constituents and

her congressional predecessor Ronald Dellums who vociferously protested preemptive military invasions in his time as a U.S. Representative. As a member of the U.S. House, Barbara Lee's duty to protect her constituents and make the decision that she felt was best for them required a vote against the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The destitution of African-American working class people around both settings of nonviolence at this time is important to consider. The settings of these nonviolent acts are Montgomery in 1955 and Washington, D.C. in 2001. While there is more in the historical record about the working class conditions of African Americans in Birmingham than in Montgomery, the conditions in both cities are arguably similar and provide the rationale for the Montgomery Bus Boycott. In Birmingham by 1955, 42.1 percent of African-American families earned less than \$2,000 a year compared to 8.4 percent of white families. Public assistance remained woefully inadequate. The city of Birmingham could barely afford to maintain its welfare program, which mainly consisted of distributing surplus food. Altogether, some 35,000 residents took advantage of that program many of whom stood in lines that stretched at least four blocks.¹⁴ Therefore, sometimes the last straw that broke the camel's back of the psyches and lives of many of Birmingham's working class blacks included the order to relinquish a seat to a white person on a city bus. Robin D.G. Kelley gives a closer glimpse of the considerations by working class blacks to protest their unfair, racist oppression:

The bitter struggles waged by black working people on public transportation, though obviously exacerbated by wartime social, political, and economic transformations, should force us to rethink the meaning of public space as a terrain of class, race, and gender conflict. Although the workplace and struggles to improve working conditions are important, for Southern black workers the most embattled sites of conflict were frequently public spaces. Part of the reason has to do with the fact that policing proved far more difficult in public spaces than in places of work.

Not only were employees constantly under the watchful eye of foremen, managers, and employers, but workers could be dismissed, suspended, or have their pay docked on a whim. Thus, for black workers, public spaces both embodied the most repressive, violent aspects of race and gender oppression, and ironically afforded more opportunities than the workplace itself to engage in acts of resistance.¹⁵

The experience of one Edgar Daniel (E.D.) Nixon as a Pullman car porter attests to the race oppression within the public space of the passenger train. E.D. Nixon became a significant community leader in Montgomery who organized other community members to fight the repression that working class African Americans faced. After meeting A. Philip Randolph who founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Nixon decided to found a local branch of the NAACP and the Montgomery Welfare League to assist those working class blacks who could not or did not work. He also helped establish the Montgomery Voter's League in 1940. For ten years he had helped fellow Montgomery citizens use the vote to overcome race and class oppression. As Donnie Williams and Wayne Greenhaw write:

On June 13, 1944, Nixon led seven hundred fifty black to the board of registrars and demanded that they all be allowed to register to vote. Many of them wore uniforms and had fought for their country overseas. Fewer than fifty were granted their request...In 1950 when Nixon heard about the killing of the young soldier Thomas Edward Brooks aboard a city bus, he was president of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP. He was sickened and angered. 'When I approached the police about the brutality, I got blank stares. It was like the boy never really existed. But I was persistent. Throughout this time, I was known as a troublemaker. When they saw me coming, they knew I had something for 'em. I didn't turn away and bow my head and look all defeated and victimized. I wasn't like that. Never was. Then some of the local police here started meeting me privately. When it was just me and them, they'd admit terrible things were happening. They knew that it hurt them just as much as it was hurting us. And most of 'em knew something was going to happen sooner or later.¹⁶

This is why Rosa Parks standing in the gap for Claudette Colvin is so important.

Because of the societal gender constructions around this time which claimed that

“respectable” young women should not get pregnant, the NAACP dropped Claudette Colvin and instead utilized Rosa Parks’s nonviolence as a test case to try to end segregation. Compared to Claudette Colvin, Rosa Parks better fit the image the NAACP had of a “respectable lady” they would want to portray in a publicized court case challenging racial segregation. Parks’s act of nonviolence served as a bridge between African-American working class and the middle class in the 1950s. Barbara Lee’s vote against the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan was the only vote in the 300 plus Representatives in the U.S. House against the military invasion and served also as a bridge between U.S. Representatives in their financially comfortable positions and those who have been adversely affected by the budget cuts in federal programs and grants such as the Community Development Block Grant, due to the military invasion of Iraq. Lee’s act is a symbol to the rest of the country about the potential for critical thinking about the overall best long-term interests and well-being for the working class people the nation.

Both working class conditions in Parks and Lee’s time are exacerbated by war, and both include the amplified economic oppression of African-Americans. This is why we should identify the similarities in methods to protesting such conditions. Similarities between Rosa Parks and Barbara Lee prove that significant acts of nonviolent protests have included not only women of color, but also women of faith.

There are other key elements in both environments as settings of nonviolent protest: for Barbara Lee it was the House floor and chambers; for Rosa Parks, it was a Montgomery public bus. Both settings of resistance included fellow African-Americans who were part of an “in-crowd” that both Lee and Parks chose not to join. For example, Barbara Lee said in a BBC interview that she was not the only member of the

Congressional Black Caucus to vote against the invasion of Iraq. Although many in the CBC felt they should not vote for the war, Lee was the only member who acted on that feeling and actually voted against it. She told Keane in the BBC interview: “there were several members, many members voicing this but of course the anger and the frustration and the sadness of the moment took over and I believe that’s what, you know, the moving with the flow, going with the flow, that’s what happened. People were caught up, I think, like everyone in the country with the emotional response.” There was also a factor that Barbara Lee did not mention, perhaps to avoid as little criticism of her colleagues as possible: the factor of fear.

Ten months after the inauguration of George W. Bush (or Bush 43, the second President Bush), the Bush administration had met with the CBC only one time. The event of 9/11 certainly postponed any plans for addressing the goals of the CBC and any votes against Bush’s plans against invasion of Iraq was interpreted as “unpatriotic.” This is a label that both CBC members John Lewis and Maxine Waters have stated as reasons for their voting for the invasion of Iraq on September 13, 2001. Many CBC members voted for Iraq invasion because they feared being labeled or considered “unpatriotic” by the American media and their constituents. In fact, Lee talks about the difficulty within her office of deciding not to vote for invasion: “I think the staff was very supportive in helping us ensure that the correct message and the truth about my vote and the rationale was put forth because you know how the press can get sometimes.” This very real factor of fear is stated more directly by Rosa Parks in the setting of her act of nonviolent resistance. As she writes in her book about her experience, *Quiet Strength*,

On Thursday evening, December 1, I was riding the bus home from work. A white man got on, and the driver looked our way and said, ‘let me have

those seats.’ It did not seem proper, particularly for a woman to give her seat to a man. All the passengers paid ten cents, just as he did. When more whites boarded the bus, the driver, J.P. Blake, ordered the blacks in the fifth row, the first row of the colored section (the row I was sitting in), to move to the rear. Bus drivers then had police powers, under both municipal and state laws, to enforce racial segregation. However, we were sitting in the section designated for colored. At first none of us moved. ‘Ya’ll better make it light on yourselves and let me have those seats,’ Blake said. Then three of the blacks in my row got up, but I stayed in my seat and slid closer to the window. I do not remember being frightened. But I sure did not believe I would “make it light on myself by standing up.”¹⁷

This makes an interesting comparison with Barbara Lee’s experience in the U.S. House where Lee says:

Well right after that several members...came up to me and said, ‘I think you made a mistake, you better go and change your vote.’ I said, ‘no, that’s not a mistake.’ And these members...who were close friends and they said, ‘Barbara, come on, you can’t be the only no vote on this.’ I said to them: ‘Why don’t you join me and vote no also because you know that this is not the right resolution we should be passing today.’ And out of genuine concern several members came to me and suggested that I should change my vote, and I told them you know there was no way I was going to change it. The Congress...at least should be above the fray in this instance and be the institution that would allow us some rational debate and discussion to take place about an appropriate response and to get caught up with the fervor and the anger and the sadness of the moment, as elected officials we should not do that, and that’s what I said to my colleagues and most of them said, ‘yeah, you’re right.’¹⁸

Certain descriptions of Parks’s experience are similar to those of Lee’s experience in both acts of nonviolent resistance. What is common in both is the presence of “scared blacks.” These were blacks that sought to maintain order, maintain the status quo and minimize the perceived threat to their political or personal lives. Certainly the blacks in Rosa Parks’s case faced a much more grave threat to their life, but in Barbara Lee’s experience, these scared blacks operated to reverse or end Lee’s act of nonviolent resistance. The legacy of Jim Crow influenced the decision of these “scared blacks” not

to join Parks in her nonviolent act of resistance, while the fear of being “unpatriotic” influenced the decision of more recent “scared blacks” not to join Lee in her act of nonviolent resistance. The presence of scared blacks in Parks’ case in Jim Crow Montgomery should not belie the organizing of the local civil rights movement that included the work of middle class black women like Parks who protested segregation. In the former case, the threat to their livelihood and lives were greater, while in the latter case, the threat to their lives was arguably less. However Barbara Lee did receive death threats because of reactions to this vote.

These women also faced significant retaliation from the white racist communities for their acts of nonviolence. Rosa Parks lost her “twenty-five dollar-a-week job when the now-defunct Montgomery Fair department store closed its tailor shop. I was given no indication from the store that my boycott activities were the reason I lost my job.”¹⁹ Fergal Keane notes that after Barbara Lee’s no vote, she had to be given a police bodyguard, and when he asks her if there were death threats, she replies: “Ah, yea. But I don’t talk about those kind of negative reactions.”²⁰ Both women are remarkably modest in not focusing on the suffering they experienced as a result of their nonviolent acts. Rosa Parks does not express a clear belief that her nonviolence cost her the department store job while Barbara Lee implicitly expresses the futility of providing the details of death threats against her. She simply leaves open the question of whether the freedom of expression that America claims to have is real. Both women avoid what King warns against, and what he describes as a martyr complex in his essay entitled “Suffering and Faith:” “A person who constantly calls attention to [their] trials and sufferings is in danger of developing a martyr complex and of making others feel that he is consciously

seeking sympathy.”²¹ Both Lee and Parks were not calling to serious attention their trials in their acts of nonviolence. Parks was fighting for integration of city buses while Lee was fighting to salvage costs that the American working class would pay for a military invasion. Lee is also trying to salvage the lives of the black and Latino military youth who join the military because of a lack of economic resources and job opportunities.

A Comparison of the Nonviolence of Barbara Lee and Rosa Parks

Not only have these women avoided a martyr complex and advanced the cause of civil rights in significantly symbolic ways, they are also fulfilling King’s definition of nonviolence because they are “appealing to the conscience of the great decent [conservative movement] who through blindness, fear, pride, or irrationality have allowed their consciences to sleep.”²² Both Rosa Parks and Barbara Lee have each taken “direct action against injustice without waiting for other agencies to act...[they] persuade with [their] words.” Barbara Lee gave a House speech, warning: “let us not become the evil we deplore,” while Rosa Parks told a bus driver in response to his demand that she give up her seat: “No I am not.” The driver could have tapped into his conscience and allowed Parks her seat, but instead he acquiesces to the social norms of the situation and isolates Parks, like the rest of the U.S. House isolated Lee, to be the sole resisters in a significant act of nonviolence. The rest of King’s definition of nonviolence states that “if our words fail we will try to persuade with our acts.”²³ In both cases of these brave women, their words did fail, however they were followed by significant acts—acts that were not preemptively aggressive in nature. These were both acts that gave the status quo an opportunity to utilize the ethical high road of their consciences with words. When these words failed however, both women made significant nonviolent acts. Many U.S.

House members are noticing the wisdom in Barbara Lee's statements on the House floor before her vote against the war, where she also stated:

In 1964, Congress gave President Lyndon Johnson the power to 'take all necessary measures' to repel attacks and prevent further aggression. In so doing, this House abandoned its own constitutional responsibilities and launched our country into years of undeclared war in Vietnam. At that time, Senator Wayne Morse, one of two lonely votes against the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, declared 'I believe that history will record that we have made a grave mistake in subverting and circumventing the Constitution of the United States. I believe that within the next century, future generations will look with dismay and great disappointment upon a Congress which is now about to make such a historic mistake.' Senator Morse was correct, and I fear we make the same mistake today. And I fear the consequences.²⁴

Lee's expressed fears have been realized by increasing poverty yet her bold act is similar to the Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat particularly because both acts of nonviolence are directly responsible for freedom movements in the 1960s and the antiwar movement we see today. This claim is supported by the influence that the Montgomery Bus Boycott wielded on later boycotts such as in Nashville in 1960 and Birmingham in 1963.

Barbara Lee's vote against the war has afforded her special status in the antiwar and activist community and undoubtedly inspired public intellectuals such as Julianne Malveaux to publish Lee's words in *The Paradox of Loyalty*. Arguably, Lee's activism has also been responsible for inspiring other activists such as Cindy Sheehan in her antiwar movement. Her act served as a bridge to the working class person who may not see the immediate need for militarily invading a foreign country with pressing domestic issues such as employment and a staggering healthcare system.

A final comment on the significance of these two nonviolent acts of resistance is the important way both acts were published and disseminated among the African-American community. After Rosa Parks' arrest, Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, an English professor at the nearby HBCU Alabama State College copied and disseminated 35,000 handbills stating Parks' arrest and calling on the Birmingham community to boycott the bus. The handbill stated: "This woman's case will come up on Monday. We are, therefore, asking every Negro to stay off the buses Monday in protest of the arrest and trial. Don't ride the buses to work, to town, to school, or anywhere on Monday."²⁵ In the week following Parks' arrest, thousands of the anonymous leaflets passed secretly through Montgomery's black neighborhoods—in stores, schools, bars, and churches. Certainly the boycott due to Parks' arrest would not have taken place had Jo Ann Robinson not communicated the arrest and the plea to boycott via these handbills.

Similarly, after Barbara Lee's No Vote, economist and public commentator Julianne Malveaux wrote and co-edited *The Paradox of Loyalty: An African-American Response to the War on Terrorism* in 2001. In this book is the complete speech that Barbara Lee gave just before she voted against the war. This book was published by Third World Press in 2002 and in its updated edition published in 2004, included a recent essay by Barbara Lee entitled "Squandered Abundance" in which she decries the decline of the working class conditions for African-Americans:

Over the last few years since 9/11, we have witnessed escalating defense budgets that are at historic levels, and as a result, we have not been able to sufficiently address the great needs that our country has in the area of crime prevention, education, job training, and health care. We are pumping billions into public works projects in Iraq, while the infrastructure in our own towns and cities is crumbling...When social service programs are cut to balance the budget and pay for war, the African American community is disproportionately affected.²⁶

The conditions that Barbara Lee describes are conditions that mirror the working class conditions of blacks in Montgomery and Birmingham after Parks' act of nonviolence. Between 1955 and 1960, the census tracts for Birmingham showed it had both the highest percentage of African-Americans as well as the highest percentage of families below the poverty line. This happened because the city's coal and steel industry discarded a large segment of its black labor force while racist zoning laws continued to thrive. An uneven and overcrowded housing market and public housing projects forced some ex-industrial workers and other poor people in the industrial suburbs, leaving pockets of unemployed black workers in the industrial suburbs. Conditions between 1955 and 1960 barely changed because of the slow combination of racist hiring practices and Birmingham's slow growth industrial economy.²⁷ The effect of Barbara Lee's no-vote galvanized support from the other Democratic U.S. Representatives, albeit very transient, for her subsequent amendment, the Lee Amendment, calling for a nonviolent foreign policy in Iraq and Afghanistan. She said: "72 members voted for the Lee Amendment, now that's phenomenal." The additional support for her nonviolent act hearkens the ways in which Jo Ann Gibson Robinson discusses the impact the Parks-inspired boycott had on the Birmingham economy in her memoir *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*. She mentions what Barbara Lee referred to as "the quiet majority" when she talks about the "surprising" cooperation of those who boycotted in Montgomery. This cooperation resulted in serious economic setbacks for Montgomery around Christmas time because of the boycott:

. . . downtown merchants counted day's receipts and came up short...especially compared to the preceding Christmas shopping days. Negroes, who as a group had a reputation for spending their earning without much thought for saving for tomorrow, just 'were not in town' to

spend money and in any case had no way to carry purchases home. But then, boycotters were in no mood to go shopping. Christmas was not on their minds...With practically 100 percent of black patrons boycotting now, it was impossible for the buses to continue normal operations...[they were] losing possibly three-fourths of its normal intake each day; it could not possibly stay in business.²⁸

In discussing support that Barbara Lee garnered across the country for her vote against the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, she refers to the presence of a “silent majority” like the one that undoubtedly surprised the city of Montgomery. Robinson discusses the verbal attacks by the city press, stating that “Negro goon squads” reportedly had been organized to intimidate other Negroes who rode buses on Monday.²⁹ The styling of the Montgomery citizens as “Negro goon squads” shows the clear ways in which the efforts to boycott were underestimated and insulted. In reality, there was no need for “Negro goon squads” because of the solidarity within a silent majority. Barbara Lee mentions this when describing the increasing numbers of Democrats that joined her to oppose the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan:

. . . when you look at the final vote count with regard to those who were opposed to the Bush resolution, over...75% of the Democratic caucus voted against the Bush resolution [subsequent to the vote on September 13th]. So I believe that while it may appear that I’m in the minority right now, I think...there’s a silent majority that’s becoming very vocal I think with regard to seeking alternatives to war.³⁰

Both women mention their religious convictions in their acts of nonviolence. In Barbara Lee’s speech on the House floor on September 16, 2001, she said: “This unspeakable attack on the United States has forced me to rely on my moral compass, my conscience, and my God for direction...As a member of the clergy so eloquently said, let us not become the evil we deplore.”³¹ Rosa Parks said: “I did not get on the bus to get arrested; I got on the bus to go home. Since I have always been a strong believer in God,

I knew he was with me, and only He could get me through the next step.”³² Theologian Obery Hendricks writes that nonviolent or passive resistance is a profound enactment of Jesus Christ’s strategy and has one purpose: to overcome injustice.³³ Because the sermon which Lee mentions was heard in a church and because Parks makes continued references to her belief in Christ, both Lee and Parks acts of nonviolence are influenced by the role of the Church. Lee and Parks prove their individual commitment to overcoming injustice as a result of their religious beliefs.

Another important similarity in women’s nonviolence in the Montgomery boycott and the Barbara Lee’s no vote is the role of the church. A few days after Rosa Parks’ arrest, the black citizens of Montgomery planned a meeting at the Holt Street Baptist Church to discuss the terms of their bus boycott. Barbara Lee talks about how attending a church service influenced her decision to vote against the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. The church is what Aldon Morris calls “the institutional center of the modern civil rights movement.”³⁴ Barbara Lee recalls the role of the church in motivating her to vote against House Joint Resolution 64 when she said that “as a member of the clergy said let us not become the evil that we deplore.” In persuading her fellow House members to vote against the war, she was appealing to the role and the moral authority of the church.

The venue in which the Montgomery boycott was agreed upon was also a church: the Holt Street Baptist Church. According to a December 7, 1955 article in the *Montgomery Adviser*, by Joe Azbell: “the purpose of this meeting was to give ‘further instructions’ on the boycott of city buses which had been started as a protest of the Negroes against the arrest, trial, and conviction of Rosa Parks, 42-year old seamstress, on

a charge of violating segregation laws by refusing to give up her seat to a white person and move to the rear of a city bus.”³⁵ Azbell also wrote: “The remark which drew the most applause was: ‘the history book will write of us as a race of people who in Montgomery County, State of Alabama, Country of the United States, stood up for and fought for their rights as American citizens, as citizens of [a] democracy.’”³⁶ This quote from this meeting might have been from King himself. Lee, in the most democratic body of Congress, the U.S. House, uses the Church to appeal to her democratic body while these Montgomery ministers (whom Azbell writes were intentionally anonymous for safety reasons) at the meeting use democracy to appeal to their church body. The irony is unique yet demonstrates the ways that nonviolence inextricably depends on a belief in a fair democracy and on Christian values.

It is written in King’s autobiography that his speech at Holt Street Baptist Church that night on December 5, 1955 was the “most decisive speech” of his life. Barbara Lee’s speech on September 13, 2001, was arguably the most decisive speech of her lifetime because it left an impression of the kind of legislator that she would be in the U.S. House: one that does not easily compromise her morals for the capitalist goals of military invasion. She also proves that she is a legislator that does not compromise for fear of being labeled unpatriotic. This is the moral standpoint from which King and many other civil rights activists objected to the Vietnam War. King began this very longstanding tradition of nonviolent protest on December 5, 1955, at Holt Street Baptist Church when he said that night,

We are here in a general sense because first and foremost we are American citizens and we are determined to apply our citizenship to the fullness of its meaning. We are here also because of our love for democracy, because of our deep-seated belief that democracy transformed

from thin paper to thick action is the greatest form of government on earth... We, the disinherited of the land, we who have been oppressed so long, are tired of going through the long night of captivity. And now we are reaching out for the daybreak of freedom and justice and equality. May I say to you... that we must keep... God in the forefront. Let us be Christian in all of our actions.³⁷

Barbara Lee in her speech proclaiming her vote against the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan said she relies on her moral compass, her conscience, and her God for direction. Both King and Lee relied on keeping “God in the forefront” as they made their nonviolent acts of resistance. In her speech denouncing the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, Barbara Lee continues the tradition of what David Howard-Pitney calls the African-American *jeremiad*, which is a speech consisting of social criticism and prophecy that includes two parts: a citing of the promise of democracy that America holds and a criticism of present retrogression from that democratic promise. King cites the promise of democracy when he says that those who are gathered at Holt Street Baptist church are there because of the “promise of democracy.” He later criticizes retrogression from that democratic promise when he later says that blacks in Montgomery are “tired of going through the long night of captivity.” Here King is referring to the captivity of the segregated, separate and inferior treatment of blacks in Montgomery. David Howard-Pitney states that in this speech, King warns that if blacks failed to observe high ethical standards, their noble cause would degenerate into ignoble violence and “our protest will end up as a meaningless drama on the stage of history... shrouded with... shame.” Barbara Lee by voting against the war and calling for a socially responsible federal budget has indeed observed high ethical standards in her time as a U.S. Representative. She also does a similar thing when she exercises her right to free speech in a democracy, saying: “I am convinced that military action will not prevent further acts of terrorism against the

United States.”³⁸ She also engages in criticizing America’s retrogression from that democratic promise of equal justice for all in her essay “Squandered Abundance:”

We face a real fight to real fight to re-order our priorities in the wake of the Bush administration’s devastating and divisive domestic policies towards African-Americans and other minority communities. The future of our nation—of our very democracy—rests on our own willingness to embrace the difference among us, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, or sexual orientation, so that all people have the chance to fulfill their own American dream.³⁹

She calls on individual American citizens to develop their own sense of democracy not from the Bush administration but from their “own” actions, their “own willingness to embrace the difference among us.” King and other leaders, such as Barbara Lee in her House speeches, have employed rhetoric of social criticism known as the American jeremiad.⁴⁰ This is one very important similarity.

In summary, the nonviolent acts Barbara Lee, Rosa Parks, and Jo Ann Gibson Robinson are significant because all of these women appeal to their religious beliefs, all women represent of the pressing needs of the black working class, and these women have their acts published and disseminated by exclusively African-American organizations.

Barbara Lee’s act of nonviolence fights a similar kind of violence that the city of Montgomery threatened days after the boycott. On December 21, 1956, one day before bus service would resume normal service, and after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling ordered the Montgomery bus company to integrate its buses following the year-long boycott, King held a newspaper at a mass meeting that read: “Tomorrow if the Negroes ride the buses [integrated], there will be blood flowing, and fighting at every street corner.” Glenn Smiley wrote that on the next day when normal bus service resumed, integrated, he rode about twenty eight buses that day and saw no serious acts of violence, with the

exception of one incident that illuminates the effects of the nonviolent teaching on individuals:

The bus had pulled up to a stop and we were unloading at the front and back doors. I got out the front, along with several others, including a tall young man I had not previously noticed. Several got out the back door, if I remember correctly, all of them black. As the bus pulled away, the young man walked quickly back to the others and struck a large woman in the mouth, knocking her to the ground. The young man stood over her for a moment with his fists clenched, looking around at the rest of us as if for help or approbation. No one moved a muscle. He became very nervous and jumped into the car with the three women. Then all of us went back to comfort the woman, who by now had rolled over and brought herself to a sitting position, some blood coming from her mouth. As I brushed her off, I said to her, 'You didn't say a thing to him. Were you praying?' 'Quite the contrary,' she said, 'for I wanted to cut him to ribbons.' 'Why didn't you do it then?' I asked. 'Well because last night I was able to tell myself and that little man (Dr. King) that tomorrow if I am hit when I ride the bus, I am not going to hit back. But I really did want to cut him up.'⁴¹

This is an example of the profound effect of King's nonviolent teachings on some members of the local Montgomery community. According to the work of Gene Sharp, the first basic step that classifies an act of protest as nonviolent is the investigation of alleged grievances. This is a step, Sharp writes, that could weaken a nonviolent movement if it is revealed that those who practice nonviolence did not really know the facts nor have accurate information on the situation they were addressing.⁴² Both Barbara Lee and Rosa Parks conducted sufficient investigation of their alleged grievances before committing their significant acts of nonviolence. First, Rosa Parks' experience at the Highlander Folk School under the guidance of Septima Clark allowed her to sufficiently investigate into the kind of work required to challenge and eventually integrate a racially segregated society. Septima Clark founded citizenship classes within the Highlander Folk School, the goal of which was to provide full citizenship through education. This education included learning constitutional rights such as the right to

organize, to obtain the political power, and to get streetlights or better roads and schools. This also included learning their right to peaceful assembly and to petition for redress of grievances.⁴³ The Highlander Folk School was where Rosa Parks conducted sufficient investigation into part of the crisis that she would eventually avert by her single act of nonviolent resistance. At this school, Parks was investigating the grievance of institutionalized segregation. She conducted this investigation before her decision to keep her seat and trigger the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Barbara Lee also demonstrates investigation of alleged grievances when she mentions an abdication of duty by Congress in allowing the Vietnam war in her speech before the U.S. House just prior to voting against the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan: “In 1964, Congress gave President Lyndon Johnson the power ‘to take all necessary measures’ to repel attacks and prevent further aggression. In so doing, this House abandoned its own constitutional responsibilities and launched our country into years of undeclared war in Vietnam. At that time, Senator Wayne Morse, one of two lonely votes against the Tonkin Gulf Resolution declared, ‘I believe that history will record that we have made a grave mistake in subverting the Constitution of the United States.’ ...Senator Morse was correct, and I fear we make the same mistake today.”⁴⁴

Lessons Learned From Both Acts of Nonviolence

Both Rosa Parks and Barbara Lee have fulfilled this first basic step of nonviolent protest by demonstrating commitments to investigation of their alleged grievances, however in different ways. Rosa Parks investigated the alleged grievance of institutional segregation by making a point to attend Highlander and learning about her right to protest. Septima Clark says about Rosa Parks: “she was working with a youth group in

Montgomery and she said ‘I want to come and see if I can do something for my people.’ So she came. We sent money and gave her a scholarship. And when she went home, she had gained enough courage, enough strength to feel that she could stand firm and decide not to move when that man asked for her seat.”⁴⁵ Rosa Parks’ investigation of institutional segregation occurred during her attendance at Highlander and when she gained the courage and strength to participate in nonviolent action by not giving up her seat. Barbara Lee’s investigation of alleged grievances happened in a different way; through her investigation of how Congress has shirked from its responsibility as a body to be a checkpoint to declare war on another country and to insure national and international justice. In her defiance against a military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, Lee clearly took the time to investigate and understand the history of the U.S. Congress’s relationship to executive power to declare war. Like her predecessor and the woman who she says inspired her to vote for the first time, Shirley Chisholm, Lee firmly believes in providing the check on the executive power to conduct military invasions. Lee’s reference to the Gulf of Tonkin resolution is perhaps the most important premise in her entire speech in the U.S. House against military invasion. She uses the sudden Gulf of Tonkin resolution and its consequences to persuade other U.S. House members to vote against the military invasion. Her premise is especially significant in light of recent reports proving that, like the falsified reasons given for the invasion of Iraq, that is Iraq’s acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, the reasons for escalating the military presence in Vietnam were also falsified by the National Security Agency. Barbara Lee is continuing a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance against a military occupation particularly in her recent

amendment to the U.S. House floor that provides funding for a complete withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq by the end of 2007.⁴⁶

A recent 2007 House amendment which was supported by the majority of the Democratic Party but rejected by Barbara Lee and many other progressive Democrats also called for a pullout of the troops in Iraq by the end of the following year, 2008. This bill was rejected by Barbara Lee and others on March 27, 2007 because it was known to have many loopholes so large that the commander-in-chief could keep as many troops as he or she wanted to, after that goal or deadline is passed. Lee and many other progressive Democrats were obviously challenging the provisions of any more funding for Iraq war, despite withdrawal timetables with large loopholes. These loopholes essentially allow George W. Bush to continue the occupation of Iraq. For example, the Senate version of the bill sets non-binding target dates for the withdrawal of “combat troops,” extending their stay in Iraq indefinitely.⁴⁷ Barbara Lee continues her tradition of nonviolent protest and is joined by U.S. Representatives Maxine Waters, Lynn Woolsey, former Freedom Rider and sit-in activist John Lewis, Mike Michaud, Mike McNulty, and Diane Watson.

Both Rosa Parks and Barbara Lee took their cues as to how to practice nonviolent activism from Septima Clark and Ronald Dellums, respectively. The most important lesson that their nonviolence has taught us in the new millennium is to ensure that before we engage in a nonviolent act, we study those who have practiced nonviolence successfully by investigating the perceived problem like Parks and Lee did. The minimum requirement to fulfill investigation of alleged grievances is the commitment to resist violence in the form of ideological and military warfare.

Chapter Three: A Comparison of the Nonviolent Activism of Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah Who Both Worked to Improve Public Education for African American Students

A Brief Background of Chaka Fattah

On Tuesday, June 13th, 2006, Republican majorities in Congress cut spending on No Child Left Behind for the second consecutive year. The bill reduced spending by almost \$500 million, on top of last year's cut of over one billion dollars, the largest cut in public education spending in American history. This kind of budget cut that is nothing short of detrimental to the future of public education in the United States. This huge budget shortfall is especially detrimental because of the drastic re-segregation of American public schools within the past fifty years. U.S. Representative Chaka Fattah, from Pennsylvania's second Congressional district, has not waited for help from the federal government to correct the issue of low quality public schools. He sponsored legislation to provide a quality education for public school students when he first entered the U.S. Congress during the Clinton Administration. He created the GEAR UP which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. GEAR UP is a program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in college. The program provides five-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at schools with at least 50% low-income students. GEAR UP has had significant success in Philadelphia public schools where in the 2002-2003 school year, 1,580 tenth graders took the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) compared to 122 tenth graders that took the PSAT during the 2001-2002 school

year. Fattah is not waiting on the inadequate funding from No Child Left Behind for his district's public schools; he is taking "direct action against injustice" by making sure his GEAR UP program is adequately funded and is able to directly benefit public school students. Nationwide, over 2 million students are now enrolled in GEAR UP programs thanks to the concern and the work of Fattah. The task of maintaining GEAR UP constitutes civil protest because it aims to reverse the results of the skyrocketing dropout rate in public high schools across the country that exacerbates the race and social class disparities that the modern civil rights movement aimed to close.

On March 27, 2001, Fattah also introduced an important bill requiring all states to equalize funding for education throughout the state, House Resolution 1234 (H.Res. 1234), the Equal Protection School Finance Act. This bill would have required states to equalize funding for education throughout the state and would have made a drastic improvement in the commitment of a better public education for all Americans. It is written in extremely clear and concise language by Fattah. Section two of his H.R.1234 states that: "education is a fundamental right under the equal protection clause of the United States Constitution" and "the provision of education to all children within a State on an equal basis, including equality of financial resources, is fundamental to the equal protection of the laws."⁴⁸ This is exactly the argument that Thurgood Marshall as an NAACP attorney used to convince the U.S. Supreme court that the segregated society created conditions that violated the fourteenth amendment, the "equal protection" clause of the U.S. Constitution. His arguments ultimately produced the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board* which declared segregated schools unconstitutional.

In this case, Fattah in co-sponsoring H.R. 1234 is continuing the surviving legacy of resistance by trying to make public education a constitutional right. Since 1971, when the U.S. Supreme Court in the ruling of *San Antonio v. Rodriguez* disparaged education as a constitutional right, courts have largely made public education a state and local issue rather than a national issue. Fattah by helping to create the GEAR UP program is making public education a national priority. This legacy resists the conservative decisions of national, state and local court decisions which uphold *San Antonio v. Rodriguez* and does not depend on the courts to improve public education. While the legal system and the courts became a significant venue to reduce race and social class disparities nonviolently up to the 1950s, in the second half of the twentieth century, it has become the venue through which many gains have been reversed. Nonviolent action to improve public education since 1954 is now executed by maintaining federal programs that encourage public school competency in order to succeed in postsecondary education. The role of effective nonviolent action has changed since the mid 1950s. Interestingly, former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall himself disparaged the direct nonviolent action of the sit-in protests, believing that it would do more harm than good: Marshall once stated that he was a lawyer and not a missionary. However Fattah continues an important legacy of Thurgood Marshall that demands that every single American, black, white, Asian, or Latino, is worthy of receiving the highest quality education possible regardless of their social class or skin color. This is a legacy that must be recognized and continued.

A Background of Daisy Bates and Arkansas Public Education for Blacks Before 1957

In terms of direct nonviolent activity, U.S. Representative Chaka Fattah has more in common with another NAACP member who tried to acquire a quality public education for African-Americans in Little Rock, Arkansas: Daisy Bates. Bates was president of the Arkansas NAACP and organized nine black students, famously known as the Little Rock Nine, to attend the city's Central High School and integrate the school for the very first time. She was, however, met with fierce resistance from the white community in Arkansas who resented the then three year old *Brown v. Board* decision and gathered in mobs to prevent the Little Rock Nine from attending Central High. In fact, many white Southerners including U.S. Congressmen from Arkansas at that time signed a "Southern Manifesto" to appease their white constituents. This manifesto was drafted by segregationist Strom Thurmond and stirred Confederate pride by trying to challenge the legitimacy of the *Brown v. Board* decision.⁴⁹

Arkansas was basically a rural agricultural state when the nation entered World War II and the majority of its public schools, especially those for blacks, were in rural areas. Those schools were dependent on the state for most of their funding and were especially hard hit by World War II, the way most federal funds for public schools recently have been hard hit by the Iraq invasion. During World War II in Arkansas, enrollments declined and teachers left for jobs in the war industries. No financial support came from the state. Black schools were hit especially hard, especially in 1943 when a federal bill (S.B. 637, the Hill-Thomas Bill) prohibiting racial discrimination of federal funds was loudly opposed by the all white Arkansas congressmen.⁵⁰ This triggered a

protracted civil rights campaign by black Arkansans, explained in *Educating the Masses*, edited by C. Calvin Smith and Linda Walls Joshua:

Black educators in Arkansas, reflecting the views of a nation at war against Nazi Germany's ideas of racial supremacy, aggressively launched themselves on a course of action designed to equalize teacher salaries and educational opportunities for blacks...The inequities were great...In 1941 salaries for white teachers averaged \$625 per year compared to \$370 for blacks, and black schools received only 11 percent of state expenditures for public education while counting for 24 percent of state enrollments based upon average attendance. Throughout the educational battles of the 1940s and early 1950s, black principals across the state risked their careers seeking equality for their teachers and students. The salary equalization battle was a costly one for Little Rock's black teachers and principals. [Plaintiff] Susie Morris [who sued the Little Rock school board for higher salaries for black educators] and John H. Gipson [who testified on her behalf] were fired at the end of the 1942-1943 academic year...a 1949 *Time Magazine* article...pointed out that state and local authorities only spent \$19.51 for the education of each black student in the public school system compared to \$144.51 for each white student. The battle to equalize facilities, salaries and educational opportunities for Arkansas's black administrators, teachers, and students legally came to an end in 1954 when the U.S. Supreme Court in its landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* ruled that segregated public schools were a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment and therefore unconstitutional.⁵¹

The "course of action" engaged in by these black educators of Arkansas was a nonviolent course of action while their white supremacist foes engaged in a more violent domestic and international battle. This nonviolent course of action eventually won them an important Supreme Court case that legally defined segregated schools as "unconstitutional." Susie Morris's lawsuit against the Little Rock school board was one of the many battles in the war to equalize black teacher salaries that certainly led to the monumental *Brown v. Board* decision. It is this surviving legacy of nonviolence from which activist Daisy Bates emerges. Chaka Fattah in his successes with the Philadelphia school system has continued this legacy. In many cases, the Republican abhorrence at

Fattah's efforts to equalize public education funding are strikingly similar to the abhorrence at the 1943 federal bill calling to equalize public school funding.

Being a co-editor and co-founder with her husband of the *State Press*, a paper that fought for the economic and social improvements for blacks throughout Arkansas, Daisy Bates was prepared to challenge the racial injustice of her time that tried to stop the Little Rock Nine. In her memoir *The Long Shadow of Little Rock*, Daisy Bates discusses the function of her paper: "From the beginning the *State Press* expanded its crusading role on an every widening front. It fought to free Negroes from muddy, filthy streets, slum housing, menial jobs, and injustice in the courtrooms."⁵² However the 1957 battle for the right of the Little Rock Nine to integrate Central High School was arguably Bates's most formidable battle. Along with their Southern Manifesto, Arkansas governor Orval Faubus introduced four pro-segregation bills in the Arkansas legislature in 1956. One of these bills gave a "state sovereignty commission" authority to resist implementing *Brown v. Board*. Another bill, House Bill 324, required organizations such as the NAACP to register with the state and make regular reports of their income and expenses. Bills like these required the NAACP to turn over their membership rosters and consequently spelled doom for black organizations, whose membership rolls were used by white organizations to harass employers of these black members into firing them if they remained members. There was a huge demand for these rolls in the middle of the red scare, when the House Un-American Activities Committee tried to challenge the activism of the NAACP by alleging it was infiltrated by communists.

In response to these bills, Bates in her *State Press* printed a criticism of these bills by the Reverend Roland S. Smith of the First Baptist Church of Little Rock who said:

“Negroes had been ‘separate but equal’ for more than sixty years, during which time they had demonstrated love and loyalty for the United States.”⁵³ In addition, Bates went with NAACP representatives from across the state to speak with Governor Faubus about defeating the bills. Instead, Faubus told Bates that the bills would not infringe on the rights of any individual or organization. She writes in her memoir that Faubus told her she would “only have to submit to the proper authorities a list of the organization’s members and a periodical financial statement.”⁵⁴ Bates refused to submit a membership list or financial statement and was arrested later that year in November. The arrest infuriated her. In her *State Press*, she writes: “why give these segregationists who are supported by the city administration, a direct target at which to shoot? They are harassing the Negro as a whole to the point where it is almost unbearable.”⁵⁵ Her biographer Grif Stockley said that her comment about this arrest was “as close as Bates would ever come to admitting publicly that the harassment was getting to her personally.”

The Nonviolence of Daisy Bates

Bates’ incredibly strong ideological commitment to helping the Little Rock Nine integrate Central High School allowed her to be remarkably successful in minimizing her expressed frustration over racial injustice. On May 17, 1957, the three year anniversary of *Brown v. Board*, she attended and encouraged her readers to attend a civil rights march in Washington, D.C. Reverend Roland Smith discouraged Arkansas blacks from attending this march: “by staying away from Washington, the Negro could make more friends that could help him.” Daisy Bates and her husband L.C. reflect a significant advancement in terms of NAACP leadership because they were not afraid to publicly criticize in the *State Press* other blacks like Smith who they believed succumbed to the

racist pressure. In this sense, Daisy Bates wields significantly more power than both Rosa Parks and Jo Ann Gibson Robinson in fomenting nonviolent protest because of control of her own press which means control over her discourse. She was not under pressure to maintain a particular image before the mainstream press, because she was part of the mainstream press. In her role as a journalist and as the writer of her memoir, Daisy Bates demonstrates a significant amount of agency over how her predicament was communicated. She used this agency to challenge the hegemonic discourse.

Both Daisy and her husband were aware of the ways that the white establishment would attempt to give money to black preachers as a way of silencing their dissent against Jim Crow segregation. On the front page of their July 20, 1956, issue, L.C. wrote, “No public explanation has been made of the alleged funds being paid to Negro preachers and a high church official. But it is a fact that the church men are carrying the flag for Faubus’s re-election.” A few months after attending the march commemorating *Brown v. Board* on the evening of August 22, Stockley writes:

a large rock came crashing through Daisy and L.C.’s living-room picture window...she threw herself to the floor and was immediately covered with glass. A note was wrapped around the rock. ‘Stone this time. Dynamite next.’ Within days another cross was burned on the lawn, accompanied by a note that read ‘Go Back to Africa—KKK.’⁵⁶

Despite this racist intimidation, Daisy Bates continues to organize and act out her commitment to nonviolence. This, in spite of the fact that she was warned: “stone this time, dynamite next.” About six years prior to this threat, an NAACP leader from Mims, Florida, Harry T. Moore, was killed with his wife after his home was dynamited. He, like Bates, was calling on his state governor to correct racial injustice.⁵⁷ Despite this threat of dynamite that took the life of a fellow NAACP member only four months earlier, Daisy

Bates persisted in trying to get a quality education for the Little Rock Nine, fulfilling not only her goals as an editor of the black press, but she also fulfilled goals of nonviolent resistance.

Like Chaka Fattah, Bates still believed in the U.S. Constitution and appealed to it the same way Fattah does in recalling the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. She understood the importance of *Brown v. Board* and articulated such an importance in her memoir: “to the nation’s Negroes the Supreme Court decision meant that the time for delay, evasion, or procrastination was past. It meant that whatever difficulties in according Negro children their constitutional rights, it was nevertheless clear that school boards must seek a solution to that question in accordance with the law of the land.”⁵⁸ In accordance with King’s definition, she first tried to persuade with words when she went to Governor Faubus and pleaded for him to stop the state sovereignty commission’s efforts to defy *Brown v. Board*. When words failed, she took nonviolent action—which meant, for her, trying to secure a place for each of the Little Rock Nine. In their appeals to the U.S. Constitution, both Fattah and Bates create jeremiads with a searing warning about the dangers of denying the democratic promise to all Americans.

Education scholar Hugh Scott writes that black Americans hold in common the belief that they must take steps to ensure that those who created and supported racially segregated public education are prohibited from allowing the same educational neglect to occur in the post-*Brown* era of public education. According to Scott, black Americans must seek to alter elements of the social structure to produce equality of opportunity for all members.⁵⁹ This is exactly what Daisy Bates’s nonviolence does: her helping the

Little Rock Nine enroll in Central High school produced, for a time, equality of opportunity for them, and was a small sign of hope for educational opportunity in the future. Fattah in creating his GEAR UP program, has advanced the cause of equality of opportunity for all members of society, particularly those who live in urban areas and cannot afford the cost of higher education.

Similarities of Nonviolence Between Bates and Fattah

The nonviolence of Daisy Bates is very similar to the nonviolence of Chaka Fattah in four important respects. First, per King's definition of nonviolence, both Bates and Fattah tried to persuade state governors to allow more citizens access to a quality public education. Second, both are able to garner community support behind their nonviolence and use such support to protect these students from bodily harm or educational neglect. Both use nonviolence to enable students to acquire a quality education. Third, the nonviolence of Bates and Fattah face violent mob activity that ultimately attacks African-Americans by first stereotyping them. And finally, both their nonviolence includes providing a place of refuge for those profoundly affected by institutionalized racism.

Like Bates, Chaka Fattah also appealed to his state's governor to improve the quality of education for all students. In a letter to former Pennsylvania Governor Mark Schweiker, Fattah asked that Edison Schools Inc., a private company in charge of the educational administration of Philadelphia's public schools, report to the governor with an assessment of what Fattah calls the seven basics of education: qualified teachers, smaller class sizes, rigorous academic curricula, educational technology, up-to-date school libraries and textbooks, and school counselors. Compared to Daisy Bates's appeal

to Governor Faubus, Fattah in his appeal to Governor Schweiker certainly shows a surviving legacy of demanding, in public education, nothing less than superior academic achievement. This is certainly an accomplishment and an advancement in the cause of education for Fattah, considering particularly the gains made in Philadelphia's public school system within the past several years. After Edison Schools showed unsatisfactory assessments, they are currently running a smaller number of Philadelphia public schools, due in part to Fattah's appeals to Governor Schweiker. Fattah, according to King's definition of nonviolence, attempted to persuade the governor by words to improve the conditions that Edison Schools are allowing in Philadelphia. Likewise, Daisy Bates in an earlier struggle attempted to persuade her governor Orval Faubus by words to improve the educational opportunities of the Little Rock Nine by convincing him to veto the segregationist bills that tried to defy *Brown v. Board*. Instead, Faubus ignores the claims in her pleas. So, Bates took direct nonviolent action by making personally sure that the Little Rock nine attend Central. Bates's appeal to her governor is arguably less successful than Fattah's appeals to his governor mainly because the notion of segregation was more strongly supported in her time. Thus Daisy Bates' struggle for a quality education was certainly more difficult, more life-threatening and more tiresome than Fattah's struggle. Governors Mark Schweiker and Orval Faubus have radically different ideologies and belong to very different historical time periods. Yet Fattah fights for his basics or principles with a similar expectation that motivated Daisy Bates.

On the day before schools opened, Governor Faubus announced on television that he intended to surround Central High School with National Guardsmen because of "evidence of disorder and threats of disorder."⁶⁰ In her memoir, Bates describes these

events in a chapter called “Governor Faubus rouses the Mob.” She later writes that in his announcement on television that Faubus “received information that caravans of automobiles filled with white supremacists were heading toward Little Rock from all over the state. He therefore declared Central High School off limits to Negroes.”⁶¹ By naming this chapter the way she does, Bates suggests that Faubus’ announcement of his “concern” about automobiles filled with white supremacists was, in fact, an implicit invitation for white citizens to organize in mob activity around the high school to harass these students. Indeed, his announcement alone was probably intentionally rousing the mob. Even after the broken window, the rock, and the burning cross on her lawn, and Faubus’ announcement, Bates originates the salient idea of asking local white and black ministers to accompany the Little Rock Nine on their first day of school, on September 5, 1957, so that they would not only provide a human shield but also serve as powerful symbols against the bulwark of segregation.⁶² She said there were two ministers—two white—Mr. Ogden and Rev. Will Campbell of the National Council of Churches and two colored—the Reverend Z.Z. Driver of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Reverend Harry Bass, of the Methodist Church. With them was Mr. Ogden’s twenty one year old son, David. The function of the ministers in serving to physically and spiritually protect the Little Rock Nine is very similar to the function of the Montgomery ministers in their influence on the citizens of Montgomery at the Holt Street Baptist Church meeting. The key roles of the ministers in these two instances confirm what Aldon Morris writes about the church being the institutional center of the movement.

The community essentially gathered around Bates in support of her plan to integrate Central High the same way that the surrounding community gathered around

Fattah in support of his principles for better schools. Congressman Robert Borski and Robert Brady joined Congressman Fattah in embracing school reform and stated this support in another letter to Governor Schweiker. Certainly Fattah's nonviolent act of demanding improvements for Edison was sufficient to garner local support. Similarly, Bates's nonviolent act of demanding improvements from the Little Rock school board was sufficient to garner local support, particularly from the pastors who agreed to flank the children as they go to school.

Bates writes in her memoir that the parents of the Little Rock Nine called and asked her to be present at a meeting with the superintendent of schools. After the meeting, she called each of the Little Rock Nine and told them to meet at her home the next morning. Unfortunately one of the students, Elizabeth Eckford, did not have a telephone to receive Bates's call and thus walked to Central High by herself the next day. On realizing this after the other students arrived, L.C. and Daisy tried to find her in a very threatening white mob gathered around Central High. This mob called her names such as "nigger bitch" and shouted expletives, most of which were "go home!" Eventually, she was able to get on a city bus. The National Guard was given instructions by Faubus however to not allow the other eight students to enter Central High. Bates then brought them to the school superintendent. Bates writes in her memoir:

When we arrived at the office, the Superintendent was out. When he failed to return within an hour, I suggested that we appeal to the United States Attorney, Osro Cobb, since Federal Judge Davies had ordered the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of the United States Attorney, to conduct a thorough investigation into who was responsible for the interference with the Court's integration order...during the school year the FBI interviewed hundreds of persons. Many of those who had participated in the mob could easily have been identified from photographs taken in front of the school. Yet no action was taken against

anyone by the office of the United States Attorney, Osro Cobb, or the Department of Justice.⁶³

Ever since the presence of National Guard preventing the Little Rock Nine on September 5, 1957 it is written that Daisy Bates “immediately went into action and she has not stopped since.”⁶⁴ During the next few weeks, a legal skirmish ensued that utilized the aid of attorney Thurgood Marshall who realized that this battle to integrate Central was really a battle begun by Faubus that, in Marshall’s estimation, should be ended by President Eisenhower. Trying to use the public opinion that was influenced by the images of Elizabeth Eckford’s treatment by the white mob, Marshall had the NAACP issue a press release calling for the president to federalize the National Guard and take command away from Faubus. Eisenhower’s only reaction was to order the Justice Department to seek an injunction to force Faubus to pull the National Guard away from the school.⁶⁵ A few days later, L.C. ran pictures in the *State Press* of the students being turned away by the National Guard, including one of the famous shots of Elizabeth Eckford being taunted by the mob. In the meantime, Daisy Bates made repeated efforts to get federal authorities to provide assistance but was met with no cooperation from federal authorities. She got cooperation however from the city’s mayor Woodrow Mann, as well as help from the editor of the *Arkansas Gazette* Harry Ashmore to devise a strategy to protect the black children. With these community members, she was able to secure physical protection for the Little Rock Nine and return them to a school in a city that was surrounded by a rousing mob. Daisy Bates probably made the fateful, ultimate decision to return the Little Rock Nine to school. Paula Giddings writes that Bates was constantly faced with the decision whether to continue believing that the Little Rock Nine could attend school safely or to desist from trying. Giddings suggests that Bates might

have thought that her own life was only one of those threatened, and many supporters had questioned her determination to go on in the face of such peril.⁶⁶ The *New York Times* in fact wrote that Daisy Bates was bearing the brunt of the integration dispute in Little Rock.⁶⁷

Daisy Bates planned that the Little Rock Nine return to Central High on the morning of September 23rd, to the surprise and chagrin of the white community, many of whom organized in violent mobs around the school to try and stop their entrance. Per Bates's plan, the Little Rock Nine along with members from the black press met at her home early that morning, so they could be travel to school in one police car. In his biography of Thurgood Marshall, Juan Williams refers to this event as a "second civil war." Bates' biographer Stockley writes that on that morning when several reporters came to her home, "Bates shrewdly managed them like an indigent house mother." What made her management especially shrewd was how Bates had set up the Little Rock to enter Central High School in the safest way possible. Upon receiving a call that morning from the police that they were ready to meet the children and escort them into the school, Bates let many newsmen know that if they were at the Sixteenth and Park entrance of the school, "they would be able to see the Nine enter the school." By giving these newsmen, mostly white, a wrong lead, Bates was successful in creating a diversion that allowed her to get the Nine into Central successfully. After the first group of white newsmen left for the school, a second group of mainly black newsmen left her home for the school. It is possible that Bates indeed planned for the group of black newsmen to be mistaken for the Little Rock Nine and attacked by the mob, thereby diverting the mob's attention from the Little Rock Nine. Stockley writes:

As soon as the crowd saw them, the black reporters became targets for the mob waiting for the students. In particular, Alex Wilson, editor of the *Memphis Tri-State Defender*, was savagely beaten. Others, including Earl Davy, the photographer for the *State Press*, were also physically assaulted, as were white newsmen...while the mob's attention was diverted, the police, under the leadership of assistant police chief Gene Smith, were able to whisk the Nine into the school through a side entrance. Predictably, the whites, which included a healthy contingent of troublemakers from outside Little Rock, were furious that the Nine had gained entry.⁶⁸

Henry Hampton's spellbinding film *Eyes On The Prize* shows vividly the grief and anger in the faces of the white mob, screaming at the Little Rock Nine's entrance to Central High. Black reporters were also able to print their explicit experience of the racist attack. James Hicks, for the *Amsterdam News*, writes specifically of the abuse that he, Alex Wilson, and Moses Newsom of the *Afro-American* endured:

I stepped up and said: 'We are not trying to go to school, we are reporters.' The mob leader said: 'We don't care, you're niggers and we are not going to let you go any further.' Someone then yelled 'kill 'em' and the mob rushed upon us. A man threw a punch at Wilson, another kicked Newsom and a one-armed man slugged me beside my right ear. We turned to run and found ourselves trapped by the crowds whom we had passed as we walked up the street to the school...Wilson's suit was covered with dirt and mud where he had been knocked down and kicked. Davy's camera had been wrenched from his hands and his legs were bleeding and battered with gashes.⁶⁹

Much of the reasons behind the violence of the white mob was explained in a quote from a mob member who said, according to Bates's memoir: "We won't stand for our schools being integrated. If we let 'em in, next thing they'll be marrying our daughters."⁷⁰

Segregationist whites opposed integration because race-mixing was inherently immoral to them and this kind of environment could only happen in an integrated setting, such as a public high school like Little Rock. Ernest Green, one of the Little Rock Nine, strongly denied interest in race-mixing in a televised discussion with white students of Central

High. He challenged strongly the idea that he attended school to “marry a white girl.” He said: “Why do I want to go to school? To marry with someone? I mean, school’s not a marriage bureau...I’m going there for an education. Really, if I’m going there to socialize, I don’t need to be going to school.”⁷¹ Indeed, Ernest Green’s experience at Central High suggests his response to be true because he was the only one of the entire nine to actually graduate from Central High.

The violence of the white mob was based, according to Ernest Green’s experience, on a gross mischaracterization of African-Americans as beings who are sexually helpless before white women. This stereotype is that of the black male rapist. Eisenhower stoked fears of this stereotype when he mentioned the concern he had about “overgrown Negroes” being forced to sit next to innocent white girls in schoolrooms. This was a common stereotype during the Jim Crow era that was used to justify lynching of black men. The violence of the mob was a reaction not to actual behavior of African-American but stereotypes of African-American behavior. The violence of the mob is comparable to the violence with which the Republican majority has very willfully prevented equal educational opportunities for Americans of different races and lower socioeconomic class. It is comparable mainly because Republican majorities make a sincere effort also to mischaracterize African-Americans as inherently being “undeserving” of receiving a quality education. Both William Julius Wilson and Sheryll Cashin clarify this new stereotype of African-Americans in the minds of many Republicans who prevent them from passing legislation that equalizes school funding. Wilson has argued, a vicious circle inhibits effective solutions. Because of poor schools, the relative skills of minority students relegated to poor urban areas do not improve, thus

worsening the problems of unemployment and decay associated with the areas in which the live. Cashin writes: “this heightens race and class conflict because it reinforces white voters’ stereotypes about racial minorities. Whites are more apt to blame black people for their ‘lack of motivation.’ In their eyes, such ‘unmotivated’ folks are not worthy of taxpayers’ money.”⁷²

Bates was considered a threat to the segregationist white community in Little Rock because she actively fought against this stereotype. She fought stereotypes that grossly mischaracterized her because she fought so fiercely to grant black students the same quality of education as white students. In fact, an older Little Rock resident said: “Daisy Bates was our Osama Bin Ladin.”⁷³ Therefore while Bates fights the stereotype of the black rapist and the terrorist, Fattah fought the stereotype of the lazy, unmotivated black. Unfortunately, these stereotypes have existed long enough to be unconsciously internalized and acted out in the behaviors of some African-Americans. However the important surviving legacy from Daisy Bates to Chaka Fattah is their unflinching commitment to fight this stereotype and organize in ways that ultimately destroy this stereotype. Daisy Bates is recognized as a leader who ensured these students had what she and Thurgood Marshall saw as their constitutional right to a quality education. Ernest Green said that “I wouldn’t be graduating but for her.” She is commended and praised for not only helping Ernest Green graduate high school, but she also helped blacks across the country understand how important acquiring a quality education is. Julia Ray, the mother of Gloria Ray of the Little Rock Nine said of Bates: “we love her for her courage, patience, endurance, and her willingness to go all the way with us in spite...of insults and danger of bodily harm.”⁷⁴ Historian Elizabeth Jacoway writes that

Bates helped the children deal with the stresses of attending Central High: “she minced no words, pushing and prodding each day to shape them into warriors. As she recalled one episode, ‘so I told them that one of us might die in this fight. And I said to them, if they kill me, you would have to go on. If I die, don’t you stop. If Jeff [Thomas] died...’ He said: ‘I ain’t going to die.’”⁷⁵ She is described by Lerone Bennett Jr. as having the public-relations know how of the late Walter White, the ideological nimbleness of King, and the bitter tongue of the late Mary McLeod Bethune.

Certainly Chaka Fattah’s creation of GEAR UP can be attributed to the drastic increase in the high school graduation of thousands of students in the Philadelphia public school system. It is therefore comparable to Daisy Bates efforts in assisting Ernest Green to become the first African-American student to graduate from Central High School. It was a symbolic graduation with a legacy that has been revived by the efforts of Chaka Fattah and his very important creation of GEAR UP that helps many more students graduate from high school.

The fourth and most important similarity between the nonviolence of Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah is the ways that both of them provided a refuge or safe haven for students who were otherwise victims to the outside world of institutionalized racism. The first haven Daisy Bates provided to the Little Rock students was her home. That was an important crucial meeting place, not only for the Little Rock Nine, but also for the attorneys Thurgood Marshall and Wiley Branton who were able to convince President Eisenhower to send federal troops and enforce integration. They were able to do this under the protective shelter of Daisy Bates’s home. Most important, Daisy Bates’s home became a crucial refuge from the racist attacks against the Little Rock Nine. Bates tells

in her memoir: “each day after school I sat with the embattled nine in the quiet basement of my home, away from the probing eyes of the reporters and the hysterical charges by the segregationists that the pupils were hirelings of the NAACP, imported from the North to integrate ‘our’ schools. These meetings were not unlike group therapy. In relating the day’s experiences, all the suppressed emotions within these children came tumbling out:

It was on the afternoon of February 4, 1958, when Terrance said to me, “I’ve had it! Today, during the eighth period in study hall, two boys kicked me. One was the same boy who kicked Jeff last week. When I reported them to the office of the Vice Principal, I was asked if a teacher or adult saw them kick me. We’ve reported one of these boys many times. Now the school authorities are telling us that unless we have an adult witness nothing will be done no matter what they do to us. I made no effort to influence Terrance to continue at Central.” I told him, “If you should decide not to go back, I will understand. The next morning Terrance was one of the first of the nine to arrive at Central. That afternoon I asked him what made him change his mind. ‘I thought about it last night and decided I wasn’t going to let that little pip-squeak chase me out of Central.’ Overnight Terrance had regained his courage.⁷⁶

Terrance Roberts was able to regain his courage because he was able to have an outlet through which to express his feelings and frustrations around within living in a racist society. This demonstrates that Bates was trying to establish, in her home, a safe haven or refuge for the Little Rock Nine to deal with the racism in the greater society. Chaka Fattah has also tried to create refuge in the school for children affected by the racist policies that result in abject poverty and anemic employment by forcing Philadelphia public schools to improve its school counseling facilities. One of the Fattah principles he originated is access to guidance counselors in a ratio that is comparable with that of other students in suburban districts. The Little Rock Nine probably did not have any access to school counselors who were sympathetic to their experience, to which they could express their frustrating experiences with racial hatred. Therefore, both Bates and

Fattah are responsible for trying to establish safe spaces for students who are under a serious racial suppression: the Little Rock Nine was under a more blatant, abusive suppression while the students who attended public schools without access to a dependable, regular school counselor are also under a more sophisticated suppression. However like Bates, Fattah aims to provide somewhere for the oppressed student, a place of refuge to deal with a larger racist society.

Daisy Bates grew up in Huttig, Arkansas realized the importance of a refuge. Her mother was savagely murdered; her father fled town, and a husband and wife with the last name of Gatson, took her in to raise her. She provided the very refuge to the Little Rock Nine that she received from the Gatsons.

Fattah grew up around parents who also made a point to provide a refuge for oppressed students or children: “my family ran a program focused on African-American young men: an urban boys’ home for some forty years in Philadelphia. I grew up in a home with some three thousand other young men...I was part in parcel of a commitment by my family to try and do something about the plight of young black men. Obviously, education was and continues to be an important weapon in that fight.”⁷⁷

Fattah is also trying to make the public school a refuge like the ones his parents created for boys in Philadelphia. He confirms this effort when he introduced the Student Bill of Rights in the U.S. House on September 5, 2002, which aimed to “hold states accountable for providing resources,” which are all from his seven principles. One of these principles is having highly qualified guidance counselors. However the bill has never left the House committee because it was voted down repeatedly by the Republican

majorities in the House and the Senate who are ultimately threatened by efforts to hold states accountable for educational priorities.

The failure of this Student Bill of Rights to be voted on by the U.S. Congress is very similar to the failure of the state legislators in Arkansas to support the Little Rock Nine students in attending Central High school. Instead of complying with the court order to ultimately allow the students to remain at Central High School, no more than six months passed before the Little Rock school board asked the federal court to delay in integrating its schools. By this time, Minniejean Brown, one of the nine, had been expelled for what she said was retaliating after a white student hit her first. After this, white students passed around an intimidating that read: “one down, eight to go.” Bates fought to keep Central High school from closing. She met with Herbert Thomas, who devised a plan to solve the crisis at Central High by closing the school. Bates clearly objected to this and sought to keep the school open. In an April 11th meeting with Bates, Thomas said about Bates that “I found the Arkansas President of the NAACP to be able and unemotional. Her answers were concise and clearly stated. My opinion is that she is uncompromising.”⁷⁸ By September of 1958, Governor Faubus overtly defied *Brown v. Board* by arranging to have an election set for September 27 to decide whether to close the schools in Little Rock or keep them open. The vote was overwhelming to close the Little Rock schools: 19,470 to 7,561.

Eventually Terrence Roberts and his family moved to California because of this crisis. Of the six that remained after both Brown and Roberts left and Green graduated, five took correspondence courses at the University of Arkansas where they received the equivalent of a high school diploma. All of the Little Rock Nine were able to attend a

college of some sort, however not after graduating Central High School except Ernest Green. Governor Faubus closed Central High school and other Little Rock Schools for the entire year. The Little Rock School Board signed a lease with the private school corporation, upholding a tenet of White Nationalism as it concerns education. This tenet is to avoid federal mandates on funding education.

Chaka Fattah explains the rationale behind the Republicans trying to avoid adequate funding of public education:

“This is exactly what the Republican majority has [done] and will always try to do. There's a lot of forces against that in this country because they see education as a zero sum game. They see it as if your child and my child has the same opportunity as theirs, then they're going to compete with them. Bush has tried to eliminate GEAR UP, a program intended to fund educational priorities for underprivileged students for three years running now. The House Republicans would initially try to put zero in the budget for GEAR UP.”⁷⁹ Walters writes that the White Nationalist movement seeks to use the argument for “school choice” to dissipate the power of government control over public education. School choice not only localizes decisions about public education, it also redirects resources in the services of this policy, which is away from the equitable distribution to schools in communities of color. Privatizing public education and removing it from federal control have negated the ability of nonwhites to receive a quality education. This is exactly what many state and city leaders mistakenly do: they contract and subcontract educational services to private corporations that ultimately do not allow urban students to receive a quality education. The fight that Daisy Bates against closing and privatizing Little Rock schools is very similar to the fight that Chaka

Fattah had in demanding Edison schools to be accountable. Both have been uncompromising in demanding a quality education for their students. In conducting a report on Edison Schools' efficiency in running Philadelphia's public schools, Fattah's office found that in 2001, nearly 90 percent of Edison's schools—61 of 69 schools—for which results are available, students performed substantially below standard levels set by the state compared to other students in the states.⁸⁰

Within the past four years, Fattah's nonviolent activism against the inefficiency of Edison Schools has managed to significantly reduce the number of schools of which they are in charge. Despite Daisy Bates' inability to stay the privatization of Little Rock's public schools, the Little Rock Nine were still able to attend colleges. Their resilience despite all the negative news and information around them attest to the ways that many African-Americans prioritize education. Now, GEAR UP enjoys a lot of support in the House and the Senate, but not in the White House, and not under President George W. Bush. However GEAR UP has still been able to maintain itself and has expanded into five hundred programs nationwide.

Chaka Fattah's improvement of the Philadelphia public school system is a significant act of nonviolence because it defies the existing norms of American society that aims to maintain a separate and unequal public educational system. Daisy Bates's organization around the Little Rock Nine is also a significant act of nonviolence because it also defied the norms of an institutionally segregated society that fought much harder to maintain a separate and disparate educational system as well. Both acts of nonviolence teach us, most recently through Chaka Fattah, how to maintain the surviving legacy of keeping education as a number one priority, despite a hostile, racist environment.

There is also no doubt that Daisy Bates was aware of the importance of the principles of nonviolence that she practiced in getting the Little Rock Nine to resist the mobs and the actions of Governor Faubus to attend at least one year in Central High School. In one of the last issues of their *State Press*, L.C. and Daisy Bates printed a story on their experience of attending a workshop by the Moral Re-Armament, a world peace group founded by the grandson of Mohandas Gandhi, Rajmohan Gandhi. L.C. Bates mentioned in this story that attending this conference was the antidote to the bitterness he felt after losing the *State Press* due to the sour turns in their personal lives after trying to get the Little Rock Nine to attend Central High School and graduate. Daisy Bates writes in her memoir that after Faubus had successfully been able to avoid integration and close Central High school, she and her and husband had to close their press:

In a matter of a few weeks we watched sixteen years of our lives being quickly chopped away, as we received curt, polite—and some not polite—notes from business firms and advertising agencies canceling their advertising contracts. Some contracts were not renewed as they expired. The advertisements of some of our largest and most substantial clients disappeared from the pages of the *State Press*. Among them were Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, Arkansas-Louisiana Gas Company, Arkansas Power and Light Company, real estate housing developments, and many of the off-Main Street merchants...The segregationists scored another successful intimidation and the grocer stopped advertising in the *State Press*....what shook me to the depths was the stark realization that in this allegedly free and enlightened society only a small minority concerned itself about the cruelties and injustices that were being perpetrated against Negro children.⁸¹

Daisy Bates' crusade to shield the Little Rock Nine from the injustices perpetrated against them was the beginning of a surviving legacy of resistance against an oppressive status quo that Chaka Fattah has continued. Daisy Bates had in fact invited Rajmohan Gandhi to speak at her home at an NAACP.⁸² She was therefore aware of the ways in

which nonviolence could be used to effect social change. Chaka Fattah has also continued this tradition and has upheld a surviving legacy of resistance that demands nothing less than an adequate public school education.

Lessons Learned From Both Acts of Nonviolence

Both Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah have important lessons to teach about how to be nonviolent resisters that work in the area of educational activism. Bates in her role in bringing the federal marshals to Central High School and Fattah in his role in creating the GEAR UP program provide important lessons in how to engage in educational activism. Bates specifically teaches the importance of developing a relationship with the school board in ensuring that one's child has a quality education. The shortcomings of any public school system for parents can be protested in a significant nonviolent way and the experience of Daisy Bates proves this. Like Parks and Lee, she first tried to persuade with words when she tried to convince the school board to allow the successful integration of the students, and then when met with resistance by the white mob that she writes was roused by Governor Orval Faubus, she turned to more nonviolent means of integrating Central High School in the form of her publications in the *State Press*, and through her correspondences with the national NAACP and the executive branch of the U.S. government.

Fattah teaches us to be scrupulously cautious against private control over public education. In an age where more and more entities such as public education are becoming privatized, Fattah's most important lesson in nonviolence is the importance of being vigilant against the inefficiencies of private corporations which, as journalist Thom

Hartmann writes, have limited government oversight and can therefore fall very short of providing a quality public education. Fattah's work demonstrates the important role that the individual citizen has in providing oversight over public education when the federal government proves to be negligent in doing so. Fattah's work is an example of the kind of work in the twenty first century that is required to maintain a quality public education for all students. Although Central High school locked its doors after the Little Rock Nine was allowed entrance in 1957, Daisy Bates, like Chaka Fattah still provides a significant example of how one person can, through nonviolence, work in the press, with the school board, and resist neoconservative policies.

Chapter Four: Ella Baker and the Legacy of Participatory Democracy: A Discussion of the Organizing Work of Ella Baker with the Organizing Work of Maxine Waters

Reporter: Do you think that the boycott has had any great impact on these national chains in a city like New York up to this time?

Adam Clayton Powell: Well I've already seen statements from some of the executive offices of...Woolworth's indicating their concern that the decline [in sales] has already been noted and is just beginning.

Reporter: I take it then that you are advocating Negroes in New York to stay out of these national chain stores?

Adam Clayton Powell: Oh, no...I'm advocating that American citizens interested in democracy stay out of national chain stores.⁸³

Ella Baker and the Historical Significance of 1960

This chapter compares 1960 grassroots organizer Ella Baker and U.S. Representative Maxine Waters in order to argue that Maxine Waters continues a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance by her organizing that began with the organizing of Ella Baker. Maxine Waters helped organize the Out of Iraq caucus which is the foundation for new and unique ways to resist race and class oppression. Ella Baker mentored a group of young people and helped organize the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an organization that resisted race and class oppression by creating direct action and voter registration campaigns led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Their founding in 1960 brought an entirely new dimension to dealing with

institutionalized segregation in the civil rights movement. Learning from the lessons of Rosa Parks and Daisy Bates, “American citizens interested in democracy” took bold new stands to assert their rights to live in an integrated society where they can receive the constitutional privileges of all other citizens.

On Monday, February 1, 1960, four students at North Carolina A&T College integrated a Greensboro, North Carolina, Woolworth’s lunch counter by sitting down and refusing to leave until they were served, in a significant act of nonviolence known as a sit-in. They asked to be served but were refused. They therefore remained on the stools for almost an hour until the store closed. The next day, they returned to the same Woolworth’s with a group of about thirty students who also sat in, and refused to leave the lunch counter until they were served. National news reported that they ended their sit-in with a prayer. By Thursday, February 4th, hundreds of college students were recruited and staging sit-ins in order to demand integration. On February 8th—exactly one week after the Greensboro sit-ins—the demonstrations spread to Durham and Winston-Salem. Aldon Morris writes that the sit-ins spread rapidly in such a short two month time period primarily because they grew out of a context of organized movement centers that were already established across the South.⁸⁴ Morris describes how these sit-ins spread across the South in clusters, which were “two or more cities within 75 miles of each other where sit-in activity took place within a span of 14 days.”⁸⁵ Morris writes that most of these February sit-ins took place in cities of border states and not the black belt states like Georgia, Alabama, or Mississippi, because repression against blacks was not as severe as in these states. This made it possible for these states with sit-ins to build dense networks of movement centers. Clayborne Carson writes that the use of nonviolent

tactics had in fact allowed black students to picture themselves as patient agents of progress pitted against obstinate, unreasoning whites. Carson writes about one student, Cleveland Sellers, a black high school student in South Carolina at the time of the sit-ins:

[Sellers] felt a strong sense of identification with blacks such as Daisy Bates, Rosa Parks, and Martin Luther King who had challenged segregation in Little Rock and in Montgomery. 'When they spoke,' Sellers recalled, 'they said what I was thinking. When they suffered, I suffered with them. And on those rare occasions when they managed to eke out a meager victory, I rejoiced too.'⁸⁶

By 1960, the student sit-in movement was articulating the concerns and ultimately the demands of black citizens to not be relegated to separate and inferior schools and other public facilities. These were citizens most interested in democracy. There are very important similarities to the struggles of these students who conducted the sit-ins and the voting records of select Congressional Black Caucus members who both are trying to be agents of progress pitted against "obstinate, unreasoning whites." There are also many important similarities between acts of nonviolence during this year and acts of nonviolence within the twenty first century. An important similarity is an aspect that mainstream media coverage of the civil rights movement has largely neglected: the significance of female leadership, particularly the leadership of one Ella Baker. The creation of an organization based on staging this kind of nonviolent resistance as the sit-in was conceived by Ella Baker. This organization's purpose in Baker's mind would be to coordinate the sit-in activity, keep the leaders in touch with each other, raise funds, increase publicity and perhaps arrange to start sit-ins in places where they had not appeared spontaneously.⁸⁷ In addition, Baker advised the students who conducted sit-ins to stay independent of the older civil rights organization, SCLC (Southern Christian

Leadership Conference) and dictate the course of their own activism by forming their own civil rights organization.

With her guidance, these students founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), known as and pronounced “snick.” Paula Giddings and Charles Payne write that in the civil rights movement, “men led, but women organized.” The organizational foundation of the civil rights movement, which was provided by the student sit-in movement, was initiated largely by the organizing of Ella Baker. Charles Payne provides a strong distinction between the tasks of organizing and mobilizing: “organizing involves creating ongoing groups that are mass-based in the sense that the people a group purports to represent have real impact on the group’s direction [while] mobilizing is more sporadic, involving large numbers of people for relatively short periods of time and probably for relatively dramatic, [single] activities...one or the other is [not] more important historically—both are clearly necessary...they are two different activities.”⁸⁸ In the creation of self-sustaining organizations such as SNCC, greater priority was placed on organizing rather than mobilizing. Other authors including Payne write that the contemporary American memory of the civil rights movement tends to miss the importance of organizing, which was largely the domain of women, by focusing on only the mobilizing efforts such as the 1963 March on Washington and not on the organizing. Owen Dwyer writes that despite Baker’s presence as a moving force in the development of SNCC, in the contemporary memory and in museums about the civil rights movement, Baker is generally ignored or neglected: “the relative absence of women at civil rights memorials stands in contrast to recent scholarship demonstrating the predominance of women in organizing and staffing the movement.”⁸⁹ Scholarship

that significantly recognizes Baker must find its way into our contemporary discourse about the civil rights movement.

Carol Mueller's article in the book *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers, 1941-1965*, provides important scholarship about Baker when she wrote that it was Ella Baker's unlabeled yet fully articulate proposals on a kind of "participatory democracy" that most appealed to the students at SNCC. This kind of democracy has three major themes: an appeal to the grassroots sector of the population, a minimization of hierarchy, and a direct action component. This third theme of a direct action component is the characteristic that continues the nonviolent tradition the most. It is also this characteristic that is the ultimate action phase of participatory democracy.

The two former themes essentially prepare one for the third and final direct action theme. While Ella Baker guided a younger generation of college students into SNCC, direct action for her meant the grunt work of organizing. Within days after the sit-ins spread across the South, Ella Baker began to plan for a gathering of representatives from across the South. She was able to convince the organization she once worked for, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to put up eight hundred dollars to cover the expenses of the meeting. She put out a follow up letter to protesting students encouraging them to attend this gathering that she set for Easter weekend, April 15 to 17, 1960, in Raleigh, North Carolina. This gathering would be named the Southside Student Leadership Conference on Nonviolent Resistance to Segregation. Baker reached an agreement with Shaw University on meeting rooms, meals and accommodations for the April 15 to 17 gathering. She urged demonstrators from across the South to send a representative from their group to this gathering. About one month before this gathering,

Baker met and talked with hundreds of students and community leaders about the importance of sit-ins and potential for future actions. Here she was establishing the first theme of her participatory democracy: a grassroots appeal, or an appeal to the grassroots population of a socioeconomic class.

Ella Baker biographer Joanne Grant writes that Baker's emphasis was on the need to find and develop indigenous leaders, especially in the states of the deep South. This appeal was grassroots because it was not restricted to members who were only those in the clergy as SCLC did. This appeal was made available to any person who demonstrated against segregated public facilities. The April 15th conference eventually attracted some 200 participants, more than double the number Baker had anticipated. Martin Oppenheimer writes that these two hundred plus participants represented fifty-two colleges and high schools from thirty-seven communities in thirteen states and the District of Columbia.⁹⁰ In an interview with Clayborne Carson, Ella Baker expressed her conception of this conference: "her basic hope from the beginning was that it would be an independent organization of young people."⁹¹ This is indicative of Baker's emphasis on organizing rather than mobilizing. Baker was planning to create a long lasting organization after this event and not the more dramatic kind of events the SCLC had planned. This kind of organizing made Ella Baker the originator of a participatory democracy that became the driving force of the civil rights movement.

The Organizing Background of Ella Baker

Throughout Ella Baker's life, as revealed in two seminal biographies written by Barbara Ransby and Joanne Grant, we see a unique life experience that essentially prepared her to begin the practice of participatory democracy. Ella Baker was taught

from an early age to minimize different kinds of hierarchies—those based on class, race and gender. She practiced this minimizing of hierarchy throughout her life. She was raised by her mother Anna Ross Baker who, Barbara Ransby writes, showed essentially no deference to whites. According to Ransby, both Baker and her mother were “imbued with the conviction that their relative privilege [as landowners within a free black community in North Carolina] carried with it a fundamental obligation to work for the improvement of their race and, especially, to better the condition of the many women and children who were denied such advantages.”⁹²

Joanne Grant writes that Anna Baker “took in boarders, but also kept up with her major calling, ministering to the poor.”⁹³ The conviction of Baker’s mother came from their strong Baptist influence, as Anna Baker belonged to a Baptist women’s missionary and thus “did not hesitate to feed, clothe, and discipline other people’s children when the need arose,” according to Ransby.⁹⁴ This practice not only followed a Baptist missionary ethos, it followed an overall African American community ethos as well. This community ethos ultimately worked for what Ransby writes is “the betterment of the race.” Ella Baker’s extended family was part of a larger network of black farmers in Warren County, North Carolina, who emphasized self-help and mutual aid as strategies for survival and the betterment of the race. The cooperative ethos that permeated Baker’s childhood was an integral part of the notions of family and community; it connoted groups of individuals banding together around shared interests and promoting a sense of reciprocal obligation, not of individualism and competition. Baker expounds:

Where we lived there was no sense of hierarchy, in terms of those who have, having a right to look down upon or evaluate as a lesser breed, those who didn’t have. Part of that could have resulted, I think from two factors. One was the proximity of my maternal grandparents to slavery.

They had known what it was not to have. Plus, my grandfather had gone into the Baptist ministry, and that was part of the... 'Christian' concept of sharing with others. I went to a school that went in for Christian training. Then, there were people who 'stood for something' as I call it. Your relationship to human beings was more important than your relationship to the amount of money that you made.⁹⁵

Throughout her life, Baker was taught and eventually learned to transgress social constructions of gender and class in order to fulfill her religious and community ethos that her upbringing taught her. Anna Baker had a profound influence on Ella Baker's commitment to galvanizing a nonviolent tradition. Ransby writes that years later in the secular context of the political and civil rights organizations with which she worked, Baker emulated her mother's example of zealous and selfless service on behalf of those victimized by injustice and social inequity, albeit in a different language and with expanded political objectives.⁹⁶ Baker grew up in a community where she was encouraged to look out for her neighbor. She said: "When I came out of the Depression, I came out of it with a different point of view as to what constituted success...I began to feel that my greatest sense of success would be to succeed in doing with people some of the things that I thought would raise the level of masses of people, rather than the individual being accepted by the establishment."⁹⁷

Baker managed to transmit this kind of concern for the working and poorer classes to the students she worked with. While she transformed the kind of concern for working and poorer classes, Baker deliberately transgressed social constructions of class and gender. She undoubtedly observed her mother Anna repeatedly transgressing these boundaries when she boarded those who were in need. Ella Baker was certainly one person not raised to keep all interactions within a certain social class; she often crossed

class lines to help others and continue the values with which her mother and extended family raised her. Ransby writes that Baker eventually adopted the notion that the more privileged, educated, and articulated members of the African American community were not only duty-bound to come to the aid of their less fortunate brothers and sisters, but also had to humble themselves in order to create the social space necessary for the more oppressed people in the community to speak and act on their own behalf.⁹⁸ This is what she allowed the young students of the student sit-in movement to do: to speak on their own behalf without having their message and their organization controlled by the SCLC. In fact, Baker went to great pains to ensure that the SCLC would allow the young students to organize separate and apart from the SCLC.

Joanne Grant writes that in one meeting with her administrative bosses within the SCLC where they were considering how to essentially determine the future of SNCC, Ella Baker walked out in fury. This departure “signaled the beginning of a new phase for the civil rights movement. It was no longer to be controlled by a stodgy ministerial or bureaucratic presence. It was to be led by a new force.”⁹⁹ This force was strengthened by Ella Baker’s dedication to people having the ability to speak and act on their own behalf. This theme of working with young people and allowing them their ability to speak on their own behalf is seen especially in Barbara Ransby’s third chapter of her biography on Baker:

Baker became an employee of the Harlem branch library in January 1934, when she was hired to coordinate an educational and consciousness-raising program for Harlem youth and young adults, aged 16 to 26. She organized the Young People’s Forum (YPF) in 1936... Baker served as a catalyst linking together different sectors of the black community, breaking down generational barriers and facilitating exchanges of skills and resources. In the YPF, she introduced Harlem teenagers to an impressive roster of prominent speakers, emphasizing the need for active

participation by the youth themselves. As Baker exposed many young people to the world of books and ideas, she sought to instill in them a sense of their own power to think critically, analyze events, and articulate their opinions and beliefs. The YPF included discussions about ‘social, economic, and cultural topics,’ as well as her work with the YPF and in many other contexts...Ella Baker was a teacher without a traditional classroom. The belief that education and the exchange and dissemination of ideas could make a difference in people’s lives was to remain central to her life’s work.¹⁰⁰

In helping to organize the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Ella Baker is continuing the kind of work she began with the Young People’s Forum of instilling in young people “a sense of their own power to think critically, analyze events, and articulate their opinions and beliefs.” This mission of empowering young people with the ability to think critically and analytically was ultimately the aim of the conference and is a theme of her leadership not only in the 1960s, but in the 1930s, the 1940s, and the 1950s. Joanne Grant writes that when NAACP leader Walter White appointed Ella Baker as the director of branches in 1943, Baker set forth three goals: increasing membership participation, extending the membership base, and maximizing the NAACP’s leadership role in local communities.¹⁰¹ During the next three years until 1946, Ella Baker concentrated on building a strong membership base as she had done since she joined the organization in 1938, well before she was appointed director of branches. Ransby writes that “over the course of Baker’s years with the association’s national office, from 1940 to 1946 [the year she resigned from the NAACP], its membership mushroomed from 50,000 in 1940 to almost 450,000 by 1945.”¹⁰² Baker’s specialty in attracting such high numbers to the NAACP was her leadership workshops where she empowered people with the basic techniques of local leadership. Ransby writes that these leadership conferences were an enormous success and that when she left the association in 1946, Roy Wilkins remembered them as one of her main contributions

of the national organization. The purpose of these conferences was very similar to the purpose of her Young Peoples' Forum in the 1930s, and what would be the purpose of SNCC in the 1960s, "to emphasize the basic techniques and procedures for developing and carrying out programs of action in the branches."¹⁰³ Joanne Grant's description of a typical month of organizing that Baker engaged in as a member of the NAACP included attending school assemblies, ministers' conferences, mutual aid societies, youth council meetings that probably distinguished her as one of the busiest members of the group at this time.¹⁰⁴

Barbara Ransby also writes that on several occasions, Baker ignored her own health and came into the office against doctor's orders to perform some of the seemingly never-ending tasks associated with her job.¹⁰⁵ It was this type of organizing that arguably led to the vast organizational network that enabled the success of the strategy of the NAACP Legal Defense team led by Wiley Branton and Thurgood Marshall. Because Baker was able to carry out an extensive schedule like this within a three to four year span, she was able to fulfill the goal of increasing the membership of the NAACP. However in the contemporary memory of the civil rights movement, those whose organizing skills built NAACP membership and created the vast grassroots appeal that it had are ignored. Baker's time as the NAACP director of branches foreshadows her principles and leadership strategies that essentially advanced the black struggle, or the struggle against racism. Grant writes that from Baker's earliest days in the NAACP, she tried to make the organization more democratic: "time after time she proposed that the local branches have a say in the program and the policies of the organization."¹⁰⁶ This demand shows her dedication to two of the themes of participatory democracy outlined

by Carol Mueller, which are the themes of an appeal to grassroots and a minimization of hierarchy. From her earliest days, Baker did her best to minimize the already present hierarchy within the NAACP. This was a hierarchy dictated by then NAACP leader Walter White who, in Baker's opinion, "spent too much time catering to the wealthy and influential." Eventually, Baker withdrew from the NAACP in 1946 for reasons, as confirmed in the biographies of Grant and Ransby, related to the leadership style of Walter White. About leadership, Baker says:

I have always felt it was a handicap for oppressed peoples to depend so largely upon a leader, because unfortunately in our culture, the charismatic leader usually...has found a spot in the public limelight...such people get so involved with playing the game of being important that they exhaust their time and don't do the work of actually organizing people.¹⁰⁷

The hierarchical structure of the NAACP allowed one person too much power according to Baker. In the case of the NAACP in 1946, it allowed Walter White the power to make decisions without consulting other executive members. Ella Baker's climactic decision to leave the NAACP came when Walter White accused her of being out of the office on more personal matters than any other executive "to the detriment of [her] work and office morale." Barbara Ransby writes that the more Baker pushed White for accountability about his administrative decisions, the more he counteracted by criticizing her for alleged infractions of office procedure. However Walter White took the time to calculate her time off with a precise motive in mind. Ransby writes that White's accusation was "callous and insensitive" since she had just suffered a bereavement of her cousin Martha Grinage, who took Baker in when she moved to New York.¹⁰⁸ White's motive in calculating her exact time out of the office seems destined to deflect from Baker's criticism of his top-down leadership style, typical within the kind of leadership hierarchy that Ella Baker actively tried to minimize. It is certainly indicative

of the sexism that plagued black men in traditional organizations and in the greater civil rights struggle. This sexism was a significant obstacle to achieving the participatory democracy that Ella Baker sought.

While it seems that the most celebrated people of the civil rights movement are Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr., theologian James Cone writes that the sexism of these men greatly hindered their achievement of social and economic freedom; the freedom for which they and other women like Ella Baker fought. While their sexist views diminished substantially throughout their lives, their changes were still minor when compared with those of two earlier, prominent black advocates of women's rights like Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. Du Bois in particular who, like Baker, left the NAACP also because of disagreements with Walter White.¹⁰⁹ However Ransby writes that Baker described both White and Du Bois as “having a great sense of ego and self-importance.”¹¹⁰ Egoism from leading male figures was a root cause for Baker eventually leaving the NAACP. Baker says of her own withdrawal from the NAACP:

My reasons for resigning are basically three—I feel that the Association is falling short of its present possibilities; that the full capacities of the staff have not been used; that there is little chance of mine being utilized in the immediate future. Neither one nor all of these reasons would induce me to resign if I felt that objective and honest discussion were possible and that remedial measures would follow. Unfortunately, I find no basis for expecting this. My reactions are not sudden but accumulative, and are based upon my own experience during the past five years and the experience of other staff, both present and former.¹¹¹

Her reason states that her decision to depart came from the lack of “an objective and honest discussion.” She says that she has no basis for expecting such a discussion and leaves because of a lack of a discussion, which would, on some level, have reduced the rigid hierarchy that bolstered Walter White. Her departure indicates not only a minimization but a clear rejection of the hierarchy of power that existed within the

NAACP. Joanne Grant writes that during the year after her departure, Baker befriended organizer Bayard Rustin as well as a Quaker-oriented peace group known as FOR (the Fellowship of Reconciliation). FOR organized the Journey of Reconciliation, an interracial bus trip to test segregation laws in the South that served as a critical precursor to the 1961 Freedom Rides. However Baker was denied in joining the bus trip because FOR voted to prevent women from joining this first freedom ride, as many felt this trip would be too dangerous for women. Grant writes that from 1946 to 1958, Ella Baker's focus was on school desegregation.¹¹² In this sense she engages a nonviolent tradition similar to that of Daisy Bates.

About six years after leaving the NAACP, Ella Baker was elected president of the New York City NAACP branch, becoming its first woman president. Barbara Ransby writes that she led the New York City branch the way she thought all NAACP branches, and all community organizations for that matter, should function: by involving as many community members as possible in building direct action campaigns to address issues of concern to those in the community.¹¹³ She taught the community members how to determine their own strategies to solve community issues. The three main community issues on which she worked at the New York City branch were: public school desegregation, larger scale school reform, and police brutality. Baker taught community members how to organize to address these issues by teaching them specifically to send public letters of protest, lead noisy street demonstrations, and confront public officials such as New York City mayor.

Joanne Grant writes that Baker instituted a survey called "Check Your School," that demanded from parents information on the conditions of their child's public schools

with questions such as classroom conditions and student-teacher ratios among others. This survey ultimately resulted in the improvement of the New York City Schools because it exposed the problems of racially segregated education.¹¹⁴ Like Daisy Bates, she demanded a quality public education for all students. She also demanded fair treatment for people of color from the police; a demand made also by U.S. Representative Maxine Waters. Along with teaching community members how to organize around their own issues in the direct action manner of the public demonstration, Baker also built coalitions across races. Ransby writes that Baker led the New York City NAACP into action alongside progressive whites and Puerto Ricans, the city's second-largest group of people of color.¹¹⁵ By 1956, after Baker left the NAACP, she along with Kenneth and Mamie Clark, helped launch a grassroots coalition composed primarily of African American and Puerto Rican parents that demanded integrated schools and greater parental participation in educational policymaking. This coalition was called Parents in Action Against Educational Discrimination and was formed in response to the monumental *Brown v. Board* decision. Ella Baker said about the city, "New York City didn't act right after the '54 decision. It didn't have any reason to act, so you had to help it to realize it. I was asked to serve on the Mayor's Commission. They finally discovered the city wasn't integrated!"¹¹⁶ Kenneth and Mamie Clark provided the sociological evidence in their doll studies that helped produce the Brown decision. Kenneth chaired the Intergroup Committee, a group that, with Baker, lobbied and confronted public officials about poor public education. In addition, along with the Parents in Action Against Discrimination, Baker led significant direct action campaigns that set the stage for future public education battles that resembled the Little Rock Crisis.

On September 26, 1957, just three days after President Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock, Parents in Action called a rally designed to draw greater attention to the campaign to improve public education. Ransby writes that Baker led a spirited picket line of over five hundred black and Puerto Rican parents in front of City Hall in Manhattan. This is yet another example of the legacy of participatory democracy that Ella Baker furthered. In the case of leading picket lines and demonstrations, Ella Baker advanced the important theme of direct action identified by Carol Mueller.

Parents in Action Against Discrimination is a fulfillment of the primary theme of participatory democracy which is the appeal to grassroots. This kind of appeal is almost an assumed characteristic of Ella Baker's leadership however it is a historically significant appeal to the grassroots section of the population because it goes beyond the simple demand for racial integration made by Daisy Bates. This appeal to grassroots also employs direct action to encourage parents to take a more vested interest in their children's education and is thus perhaps the most radical type of organizing at this time. The influence she had on Black and Latino communities' to organize for their own children's quality education is a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance that is critical. Baker called not only for racial integration; in her work with Parents in Action Against Discrimination, Baker called for greater parent and community involvement in running the schools. Ella Baker's work with Parents In Action Against Discrimination set the foundation for a longer-term struggle for community control of the schools, which was a volatile issue that reemerged during the late 1960s and early 1970s in New York's Ocean Hill-Brownsville Riots of 1969. Baker's direct action demonstrations essentially created the foundation for Black and Puerto Rican parents to engage in direct action methods

such as the public demonstration or protest. These parents protested in order to elect an interracial governing board to control their children's education that was opposed by the largely white teacher's union.

In 1956, during the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Ella Baker along with Stanley Levison and Bayard Rustin founded In Friendship, an organization meant to raise funds in support of those groups such as the Montgomery Bus Boycotters who suffered for their civil rights activism. Groups such as the White Citizens' Council in Mississippi would punish businesses that employed blacks who voted, creating a culture of fear around black citizens who even thought about voting. However in some cases In Friendship provided funds to groups of black tenant farmers who were evicted from their plantations in South Carolina and Mississippi because they enrolled their black children in all white schools. In Friendship ultimately, according to Barbara Ransby, gave:

assistance to the grassroots leaders whom Ella Baker saw as the very backbone of the Black Freedom Movement; they were likely, in her view, to be pivotal actors in whatever struggles were to emerge in the years ahead. Baker's concept of progressive leadership...helped people help themselves and allowed ordinary people to feel that they could determine their own future. When she lent her energies to In Friendship, her mission was grassroots empowerment...that mission was an extension of the objectives she had worked towards in the NAACP during the 1940s.¹¹⁷

Ella Baker's work helped local leaders such as Mississippi's Amzie Moore become leaders in their own right.¹¹⁸ Ultimately, her work with In Friendship fulfills two themes of participatory democracy. It first fulfills the theme of an appeal to grassroots because it provides financial support for those who, like the majority of black Americans at this time, literally could not afford to engage in civil rights activism because of the threat of job loss from other groups such as the White Citizens Council but also from other Southern businesses who discouraged all citizens from civil rights activity that

threatened their business. A significant amount of funds raised by In Friendship was given to the organization that sustained the Montgomery Bus Boycott, known as the Montgomery Improvement Association.

Baker's work with In Friendship also fulfills the theme of direct action because it supports the kind of direct action that was part of the practice of nonviolent resistance. The effort or the action of trying to enroll one's black child into an all white school fulfills the definition of King and Gandhi as a nonviolent act because it is an example of one taking actions into one's own hands "without waiting for other agencies to act." This direct action is exactly what Ella Baker taught her students in the Young Peoples' Forum, in the NAACP as its director of branches, and in Parents in Action Against Discrimination. She continues this focus on direct action especially after the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which she saw as an event that created serious potential for making nationwide social change. While her co-founders of In Friendship Stanley Levison and Bayard Rustin developed a close relationship with Martin Luther King, Jr., at the end of Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1956, Ella Baker did not develop a relationship with King, even though she was around Levison and Rustin. While James Cone has provided evidence of King's sexist attitudes, Barbara Ransby also adds the fact that it was probably King's sexist attitudes towards women, at least in part, that prevented him from having the same kind of collegial relationship with Baker that he had with Levison and Rustin. This also hindered the ability to advance the causes for which both King and Baker strove.

Nonetheless, Baker worked with Bayard Rustin to draft statements and plan the agenda for the founding meeting of what would become the Southern Christian

Leadership Conference (SCLC) on January 10, 1957. Barbara Ransby writes that by the meeting's conclusion, SCLC would "emphasize nonviolence as a means of bringing about social progress and racial justice for southern blacks."¹¹⁹ Aldon Morris writes that the method of nonviolent direct action was stressed in the founding of SCLC. This indicates Ella Baker's role in fulfilling Carol Mueller's third theme of participatory democracy. In *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, Morris quotes from the working papers drafted by Rustin and Baker about the commitment of SCLC to focus on nonviolent direct action: "We must recognize in this new period that direct action is our most potent political weapon. We must understand that our refusal to accept Jim Crow in specific areas challenges the entire social, political and economic order that has kept us second class citizens since 1876."¹²⁰ Ransby also writes that once it was decided that SCLC was a political arm of the black church, the sexist attitudes that came along with that also permeated the SCLC what Ransby calls "a patriarchal ethos." Because SCLC was a church related protest organization, the overwhelming majority of SCLC's original leadership were ministers, all of whom were men: "neither Joanne Gibson Robinson nor any of the women who had sacrificed so much to ensure the Montgomery boycott's success were invited to play a leadership role in SCLC."¹²¹ In SCLC women were relegated to more secretarial roles while all the leaders were men, which were roles dictated by the patriarchal ethos of the black church at that time. Nonetheless Ella Baker focused on organizing and not mobilizing for SCLC.

The first large scale event that led to crucial organizing advances was her planning of the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom held on the third anniversary of the *Brown* decision at the Lincoln Memorial on May 17, 1957. This event was certainly a necessary

precursor to the historic 1963 March on Washington. Along with Bayard Rustin, Ella Baker coordinated communications and the day-to-day logistical work necessary to plan the gathering on the Lincoln Memorial. Over twenty thousand people attended this Prayer Pilgrimage and as a result of it, President Eisenhower signed the 1957 Civil Rights Act later that year in August, creating the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. What the NAACP also lobbied for in this 1957 bill is the stipulation that the Justice Department enforce the school desegregation order made by the *Brown* decision; this stipulation is known as Part III. However after President Eisenhower publicly disparaged Part III of the 1957 Civil Right Act, the then U.S. Senator John F. Kennedy on July 23, 1957 delivered on the Senate floor what historian Nick Bryant calls “a carefully nuanced speech,” where he essentially placates Southerners by reassuring them that this 1957 Civil Rights Bill even without Part III would not lead to dismantling segregation.¹²² Despite this weakened bill, Ella Baker’s activism after the signing of the bill into law indicates that these legislative “victories” were opportunities for continued organizing and a new focus rather than being opportunities for celebration and respite from grassroots organizing.

Bayard Rustin and Stanley Levison agreed that Baker would be the ideal person to organize SCLC’s new campaign that would try and to capitalize on this organizing opportunity and double the number black voters in the South. This new campaign, known as the Crusade For Citizenship, was in fact organized by Ella Baker who had the social skills to work with all types of people, from proper middle-class church members to working-class sharecroppers. Rustin and Levison had to actively persuade King, the leader of SCLC, to hire Baker as a full-time staff member of SCLC in order to have her

organize this important Crusade For Citizenship. After successfully becoming a full-time staff member, Baker wrote flyers and press releases to promote the events, and made many phone calls in support of the campaign. On the day of the Crusade, February 12, 1958, there were church rallies, press conferences, and prayer vigils in nearly two dozen cities. Barbara Ransby's description of Ella Baker's reaction to the weak 1957 Civil Rights Act and the consequent organizing demonstrates her commitment to direct action, indirectly or directly: "For Baker, mobilizing for voter registration campaigns, documenting the establishment's corruption that undermined such campaigns, and forcing the hand of the otherwise impotent Civil Rights Commission would inevitably lead to direct action...Baker also recognized that direct action might not always remain nonviolent."¹²³ The Crusade For Citizenship was not exactly unadulterated proof that voter registration was the key to achieving direct action that would lead to significant societal changes. In fact, after the Crusade For Citizenship both Joanne Grant and Barbara Ransby write about Baker's increasing frustration as she thought the leaders in SCLC were becoming more and more focused on giving inspiring speeches than on mobilizing and organizing a mass movement. Joanne Grant quotes Ella Baker in this regard:

on one occasion, an anniversary [the first anniversary], they had this meeting in Montgomery, and there was nothing, nothing...in the call to the meeting that dealt with people or involving people...the basis of the call was the honoring of our great leader and even the achievements, if there were any, of the association, were not highlighted. Everything was a reflection of the greatness of the individual...I spoke to [King] about that, which was not very bright. And I spoke to people who were sponsoring it. When I spoke to him, he said, 'Well I can't help what people do.'¹²⁴

After planning the Prayer Pilgrimage in 1957 and the Crusade For Citizenship in 1958, Baker strongly felt disappointed that so little had been achieved in terms of region

wide organizing work. She found that the SCLC was not truly dedicated to the goal of organizing, but really to the goal of bolstering King. Barbara Ransby writes that “she had to beg for a working mimeograph machine, an air conditioner, in the summer, and secretarial help...to add insult to injury, she was saddled with the responsibility of all promotions of and sales for King’s 1958 book [*Stride Towards Freedom*].” What was most insulting to Baker was SCLC’s lack of enforcement of her 1958 report to the Administrative Committee which expressed her personally endorsed goals that she fought hard to implement. The first goal in this report was the formation of youth and action teams to help ignite her work. This was a goal that she herself had carried out when she worked with the Young Peoples’ Forum, and the NAACP Youth Councils, as well as with the Parents In Action Against Discrimination. Another goal she expressed in this administrative report was to develop programs of mass action to specifically target women for activist campaigns. This had been an ongoing issue in the SCLC for Baker ever since it was known as the political arm of the black church. Ransby writes that the reaction to this report to the administrative committee was modest at most, and that “everyone nodded and continued on as they had before.”¹²⁵

Joanne Grant writes that having made a decision to remain with SCLC despite their cult of personality rather than their focus on organizing, Baker was soon revered for her reputation after her Crusade For Citizenship and was in demand by local groups precisely because of her professional organizing skills. In late 1958 she visited Shreveport, Louisiana, to help in a voter registration campaign with an organization known as the United Christian Movement of Shreveport led by C.O. Simkins. Ransby writes that in Shreveport: “as director of the Shreveport voter campaign Baker ran the

office, organized mass voter registration efforts, coordinated the work of committees, and wrote leaflets.”¹²⁶ In early 1959 she went to another local group in Birmingham, Alabama: Fred Shuttlesworth’s Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR). Aldon Morris writes that the ACMHR organization attacked the tripartite system of domination on several fronts. As a local group, they fought around these issues: the right to have black police patrol black communities, discrimination in hiring, bus and train segregation, disenfranchisement at the polls, segregation at the polls, public schools, swimming pools, libraries, and retail stores.¹²⁷ In 1959 in Birmingham, Ella Baker gave what was perhaps one of her most memorable speeches that condoned yet also challenged the role of nonviolence in the larger civil rights struggle for blacks in the South. In this speech she mentioned the function of nonviolence yet also pointing to the role of then NAACP member Robert Williams, suggesting the possibility that nonviolence is not always the remedy to fighting for freedom. Emory Jackson writes that in this speech, “she reminded her listeners that the constitution gives to every citizen the right to defend himself.”¹²⁸ In essence, Baker was calling on people to defend themselves when appropriate. In this respect, Baker is clearly expressing her belief that nonviolence is not always her chosen method of direct action. Barbara Ransby writes that for Baker, “nonviolence and self-defense, were tactical choices, not matters of principle.”¹²⁹ Baker was not calling on civil rights organizations to unequivocally use nonviolence or self-defense strategies per se, she was calling on organization to maximize their tact in knowing which strategy to use after a critical look at the given circumstances. In this sense, Baker’s philosophy presents an exception to a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance particularly because she did not unequivocally endorse

nonviolent resistance per se. She endorsed it as a tactical choice and not as a matter of principle. Baker's own philosophy endorses more a legacy of resistance by tactical means than a legacy of nonviolent resistance. In her time at the center of the twentieth century, Baker was involved in a legacy of resistance by tactical means that happened to resist nonviolently more than violently. Ultimately, she functioned as primarily a nonviolent activist, yet she clearly respectfully recognized the tact of Robert Williams in resisting race and class oppression. Compared to both Rosa Parks and Daisy Bates, Ella Baker more strongly endorsed other strategies besides nonviolence to fight race and class oppression. The NAACP and its then leader Roy Wilkins strongly criticized Robert Williams for what they believed to be his teaching violence in his training members of the Monroe, North Carolina, NAACP chapter how to use rifles in the case of racist violence by whites who had terrorized the black population. Both Parks and Bates were more under the philosophical influence of the NAACP while Baker was not after her departure from the group by 1950. Where the NAACP encouraged its members to either publicly criticize or distance itself from Robert Williams, Baker publicly pointed to Robert Williams to remind other blacks that the U.S. Constitution gives every citizen, including blacks, the right to defend oneself. Baker is continuing a legacy of several black women in her recognition of self-defense as a tactical choice for blacks. She continued the legacy of journalist Ida B. Wells who was known to keep a rifle under her dress after white mobs burned down her press in Memphis; Irene Morgan who physically attacked white men who tried to physically remove her from her seat on a racially segregated bus (this fight led to the monumental *Morgan v. Virginia* Supreme Court decision); and Fannie Lou Hamer who insisted that she keep a rifle in her home to protect

her from violence by white mobs. In Baker's eyes, Robert Williams was using his constitutional right as a tactical choice to fight race and class oppression rather than blindly adopting nonviolence in all cases and facets of one's life. More than Rosa Parks and Daisy Bates, Ella Baker taught that other tactics to fight such oppression are just as useful as pure nonviolence.

Ransby writes that in Baker's view, Shreveport and Birmingham were models of how local communities can organize themselves effectively. Both Simkins in Shreveport and Shuttlesworth in Birmingham shared Baker's view of nonviolence as a more limited tactic than a way of life. In the local campaigns in which she worked, Ella Baker practiced the first and third themes of participatory democracy more than second theme. In these local communities, she did not have to deal with such a stratified hierarchy that she confronted while working in the NAACP. Avoiding this hierarchy for about ten years at this point is perhaps what led her to respect Robert Williams' work as acceptable in fighting race oppression, unlike Daisy Bates who was encouraged by the NAACP to publicly criticize Robert Williams, which she did. Baker helped maintain a grassroots appeal in both the local Shreveport and Montgomery associations, as well as calling them to direct action in steps such as registering to vote. Adam Fairclough writes that the Crusade For Citizenship in 1958 marks an important turning point in the direct action strategy of SCLC which began to focus more on voter registration.

By the time Baker was in Birmingham in 1959, voter registration became a significant form of direct action protest and Baker supported this kind of protest in every way, fulfilling this third theme of participatory democracy. Also in Birmingham, Baker crossed paths with a white couple that proved to be vitally important to the sixties' civil

rights struggle: The Bradens. Carl and Anne Braden were very active members of the Southern Conference Education Fund (SCEF), an organization founded in 1946, which like the In Friendship organization raised funds for black activists, lobbied for implementation of civil rights bills, and worked to educate southern whites about the evils of racism. Fred Shuttlesworth joined the board of SCEF about one year prior to Baker's arrival. By the time of Baker's arrival she and the Bradens crossed paths routinely at meetings and workshops and developed a close political and personal relationship.

By 1960, Baker worked with Carl Braden to organize a set of hearings called "The Voteless Speak" in Washington, D.C., on January 31, 1960, intended to revive the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, which had been weakened by the inability of the U.S. Congress to include Part III of the 1957 Civil Rights Act, which required that the Justice Department enforce the school desegregation order made by the *Brown* decision. These set of hearings would establish a volunteer commission that would collect its own data of voting discrimination and use that information in an attempt to strengthen the enforcement powers of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission.¹³⁰ Baker spent an arduous ten days prior to these hearings with Carl Braden mobilizing the Washington, D.C., area, attracting the attention of veteran activist Nannie Helen Burroughs, whom Baker held in very high esteem. Burroughs helped secure a location for the hearings when the church they had booked cancelled at the last minute. "The Voteless Speak" hearings on January 31, 1960, were followed exactly one day by the climactic February 1st sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina, and arguably represent a significant precursor to taking democracy in one's own hands. The sit-in activists from February 1960 certainly

attempted to take democracy into their own hands in a similar way that Ella Baker attempted to take democracy in her own hands when she planned “The Voteless Speak” hearings with Carl Braden. However her commitment to build local community struggles from New York, to Atlanta, to Shreveport, to Birmingham, to Washington, D.C., is arguably responsible for inspiring the very climactic sit-in movement of 1960. Ransby writes that: “her main contribution to the movement was not the building of a solid regional coalition...but the strengthening of several semi-independent local struggles, which were more connected to one another and to itinerant organizers like Baker than they were to the official SCLC leadership in Atlanta.”¹³¹ Several semi-independent local struggles are exactly how the sit-in movement of 1960 is characterized. Aldon Morris in particular characterizes part of the movement as “sit-in clusters” where there were groups of sit-ins all across the country that was inspired by a previous sit-in cluster, the origin of which was the climactic sit-in on February 1st. These semi-independent local struggles were what Ella Baker’s organizing had helped to create.

The local struggles that Baker helped to create are clear evidence of her fulfillment of the three themes of participatory democracy. These struggles had a broad appeal to grassroots because they included blacks from every class strata. These local struggles minimized the hierarchical structure because they encouraged public forums such as “The Voteless Speak” hearings where no one person’s voice was privileged over the other. Hierarchy was also minimized in the voting registration campaigns because every person was encouraged to register to vote, and presumably no one person’s vote was privileged more than another. These local struggles ultimately included some direct action. Every local struggle that Ella Baker participated in had some form of direct

action. When she worked with the Young People's Forum in the 1930s, she urged them to hold library-sponsored debates on the current events issues of the day. When she worked with the NAACP in the 1940s, she encouraged direct action by encouraging rural blacks to join the NAACP. When she worked with Parents In Action Against Discrimination, she taught others how to protest in front of city hall and confront public officials about quality education. When she worked in the late 1950s with the SCLC and with SCEF, she used voter registration campaigns as direct action strategies to give local community members the sense of control over their own societal circumstances.

Ella Baker's work throughout the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s inspired the chain of local sit-ins in the 1960s that Aldon Morris writes were supported by a prearranged organizational structure. Exactly one day after Baker and Braden's "The Voteless Speak" hearings on January 30, 1960, major sit-in demonstrations and related activity had been conducted in at least sixty-nine Southern cities between February 1st and March 30th of 1960.¹³² Her organizing inspired a nationwide debate on the methods by which any persons "interested in democracy" can, in King's words, not wait for other agencies to act but to take proactive steps on their own through direct action to achieve institutional change. After these sit-ins, Baker continued at a feverish pace to separate this burgeoning student movement from what she saw then as the anemic, speech-driven SCLC. She took pains to form an organization that was entirely independent and entirely free of the hierarchy that exists in SCLC. This organization became the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Conference (SNCC). Her experience as an organizer presents two important lessons for the nature of organizing in a nonviolent way: the first lesson is the need for a cross-racial coalition building in the U.S. Congress.

Lessons Learned From the Organizing of Ella Baker

The U.S. House is currently divided and polarized politically by race in a very significant way and a cross-racial coalition is sorely needed if any proof of a highly touted bipartisanship is celebrated. In the U.S. House currently, all African American U.S. Representatives are members of the Democratic Party while almost all Republican U.S. Representatives are whites. U.S. Representative J.C. Watts was one of the few African American U.S. Representatives who was part of the Republican Party, and he left this post in 2002. Watts' departure in 2002 left the rest of the Republican Party composed of almost all whites with a few exceptions including Indian American U.S. Representative Bobby Jindal from Louisiana.

The second lesson that Ella Baker's leadership provides is the importance of a decentralized leadership structure. Belinda Robnett writes that because of the decentralized, nonhierarchical structure of SNCC that Baker helped guide, women in SNCC enjoyed leadership mobility more than in any other civil rights organization. The decentralized nature of SNCC provided more free spaces, allowing greater individual autonomy and therefore, increased leadership mobility for women.¹³³ This mobility for women allowed SNCC to be as effective as it was in advancing the black struggle through the exercise of the franchise.

This kind of organizing is exactly what a select number black women in the U.S. Congress practice within the tradition of both participatory democracy and nonviolent resistance. U.S. Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones noted the propensity that women have for allowing participatory democracy: "Women tend to be more participatory managers. And by that I mean, you know what you want. You know what you're going

to do. But you give people an opportunity to participate in the process of getting you there, to be included in the discussion. And women tend to do that.”¹³⁴ Ella Baker in her role as a grassroots leader, helped create SNCC in order to give people an opportunity to participate in the process of obtaining their civil rights and achieving the right to vote.

A Background of Maxine Waters

Forty years since the organizing of Ella Baker, U.S. Representative Maxine Waters has been organizing people against institutionalized barriers that encourages the kind of societal changes in society that are profoundly similar to those within the segregated South. In decades up to 1960s, Baker was teaching people in local communities how to organize to end the institutional barrier of poor school quality and voter discrimination. From the 1930s to 1960, her organizing focused more on breaking down the barrier of voter registration. Baker had an initial focus on improving the quality of public schools. In Waters’ time since 2001, she was not organizing exactly like Baker but she was organizing in order to end the institutional barrier not of voter discrimination but of war spending, which she contends indirectly leads to poor school quality. Waters writes:

the Administration has passed massive tax cuts in each of their first three years in office, which have produced massive budget deficits. In order to make up for the loss of revenue caused by these tax cuts, the Administration has cut the budget for dozens of federal programs, many of which are important to African Americans...the penalty that poor and working-class families pay for the Administration’s dangerous policies reach far beyond our neighborhoods. The Administration has sent our children to fight in a senseless and needless war in Iraq.¹³⁵

Reverend and author Lavern McCain Gill writes: “on the West African island Gorée, where human cargo was shipped across the Atlantic to America, Africans who

refused to go quietly or without a struggle were placed in cubicles labeled ‘recalcitrants.’ They refused to participate in their own enslavement. When it comes to yielding to extreme conservative positions and legislation that goes against her South Central Los Angeles constituency, Maxine Waters is a recalcitrant. She [like Chaka Fattah] refuses to allow America to slip back into its pre-civil rights mode of disenfranchising African Americans. At no time was that label more a propos than in 1994, when the Republican rebellion began its self-imposed mission to destroy social programs.”¹³⁶

Like Ella Baker, Waters is a strong recalcitrant that works at the national level against the policies that have been nothing short of dangerous to the African American community while Baker has been a strong recalcitrant at the local level against such policies. Also like Ella Baker who had grown up in an interdependent black community on whom one could depend for financial support, Maxine Waters also had the support of an interdependent African American community in her early years. Lavern Gill writes that while Waters was a single mother struggling to support her two children and trying to hold down several jobs, she was able to benefit from a “bond she established with black women who fed her children while she worked, fed her when she returned home, and provided a nurturing, warm, and caring environment for her during trying times.”¹³⁷ It is this experience that shapes the kinds of beliefs that makes Maxine Waters try to provide the kind of environment for working mothers that these helpful black women of her Los Angeles community provided for her.

Maxine Waters like Ella Baker cares deeply about domestic policies that ultimately destroy the economic fabric of the African American community which has depended largely on social programs and have more or less eroded the ability of the

community members to care for each other. Barbara Ransby writes that within Ella Baker's upbringing also existed a cooperative economics: "the cooperative economics was rooted in the long standing tradition of black self-help, mutual aid and uplift; they could also be viewed as a way of navigating the racist stumbling blocks within American capitalism; alternatively, they could be seen as a direct challenge to its legitimacy. For blacks in particular, the repertoire of survival strategies included the pooling of resources and a willingness to at least temporarily substitute cooperation for competition."¹³⁸

Maxine Waters was fortunate enough to benefit from the repertoire of survival strategies from these black women who cared for her and her children until she graduated from UCLA in 1970 with her B.A. in Sociology and became able to earn her own living when she began working as an assistant in a California Head Start program during the 1970s. Waters carries this remembrance and appreciation for the sort of mutual aid society that she benefited from by demanding less oppressive policies towards the black community. Like Baker she understands that she is not only duty bound to come to the aid of less fortunate community members, but she also has to humble herself in order to create the social space necessary for the more oppressed people in the community to speak and act on their own behalf.¹³⁹ Waters has held numerous public forums within her congressional district which have addressed issues from the Iraq war to police brutality. These forums allow community members an opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns and fulfills the two key themes of participatory democracy of appealing to grassroots and minimizing hierarchy.

A Discussion of the Organizing of Baker and Waters

In organizing people against institutionalized segregation, Maxine Waters is continuing Ella Baker's tradition of practicing participatory democracy. Though the social conditions both Ella Baker and Maxine Waters faced differed, comparison can yet be made in relation to their organizing strategies. Because of the effective organizing strategies of Ella Baker, many societal changes such as the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act took place. Her work was central to the creation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and therefore influenced the range of organizing strategies that Maxine Waters could practice in her role as a U.S. Representative.

Therefore, instead of pursuing a comparison of the organizing of Baker and Waters, this chapter pursues a discussion of how Maxine Waters organizes like Baker. Like Baker's organizing, Waters' organization of an Out of Iraq caucus with fellow U.S.

Representative Lynn Woolsey, appeals to a grassroots section of the American public, minimizing hierarchy within that organizing, and she is encouraging American citizens and other U.S. Representatives to engage in direct action by calling on them to join a public protest against the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Waters' most recent feat in practicing participatory democracy is her co-founding of the Out of Iraq Caucus, which began on June 16, 2005. Waters has successfully drawn support from members of the Republican Party that have previously and most unilaterally supported George W. Bush in his military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. However, unlike Barbara Lee, Maxine Waters did not vote against the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan on September 13, 2001. In an interview with Tavis Smiley that aired on National Public Radio, Maxine

Waters stated that there was a lot of pressure on U.S. Representatives like herself after September 11th to vote for the military invasion and that not to do so would make politicians look unpatriotic and unpopular.¹⁴⁰ She implies that she suppressed her initial instincts which was against this military invasion to indirectly support it on September 13, 2001. However her later founding of the Out of the Iraq caucus appeals to her initial instincts that demand the end of a military occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan.

She has followed one lesson of Ella Baker's nonviolent organizing: the ability to organize for social change across racial lines; the building of a cross-racial coalition. A cross-party coalition that Waters built to demand withdrawal from Iraq is significant for the simple reason that the Republican Party has few nonwhite members in both the U.S House and the U.S. Senate. Therefore, the Out of Iraq caucus co-founded by Maxine Waters in order to organize in support of withdrawing troops from Iraq is appealing across races to form a group united by the same cause: the end of the Iraq occupation that has led to the neglect of the basic needs of American citizens. Certainly Maxine Waters' work with her Out of Iraq caucus co-chair Lynn Woolsey is a particular example of a successful cross-racial coalition that has been able to attract members of the Republican Party.

The success of the Out of Iraq caucus is evident in the increasing number of the Republicans in the U.S. House who are voicing their growing disapproval of the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. On Friday, February 16, 2007, seventeen House Republicans, all of whom traditionally voted and supported the military invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan broke their expected voting patterns and voted for a nonbinding resolution that disapproved of sending more troops to Iraq.¹⁴¹ The defection

of these U.S. House Republicans can be attributed to the work of the Out of Iraq caucus. Maxine Waters's work with the Out of Iraq caucus has raised the level of consciousness about the Iraq war in the minds of many U.S. Representatives. This is comparable with the ways that Ella Baker's work in SNCC raised the level of consciousness of a lot of whites from the North who were able to have more leadership roles. Paula Giddings writes: "with the 'group centered' egalitarian values of SNCC, any activist who worked hard inevitably had some say in policy decisions. Thus many of the White women gained a respect for their own abilities that would not have been possible in other organizations. Additionally, they benefited from seeing Black women as a new kind of role model."¹⁴²

Both Barbara Lee in the public recognition of her lone vote against the Iraq war and Maxine Waters in the founding of her Out of Iraq caucus have become in their own right new kinds of role models to other U.S. congressmen and women who are white and of color. They have been a role model in demanding a higher level of consciousness about the military invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Waters also fulfills the second lesson provided by Ella Baker in her focus on a group-centered leadership. Like Baker, Waters collaborates with other groups with similar goals rather than trying to control other groups within a hierarchy. About exactly one year after its founding, the Out of Iraq caucus joined another group called Troops Home Fast, a group launched on July 4, 2006, that includes over 3700 people who have pledged to fast in order to bring the troops home. In a press conference expressing support for Troops Home Fast, Waters compared the fasters to Gandhi and called on George W. Bush "to provide relief to the heroic fasters and troops in Iraq by bringing the troops home now."¹⁴³ The act of uniting groups with similar causes is comparable to the

organizing Baker underwent in bringing together college students from all across the South to create one movement, the student sit-in movement with a united goal. Baker organized the student sit-in because she observed how the different sit-in clusters across the American South basically had the same long-term purpose: to end institutionalized barriers of segregation.

Waters helped create the Out of Iraq caucus because she also observed how different manifestations of opposition to the Iraq war had a similar purpose: to end the occupation of Iraq and correct, as she saw it, the priorities of the federal budget. Both women are organizing geographically separate groups and are for a united cause. For Baker it was ending institutionalized segregation. For Waters, it was ending occupation of the Iraq war. Maxine Waters is particularly concerned about how the Iraq War has siphoned off funds from domestic priorities such as public education.

Jonathan Kozol writes about the drastically poor quality of one school in Waters' Congressional district: "At the 75th Street Elementary School in South Central Los Angeles, which I visited...the presence of rats was only one of a number of health hazards that children had to face. Exposed asbestos and the presence of flaking chips of lead-based paint were serious problems too."¹⁴⁴ Schools in Waters' district not only provide substandard education, but also become environmental hazards for students as well. Both Baker and Waters are fighting the institutional barriers of poor quality schools. They are also using the methods of participatory democracy to combat them. In founding the Out of Iraq caucus, Waters is appealing to grassroots because she holds public events in which the general opinion can join in marches in support of an immediate withdrawal from Iraq. Waters is also minimizing hierarchy because she is

privileging no voice demanding withdrawal more or less than anybody else's. And third, Waters is engaging in direct action by calling on all congresspersons to join her in staging public protests against the Iraq invasion. This is what Ella Baker was able to do in the NAACP New York City Branch in the fight for a quality public education.

Maxine Waters continues a tradition of nonviolent resistance created by Ella Baker in organizing certain kinds of communities. Baker organizes communities in rural and urban areas while Waters organizes political bodies that have larger, institutionalized political bodies that have become ideologically polarized over a military invasion. Baker had more of a specialized focus that concentrated on one city at a time, while Waters calls on all Americans and has a strong focus on national policy change, which is also what Baker called for. Baker generally organized within cities while Maxine Waters' name recognition and media coverage in several independent media allows her to essentially organize across the nation. Waters' name recognition as a stalwart fighter for human rights is a key factor in organizing people to demand immediate withdrawal from Iraq.

Two extraordinary similarities in the experiences of Maxine Waters and Ella Baker have prepared them to practice a surviving legacy of participatory democracy. The first is their commitment to the younger generations' own practice of democracy. The second is their disagreements with male leaders that have been popularly revered by the African American community: for Baker, it was her disagreements with King while for Waters it was her disagreements with Bill Clinton. Lavern Gill writes that Maxine Waters is one of the few members of Congress who consistently stands up against capital punishment and for the rehabilitation of black youth: "some might conclude that Waters

is the only contemporary black leader that the generation of hard core youth could count on in the halls of Congress.”¹⁴⁵

Like Baker, Waters is clearly an advocate for young peoples’ independent awareness and expression. Waters staunchly defended the younger generation when she argued that the social conditions in which younger artists lived should be challenged more than the music that they produce. This put her at odds with other black women activists such as C. Dolores Tucker who tried to organize other black women against demeaning images of women in the work of music artists. Waters took this dispute as an opportunity to most strongly criticize the social conditions that produce those kinds of images, rather than an opportunity to criticize the artists themselves who are able to make a living from their music. Lavern Gill writes that in 1993, Maxine Waters attached an amendment into a flood relief bill that created stipends for 17 to 30 year olds that would provide one hundred dollar stipends for those who would re-enroll in school for vocational education, for GED, or for job training. Waters had also successfully passed through Congress the Gang Prevention and Youth Recreation Act and the Job and Life Skills Improvement Act, which provided \$50 million to be appropriated for stipend-based job training programs nationwide.¹⁴⁶ Maxine Waters’ work in trying to improve the social conditions that younger generations are susceptible to is comparable to the work of Ella Baker and her Young Peoples’ Forum in New York City, where Baker encouraged young people to form an opinion around political issues and become more informed about the community in which they live. This is a characteristic also seen in the nonviolent resistance of Daisy Bates, in making a significant effort to provide a younger generation with a quality education. The nonviolent resistance against policies that try to

destroy infrastructure that will provide a quality education for young people is seen in the actions of not only Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah, but also in the actions of Ella Baker and Maxine Waters.

The second significant similarity between Ella Baker and Maxine Waters is their disagreements with male leaders that have been popularly revered by the African American community. Ella Baker's disagreements with Martin Luther King, Jr., came primarily from her emphasis on protest organizing that clashed with his emphasis on inspirational speech-making. Joanne Grant writes that once Baker asked Martin Luther King, Jr., about his inspirational speechmaking, "whether it's just a matter of being a sophomoric oratorical contest," she lost respect from SCLC leaders. About her criticism of King's lack of organizing skills and his emphasis on inspirational speechmaking, Baker says: "none of [it] endeared me to anybody...I know that people do listen and can respond to information with the same degree that they just respond to sound."¹⁴⁷ Baker's obvious discomfort with the lack of emphasis on the organizing in King's SCLC organization became obvious to King and made her work in SCLC more difficult by 1960. Barbara Ransby writes that Baker saw King's weaknesses as reflective of prevalent tendencies in American society.¹⁴⁸ One of those tendencies is the idea that a social movement must be led by a single person, especially a person who can motivate and inspire in their speech. This kind of tendency to depend on single leaders is a product of a dominant culture that promoted individualism and egocentrism. In Baker's view, the celebrity status that the movement afforded King obscured the essential work of community organizing that she emphasized.

Joanne Grant writes that this is why Ella Baker went to great lengths in 1960 to separate the student sit-in movement and its founders of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) from King's SCLC. Baker wanted to continue the legacy of participatory democracy particularly by minimizing the hierarchy that would have existed in the group had SNCC been part of SCLC, as those in SCLC wished. SNCC director James Forman writes that Baker felt the organization was depending too much on the press and on the promotion of King, and was not developing enough indigenous leadership across the South.¹⁴⁹ Edward Morgan writes that the press has economic reasons to promote King and other single leaders such as, more recently, Barack Obama as a celebrity and ignore other far reaching issues. Morgan writes that there are three defining characteristics of the mass media:

First, the mass media embraced a market-driven emphasis on personality as a key signifier of political meaning. Second, the media followed market driven codes and biases with respect to protest activity, violence, drama, and dichotomous conflict. Finally, the mass media turned to an ideologically bound discourse for interpreting or explaining the meaning of events, one that Stuart Hall and others have referred to as the media's common discourse...the market driven push to maximize profit margins has a great deal to do with the elevation of public figures [like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Barack Obama] to celebrity status. The violent death of significant figures such as King only compounded this media tendency. The elevation of leaders into larger-than-life celebrities has left the rest of us, in effect, waiting for a new King.¹⁵⁰

Therefore Ella Baker greatly resented therefore the promotion of King within SCLC because it neglected fulfilling the goals of an ever-increasing student movement; her work reminds her protégés of the truth originated by Gil Scott Heron that, "the revolution will not be televised." King's clash with Baker is comparable to the clash between Maxine Waters and another leader whose administration has been seen as most friendly to the African American community: Bill Clinton.

In her opposition to the policies of the Clinton administration, Maxine Waters has also fulfilled three themes of participatory democracy. She appeals to grassroots, minimizes organizational hierarchy, and engages in direct action. Lavern Gill certainly writes about the “recalcitrant” positions of Maxine Waters that not only resists extreme conservative political positions, but also resists positions endorsed by politically moderate Democrats of the late 1990s. Ronald Walters writes that Clinton’s support of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was a second major move away from Clinton’s Democratic base that came at the expense of organized labor that was eventually abandoned by American companies that pursued cheaper labor markets.¹⁵¹ Lavern Gill writes that Waters refused to back Clinton and support NAFTA because it showed no promise of economic opportunity for people of color. Waters firmly believed that the provisions of NAFTA deferred economic promise for people of color both within and outside the United States.¹⁵²

Most recently, Maxine Waters, Barbara Lee and U.S. Representative Lynn Woolsey have encouraged citizens and fellow lawmakers to join with them in practicing nonviolent resistance against the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan at a protest war at the National Mall on January 27, 2007. In this sense, Lee, Waters, and Woolsey are fulfilling the third theme of participatory democracy: the call for direct action or protest. Waters has sent a letter to every other member of the U.S. House urging them to participate in the public demonstration. At the public demonstration, she implores other American citizens to confront their elected officials and demand the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq. She tells the crowd:

I want you to come to Capitol Hill and lobby on Monday and put some starch in the backs of the members of Congress and give them the courage

that they need to do the right thing. It is all right to have some resolutions that are not binding, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and that will come when it's time to decide whether or not we're going to fund this immoral war. I will not vote one dime for this war! And when you come up here to lobby, you ask these members, 'Are you going to support appropriation to continue this war, to expand this war?'¹⁵³

Less than one month after this speech, several people were arrested for sitting in the congressional office of U.S. Senator John McCain, to protest his support of the occupation of Iraq. Waters' speech had perhaps inspired such a direct campaign to "sit-in" the senator's office. This is undoubtedly comparable to the concerted effort Ella Baker undertook to inspire college students across the South stage sit-ins. This kind of verbally exhorted direct action is exactly what Ella Baker in her work with Parents In Action Against Discrimination urged her followers to do: confront public officials and demand improvements in public education.

In addition, on January 29, 2007, Waters hosted along with Lynn Woolsey an Iraq book fair where she invited over fifteen authors who have published books specifically about the occupation of Iraq within the past four years.¹⁵⁴ At this book fair, Waters says: "these authors have played a vital role in helping members of Congress and the American people understand the many issues that surround the war." However this Iraq book fair received next to little or no attention from the mainstream television news media. This kind of coverage towards black women elected officials continues a pattern of racist coverage since the last half of the 1990s described in detail by Bridgitte Nacos and Natasha Hritzuk:

The vast majority of the news visuals reflected two of the most common stereotypes of Blacks—the physically superior athlete and the talented entertainer...our data reveal that in the late 1990s the leading news media were far more inclined to publish visuals of black activists, whether moderate or radical, than of African Americans who held elective or appointed public offices. Our findings suggest that the news media as a

whole, not simply sports news, perpetuate the uneven portrayal and the stereotyping of black Americans by reporting daily and extensively on African American success stories in athletics without paying similar attention to successful Blacks in business, politics, and other walks of life.¹⁵⁵

This helps explain why the Iraq book panel was not covered by major media sources: being a black woman in politics, Waters' aim and certainly her message is not paid attention to as closely as other African Americans who are in the sports or music industries. Nonetheless, the lack of media coverage does not lessen or diminish the role that Maxine Waters plays as one who practices nonviolent resistance and one who does so within a context of participatory democracy previously practiced by Ella Baker.

Maxine Waters' relationship with Lynn Woolsey as co-chairs and co-founders of the Out of Iraq caucus share some interesting similarities with Ella Baker's work with nonviolent organizer Anne Braden of the Southern Conference Educational Fund. Both groups of women represent the significant potential of cross racial coalitions in advancing the cause of civil rights. This cross racial coalition between Maxine Waters and Lynn Woolsey, a Caucasian American, is very similar to the coalition between Ella Baker and another Caucasian American, Anne Braden, because these groups have striven for the goals of participatory democracy. Biographer Catherine Fosl writes that Anne Braden's leadership has been of a more decentralized variety "because—like that of her friend Ella Baker (an African American organizer some years her senior whom many 1960s aficionados hail as a 'mother' to the student civil rights movement)—Anne's style of leadership has been participatory, intentionally staying in the background while nudging others to take the lead."¹⁵⁶

In summary, Maxine Waters continues the legacy of participatory democracy and thus continues the tradition of nonviolent resistance. The third theme of participatory democracy is the theme of direct action, and Waters calls on others to practice direct action in the form of the protest rally in order to resist oppressive infrastructures such as the U.S. military. Maxine Waters fulfills Baker's models of participatory democracy in her commitment to building a cross-class, cross-racial alliance that certainly speaks to Waters' devotion to an appeal to a grassroots section. Waters also fulfills Baker's models of participatory democracy in her willingness to challenge male authority. Paula Giddings writes that "it was black women who represented both moral and social authority when controversial decisions had to be made."¹⁵⁷ Both Ella Baker and Maxine Waters represent the highest moral and social authority in their uncompromising and unwavering commitment to continuing nonviolent resistance in the form of participatory democracy. Their examples are the strongest in demonstrating the importance and necessity of the role of the recalcitrant.

Lessons Learned From the Organizing of Maxine Waters

One important lesson from the organizing of Maxine Waters is the necessity of preparing oneself for the possibility of engaging in persuasive dialogue, as persuasion is the first step of nonviolent action. Waters beseeched all interested listeners to engage in persuasive dialogue with those who support the military invasion of Iraq, to try to persuade them to discontinue their support. She does this more forcefully and persistently than Barbara Lee. A second important lesson of Waters' organizing proves is the effectiveness of a cross-racial coalition. She may not have had the opportunity to gain as much support from Republican U.S. Representatives had she not joined with U.S.

Representative Lynn Woolsey. In addition, she was able to foment considerable consternation among Republicans about the feasibility of continuing the military invasion and occupation of Iraq. Finally, the last important lesson that Waters' organizing provides is to consistently challenge executive leadership on a consistent moral basis. Waters challenged Clinton on NAFTA despite his popularity and favor within the black community and despite the approval of NAFTA by other elected U.S. officials. Baker challenged King on the direction of SCLC away from organizing despite King's popularity and despite the approval of King's leadership by other SCLC members. Both Waters and Baker operate from a consistent moral basis that puts the interests of the poor and working class communities at the highest priority.

Chapter Five: Appeals to the U.S. Constitution: A Comparison of the Nonviolent Protest Strategies from 1961 to 1963 with Nonviolent Strategies by the Congressional Black Caucus from 2001 to 2005

The 1961 Freedom Rides and the Jail-In Strategy

We might phrase the following question: how do we use the law as a vehicle of progressive change, while simultaneously emphasizing the importance of acknowledging the limits of the law—the limits of national law as well as international law?¹⁵⁸

This chapter focuses on the use of the arrest as a nonviolent protest strategy comparing incidents from 1961 to 1963 with incidents of the past six years by Congressional Black Caucus members. It first focuses on the 1962 arrest of college students in Rock Hill, South Carolina, and its similarities to the arrests of select Congressional Black Caucus members who protest U.S. foreign policy regarding genocide in the Sudan. It will then focus on a comparison of the appeals to the U.S. Constitution by protestors known as Freedom Riders with the appeals to the U.S. Constitution by U.S. Representative John Conyers in a published report prepared by his congressional office entitled *George W. Bush Versus The U.S. Constitution*. This chapter will then provide a comparison of the most significant civil rights mass mobilizations in 1962 and 1963 with the incidents of activism of the past five years initiated by select CBC members. In particular, this chapter will compare the ideology behind those who tortured the Freedom Riders in a Mississippi prison with the ideology of the Bush administration in their use of military invasion and torture. A discussion of the Bush administration's use of torture is done in the 2006 Conyers report and illuminates the

similarities in ideology between the Bush administration and that of segregationists of the deep South during the early 1960s. This chapter will compare not only the differing nonviolent protest strategies in 1961, 1962 and 1963 with those between 2001 and 2007, it will also compare the ideologies that opposed such nonviolent protest strategies. In doing so, it aims to argue that “racism has played a critical role in the ideological production of the communist, the criminal, and the terrorist.”¹⁵⁹ It also hopes to argue the importance of a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance against such ideology that has evolved into new and more subtle forms. This resistance is also clearly against the exportation of Jim Crow from the American South in the 1950s and 1960s to the Middle East and especially to Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo in the twenty-first century.

The goals of SNCC supported by Ella Baker according to their initial April conference were clarified at a later conference held in Atlanta from October 14th to the 16th in 1960. At this conference, it was decided that the “vehicle of progressive change” would be a more intense form of nonviolent direct action. Also at this conference, SNCC drafted a statement reading: “we are further convinced that...only mass action is strong enough to force all of America to assume responsibility and that nonviolent direct action alone is strong enough to enable all of America to understand the responsibility she must assume.”¹⁶⁰ Clayborne Carson writes that as they practiced more nonviolent direct action, they adopted Ella Baker’s notion of group centered leadership in their decision to not have a president or any other leadership typical of a hierarchy. This is why they made a choice to initiate action only when two thirds of the members present supported such a course. This group centered leadership was different from the kind of leadership

in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference that was more hierarchical with Martin Luther King serving as its president.

Reverend James Lawson wielded incredibly significant influence at this October conference when he awakened within SNCC members the utility of the “jail, no bail” strategy. This is a strategy where nonviolent protestors who are arrested refuse to pay bail and remain in jail in order to protest what were seen as unjust laws. About these unjust laws, Lawson said at the October conference: “instead of letting the adults scurry around bail, we should have insisted that they scurry about to end the system which had put us in jail. If history offers such an opportunity again, let us be prepared to seize it.”¹⁶¹ Clayborne Carson writes that this “jail, no bail” strategy was the start of a nonviolent revolution to destroy segregation, slavery, serfdom, paternalism, and industrialization; a revolution which preserves cheap labor and racial discrimination. Adam Fairclough writes that James Lawson possessed a much deeper grasp of the philosophical and historical basis of nonviolence than did King. His conception of nonviolence was apparently more far reaching.¹⁶² By the end of 1960, Lawson openly endorsed the use of the jail, no bail strategy while King seemed slightly more reticent to use the concept yet King nonetheless acquiesced to its growing popularity among the SNCC members:

these young students have taken the deep groans and the passionate yearnings of the Negro people and filtered them in their own souls and fashioned them in a creative protest which is an epic known all over our nation. For the last few months they have moved in a uniquely meaningful orbit importing light and heat to distant satellites. Through their nonviolent direct action they have been able to open hundreds of formerly segregated lunch counters in almost eighty cities. It is no overstatement to characterize these events as historic. Never before in the United States has so large a body of students spread a struggle over so great an area in pursuit of a goal of human dignity and freedom. I am

convinced that future historians will have to record this student movement as one of the greatest epics of our heritage.¹⁶³

As astounded as King seems, he was not as influential a mentor as James Lawson in his commitment to a “jail, no bail” strategy. Lawson was inspiring students to protest against unjust laws that condone racial segregation using the “jail, no bail” strategy.

This kind of nonviolent direct action is what select members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) engage in when they protest what they see as unfair or unjust foreign policy that ignores genocidal killings such as those in the Sudan. Several CBC members in their protest of foreign policy go to jail in order to try and raise public awareness. This will be discussed in detail further in this chapter. CBC members do not go so far as to refuse bail like SNCC members did in their first significant protest in Rock Hill, South Carolina in early 1961. SNCC members clearly demonstrated more time to preparing for nonviolent direct action than CBC members have in the last five years. However, there are other significant similarities between incidents of nonviolent protest exhibited by select SNCC members and select members of the CBC that will be elaborated on in this chapter.

Exactly one year after the Greensboro sit-in on February 1, 1961, nine students from Friendship College in South Carolina were convicted of trespassing after demonstrating in downtown variety and drug stores. The nine, later known as the Rock Hill Nine, had refused to post bail and had publicly expressed a determination to serve out their full sentence. SNCC members in their newsletter *Student Voice* wrote about the Rock Hill Nine: “their sitting-in shows their belief in the immorality of racial segregation and their choice to serve the sentence shows their unwillingness to participate in any part

of a system that perpetuates injustice. Since we too share their beliefs and since many times during the past year we too have sat-in at lunch counters, we feel that in good conscience we have no alternative other than to join them.”¹⁶⁴ At the next SNCC conference a few days after the arrest of the Rock Hill Nine, University of South Florida Historian Raymond Arsenault writes that a phone call from Tom Gaither focused SNCC’s attention on the Rock Hill Nine. Tom Gaither was then a member of the Congress of Racial Equality or CORE, founded in 1943 with a stated goal to “abolish the color line through direct non-violent action.”¹⁶⁵ After Gaither’s phone call, Diane Nash of Fisk University, Charles Jones of Johnson C. Smith University, Ruby Doris Smith Robinson of Spelman College, and Charles Sherrod of Virginia Union Seminary were the four SNCC members who vowed to join the Rock Hill Nine. Smith’s biographer Cynthia Griggs Fleming writes:

for Ruby Doris, her decision to go to Rock Hill was an important departure from her past movement experience in at least two respects. First, she had never before shown any inclination to take the initiative or provide leadership. Second, the targets of Ruby’s activism up to this point had all been establishments whose policies directly affected her, since they were in her hometown. But her involvement in Rock Hill pushed Ruby out of her own community into the national arena.¹⁶⁶

This is exactly what the arrest of U.S. Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee in front of the Sudanese embassy on April 28, 2006, accomplished: it pushed her out into the international arena. Like Robinson’s arrest, Jackson-Lee’s arrest is against policies that did not affect her directly. Her arrest has the capability of pushing her out of her own community, out of national concerns and into the national arena. Gerard Prunier writes about the U.S. government and the American media’s attitudes towards the killings in Darfur that inspire the kind of nonviolent protest from Sheila Jackson-Lee and Charles Rangel. Prunier writes about the U.S. government’s inaction:

On 1 June 2004 the members of Congress who sympathized with the SPLA [Sudan People's Liberation Movement] sent President Bush a list of twenty-three names of *Janjaweed* supporters, controllers, and commanders who were either members of [the Sudanese government] or closely linked to it...pressures led the White House to compromise on all fronts...not putting too much practical pressure on Khartoum but nevertheless passing legislation which could be used as a sword of Damocles in case of non-compliance; be vocal on Darfur; put a fair [amount of] money on its humanitarian aspect; and do nothing at the military level. This author was assured that Secretary of State Colin Powell had practically been ordered to use the term 'genocide' during this high profile 9 September 2004 testimony to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations but that he also [had] been advised to add in the same breath that this did not oblige the United States to undertake any sort of drastic action, such as a military intervention.¹⁶⁷

The lack of military intervention is what Sheila Jackson-Lee was protesting in 2006 whereas in 1961 the lack of racially integrated public facilities were being protested by Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, who became one of the first group of Freedom Riders. Raymond Arsenault has written about Robinson's political actions. A later 1961 arrest of Ruby Doris Smith Robinson in Jackson, Mississippi, also shares significant similarities with Sheila Jackson-Lee's arrest in response to the inaction of the Bush administration.

Because of his recent activism in Rock Hill, CORE chose Tom Gaither to scout a geographical bus route from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans that will be traveled by nonviolent activists who will try to integrate racially segregated buses and bus terminals. The planned route traveled in a general southwest direction between Washington and New Orleans through the following cities: Fredericksburg, Richmond, Farmville, Lynchburg, and Danville, Virginia; Greensboro, High Point, Salisbury, and Charlotte, North Carolina; Rock Hill, Winnsboro, Columbia, and Sumter, South Carolina; Augusta, Athens, and Atlanta, Georgia; Anniston, Montgomery, and Birmingham, Alabama; Jackson, Mississippi; and New Orleans, Louisiana. Arsenault writes that this Freedom Ride, named after a phrase "Ride for Freedom" originated by Billie Ames was patterned

after Gandhi's famous march to the sea: "taking advantage of the Southern movement's gathering momentum [during 1960], it would also extend the effort to test compliance with the Constitution into the heart of the deep South."¹⁶⁸ The Freedom Riders traveled in groups. The exact protest strategy of the Freedom Riders, according to Arsenault entailed the following:

each group made sure that one black Freedom Rider sat in a seat normally reserved for whites, that at least one interracial pair of Riders sat in adjoining seats, and that the remaining Riders scattered throughout the bus. One Rider on each bus served as a designated observer and as such remained aloof from the other Riders; by obeying the conventions of segregated travel, he or she ensured that at least one Rider would avoid arrest and be in a position to contact CORE officials [and] arrange bail money for those arrested. Most of the Riders, however, were free to mingle with the other passengers and to discuss the purpose of the Freedom Ride with anyone who would listen. Exercising the constitutional right to sit anywhere on the bus had educational as well as legal implications, and the Riders were encouraged to think of themselves as teachers and role models.¹⁶⁹

James Farmer as a leader of CORE made it his responsibility that these Freedom Riders were fully aware of constitutional law. They were given a course by Carl Rachlin, a then forty two year old New York labor and civil rights lawyer who served as CORE's general counsel. The Freedom Riders were given a course focusing on federal and state laws pertaining to discrimination in interstate transportation; this course told them what to do if they were arrested. The two main pillars of constitutional law that the Freedom Riders used to justify their nonviolence were two important U.S. Supreme Court decisions of *Morgan v. Virginia* and *Boynton v. Virginia*. The *Boynton* decision stated that a Virginia law requiring the segregation of interstate bus passengers was unconstitutional. This decision however did not explicitly address the issue of racially segregated bus terminals. Arsenault writes that up to 1961, there was a growing

realization among civil rights advocates that the decision was a paper tiger because “strict segregation remained the norm on the vast majority of interstate buses.”¹⁷⁰ Another significant and recent nonviolent movement was also limited in its ability to end racially segregated bus terminals: the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Neither the *Morgan* decision, the *Boynton* decision, nor the Montgomery Bus Boycott categorically challenged mandated segregation in bus or train terminals.

A Brief Background and Comparison of the Nonviolence of James Farmer & John Conyers

In his role as U.S. Representative, John Conyers is currently playing the role of Carl Rachlin who taught the Freedom Riders about constitutional law. Like Rachlin, Conyers earned his law degree and practiced law. Unlike all the aforementioned Congressional Black Caucus members, Conyers is the only one with direct military experience. He attained the rank of second lieutenant while serving a year in Korea during the Korean War. After being discharged, he served in the National Guard while he earned his law degree from Wayne State in 1957. He followed in the footsteps of his father when he served as general counsel for the Detroit Trade Union Leadership Council. His expertise in constitutional law as it concerned labor and civil rights was recognized when John F. Kennedy appointed him to the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights in 1963.¹⁷¹ In the twenty first century, Conyers is continuing a surviving legacy of nonviolence that emphasizes the importance of having an understanding of the U.S. Constitution and enforcing its application to all citizens, regardless of skin color.

Executive director of CORE, James Farmer explains his goals in teaching the constitutionality of their nonviolent protest of Freedom Riders: “I conducted an

orientation session to explain the rationale for this adventure and provided an overview of what we were going to do, how we were going to do it, and the most optimistic and pessimistic outcomes possible.”¹⁷² This orientation session prepared the future Freedom Riders to defend their cause verbally, using the U.S. Constitution. Like Conyers, Farmer followed the footsteps of his father before him, using the U.S. Constitution to practice nonviolence. Farmer in 1938 enrolled in Howard University School of Theology where his father had then accepted a position as a professor of Greek and New Testament studies. Raymond Arsenault writes that in theology school, Farmer was inspired by former Florida native and Theology Professor Howard Thurman, who exposed him to Gandhi and other radical versions of the social gospel endorsed by the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), a Methodist pacifist organization. Thurman helped secure for Farmer a part-time secretary position in FOR’s Washington office. Rather than follow the traditional path of becoming ordained as a Methodist minister after graduating from Howard’s theology school, Farmer pursued full-time work with FOR. Farmer resisted the custom of having black Methodist ministers serve only all-black congregations and arrived in FOR’s Chicago regional office ready, as he put it, “to lead an assault of the demons of violence and bigotry.”¹⁷³ This is why in 1941 and 1942 Farmer spearheaded a series of campaigns spreading the FOR gospel of pacifism and nonviolent resistance to social injustice; he also organized study groups of Gandhianism and encouraged students to engage in sit-ins and picketing campaigns. The organization conducting these campaigns eventually became the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and, with Farmer’s insistence, was ultimately independent of FOR.¹⁷⁴

Arsenault writes that the decision of Farmer and CORE to embark on these Freedom Rides in early May signaled that “the time had come to challenge the hypocrisy and complacency of a nation that refused to enforce its own laws and...failed to acknowledge the utter indecency of racial discrimination.”¹⁷⁵

The orientation sessions that Farmer conducted taught Freedom Riders how to challenge parts of a nation that refused to enforce *Boynton v. Virginia* according to the U.S. Supreme Court’s interpretation of the U.S. Constitution. In a similar way, John Conyers’ report entitled *George W. Bush Versus The Constitution*, published by Academy Chicago Press in 2006 has provided readers evidence about the shortcomings of the Bush administration in following the U.S. Constitution. In the foreword to this report, he writes: “I believe our Constitution remains in crisis.”¹⁷⁶ Although this crisis is clearly a dramatically different crisis than the one faced by Freedom Riders in 1961, Conyers expressed a concern about the U.S. Constitution that is similar to those of James Farmer and CORE attorney Carl Rachlin. Conyers writes more specifically that he made the request to publish this report “in the wake of Bush’s failure to respond to a letter submitted by 122 members of Congress, and more than 500,000 Americans in July of 2005, asking him whether the assertions set forth in the so-called Downing Street Memo are accurate.”¹⁷⁷ The Downing Street Memorandum was a collection of classified documents written by senior British officials during the spring and summer of 2002 that discussed the plan to invade Iraq with American counterparts. This memorandum is significant because it appears to document a manipulation of intelligence by the Bush administration in order to justify military invasion of Iraq. This memorandum would prove that the administration abrogated its Constitutional responsibility of guaranteeing

citizens their first amendment rights. This thesis however will focus only on Conyers' appeal to the U.S Constitution arguing against the use of military detention centers, because of their clear similarities with the site of the racially segregated bus terminals. Both Farmer and Conyers call to attention the lack of enforcement of rights believed to be provided by the U.S. Constitution: for Farmer it was the right to sit anywhere in a bus terminal while for Conyers it was the right to prevent torture of foreigners designated as "enemy combatants."

Angela Davis said that "the military detention center as a site of torture and repression does not...displace the domestic supermaximum security prison (which incidentally, is being globally marketed), but rather they both constitute extreme sites where democracy has lost its claims."¹⁷⁸ Conyers is aiming to prove in his report that the use of military detention sites constitutes a violation of the Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which prohibits the use of cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment. Conyers is also proving the misuse of executive power within the military detention sites. Farmer is aiming to prove through his Freedom Rides that the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which guarantees to all citizens equal protection under the law is not being enforced. In both cases, both Conyers and Farmer are protesting "extreme sites where democracy has lost its claims." For Conyers, it is the military detention centers in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, and for Farmer it is the closer space of the racially segregated bus terminal.

The first group of Freedom Riders left Washington, D.C., headed for New Orleans, Louisiana, on May 4, 1961. Despite opposition from the Kennedy administration, Freedom Rides continued during the summer, with at least 1,000 people

participating throughout the South and more than 300 people arrested in Jackson alone.¹⁷⁹ The linchpin of the Freedom Riders' ideological arguments in support of their nonviolent protest was the U.S. Constitution and the recent *Morgan* decision. Two Freedom Riders provide personal testimonies about how they verbally defended their constitutional right to sit anywhere in a bus terminal with no regard to separation by races: John Lewis and Jim Peck. In fact, both these men verbally invoked the constitution in their protest. Their narratives exemplify the strategic evocation of the U.S. Constitution in asserting what is believed to be one's constitutional right. In his memoir *Walking With The Wind*, Lewis provides a gripping account of being attacked by white segregationists in a Rock Hill, South Carolina, bus terminal:

as Al Bigelow and I approached the WHITE waiting room in the Rock Hill Greyhound terminal, I noticed a large number of young white guys hanging around the pinball machines in the lobby... 'Other side, nigger,' one of the two said, stepping in my way as I began to walk through the door. He pointed to a door down the way with a sign that said 'COLORED.' I did not feel nervous at all. I really did not feel afraid. 'I have a right to go in here,' I said, speaking carefully and clearly, 'on the grounds of the Supreme Court decision in the *Boynton* case.' I don't think these guys had ever heard of the *Boynton* case. Not that it would have mattered. 'Shit on that,' one of them said. The next thing I knew, a fist smashed the right side of my head. Then another hit me square in the face. As I fell to the floor I could feel feet kicking me hard in the sides. I could taste blood in my mouth.¹⁸⁰

Lewis's description of his experience in Rock Hill, South Carolina, the same city where the jail-in strategy was exercised, is astoundingly similar to the argument created by the Conyers report. According to the Conyers report, investigations conducted on the conduct of the military by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), have identified numerous incidents of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment in Iraq; these incidents include "punching, slapping, and kicking detainees," which is essentially what happened to John Lewis according to his own testimony.¹⁸¹

A Discussion of Racist Ideologies Opposed to Nonviolence

Over the past forty-five years since the Freedom Riders, the Bush administration is unwittingly exporting the violent torturous nature of mob violence onto those in Iraq that was visited upon the Freedom Riders in 1961. The sites of violence where the Freedom Riders in Anniston and later in Birmingham were abused functioned as a military detention center. During the Freedom Rides, perhaps the most significant site of violence that functioned most like a military detention center was Parchman prison in Mississippi where some arrested Freedom Riders were sent. Arsenault writes about their approach to Parchman:

as the convoy lurched northward, however, at least some of the Riders began to suspect that they were on Highway 49, the road to the Delta and the dreaded Parchman farm. It was a road that thousands of unfortunate Mississippians had taken since the prison's construction in 1904, and very few had survived the experience without suffering lasting physical and emotional scars. Many, of course, did not survive at all. 'Throughout the American South, Parchman Farm is synonymous with punishment and brutality...' historian David Oshinsky observed in 1996, and the farm's gruesome reputation for unfettered violence was, if anything, even more widespread and deserved in 1961 when the Freedom Riders were there...the prospect of scores, and eventually hundreds, of Freedom Riders spending the rest of June and July at Parchman was appealing to [Mississippi Governor Ross] Barnett and many other white Mississippians.¹⁸²

The Conyers report is shedding light on how detention centers or prisons using cruel and inhumane treatment, are being established or supported by the Bush administration. John Conyers explains his efforts in writing the report: "what we are trying to do is get some realignment in the political setup to bring a little more honesty and realism into politics, to make some of the promises begin to have some meaning, and to have the government play the...major role in leading America out of a racist past."¹⁸³ Clearly Conyers' is trying to have the U.S. government, currently represented by the

Bush administration play a role in leading America out of a racist, violent, and unjust past that allowed the Parchman prison to serve as a huge threat meant to stop the Freedom Riders from trying to desegregate Southern bus terminals. Angela Davis has styled the practice of this kind of torture as a manifestation of a new kind of racism that Conyers is trying, with this report, to lead America out of. The ideology behind torturing those in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo is based on a kind of racism that is strikingly similar to the ideology of those who enforced and allowed punishments of the Freedom Riders in the Parchman prison.

The military detention center is purportedly intended to attack the imagined construction of the terrorist, defined not as an individual that protects their own sovereign interests in their self-defense, but an individual who clearly threatens the long term interests of a foreign country, particularly the United States. This mode of thinking is similar to a stereotype that white segregationists adhered to in order to justify their own violent defense of segregation. Segregated bus terminals are purportedly intended to attack the imagined and stereotyped figment of the “communist” who, like the terrorist, is believed to be an individual that is not worthy of constitutional protection, an individual who, according to 1968 presidential candidate George Wallace, would contribute to the “false doctrine of Communistic amalgamation [or race mixing].”¹⁸⁴ Further, it was believed that allowing the “negro” to sit with whites would concede to Communist beliefs of and contribute to the moral decline of the Southern way of life in the United States.

Despite the eventual integration of bus terminals by the end of 1961, the ideological production of the communist has changed from that to the terrorist and John

Conyers' nonviolent resistance in publishing this piece is not only against the practice of torture, but also against American racism and the ideological production of the terrorist.

Lewis writes that after stating his constitutionally legal right to stand in the white section because of the Boynton decision, he was not only punched but kicked. John Conyers has worked toward publishing information about foreign detainees being punched and kicked for being labeled an "enemy combatant" and being accused of having some affiliation to al-Qaeda, a group popularly identified in U.S. media to be a "terrorist" organization. Lewis is not only directly fighting white segregationists, he is fighting the ideological construction of the communist in the minds of many segregationists. Conyers, compared to Lewis, is indirectly fighting the ideological construction of the terrorist in the minds of Bush administration officials. Lewis suffered physical and psychological pain for his fight while Conyers does not. Without Lewis's fight, Conyers might not have been able to take office as a U.S. Representative in 1965. Conversely, without Conyers published report in 2006, an observation comparing torture during the Bush administration and within Parchman prison recognizing Lewis's plight might not be possible. Therefore, the comparison of Lewis and Conyers highlights the need to recognize torture and how it is condoned by U.S. presidential administrations (Kennedy and Bush) during and after the twentieth century.

Conyers' fight is nonetheless worthy of being considered a form of nonviolent resistance against policies of a very violent presidential administration. The ideological construction of the terrorist is not only responsible for the practice of torture, but for the continued military occupation in Iraq and consequent insurgency, according to Anthony Arnone: "the insurgency created by the occupation is being used to explain why the

United States must continue the occupation, and assessments of Iraqi capabilities reflect the racist, colonial assumptions about the inability of the Iraqis to manage their own affairs that are widespread in the military establishment.”¹⁸⁵

Conyers is using this report as an effort to draw America out of the racist past, to end the racist oppression of not only African Americans in the South, but also the racist oppression of Arabs and Persians in the Middle East. Lewis’s personally harrowing experiences were one of many crucial experiences that paved the way for integrated bus terminals and ultimately integrated society. His ideological support was the U.S. Constitution, and the will to, as Arsenault writes, “challenge the hypocrisy and complacency of a nation that refused to enforce its own laws.” Arsenault also writes how fellow white Freedom Rider Jim Peck used the U.S. Constitution to verbally defend the right of Hank Thomas, another black Freedom Rider, to sit in the white section of a racially segregated lunch counter in a bus terminal in Winnsboro, South Carolina. Jim Peck recalls the event in his memoir of the Freedom Ride:

Henry Thomas, a lanky Negro student, and I entered the white lunchroom and sat at the counter. The restaurant owner dashed away from the counter to phone the police. Within two minutes a police officer who was a stereotype for such a role in Hollywood, stepped over and drawled to Thomas, ‘Come with me, boy!’¹⁸⁶

Arsenault writes that at this point, “Peck tried to explain that Thomas had a constitutional right to eat lunch wherever he pleased,” however both Thomas and Peck were arrested.¹⁸⁷

Peck later writes that “local officials apparently concluded that our cases would not hold in view of the Supreme Court’s Boynton decision,” so they were ultimately released.¹⁸⁸

Peck however was immediately rearrested for violating an obscure South Carolina statute that prohibited the importation of untaxed liquor into the state.¹⁸⁹ In the consciences of both John Lewis and James Peck the constitutionality of racially segregated bus terminals

as ordained by the highest court's ruling was the legal and fundamental justification for their protest. However they were confronted with a white segregationist community and ideology that expressed little if no compliance with the recent 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme court decision that declared segregated public schools unconstitutional, and by the following year declared that public schools be desegregated "with all deliberate speed." This was coded language to Southern segregationists for them to integrate at their own pace, if at all. Ronald Walters describes in detail the Southern Manifesto, which defined segregationists' ideology in refusing to comply with the *Brown* and *Boynton* Supreme Court decisions:

'The Southern Manifesto' signed by 90 southern members of Congress in 1956 in opposition to the implementation of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, established a consensus theory of the Constitution that reappeared in similar resolutions drafted and passed by southern legislatures. The manifesto argued that because the education function is not expressly included in the Constitution, it falls under reserved powers which are to be exercised by the states. It contained a principle that is almost universally accepted among Whites across America today...founded on the elemental humanity and common sense, for parents should not be deprived by Government of the right to direct the lives and education of their own children.¹⁹⁰

This resistance to *Brown* in the South is also what allows resistance to *Boynton*. This resistance was supported not only by white vigilantes such as the Ku Klux Klan, it was supported by southern legislators, police officers, and it was also undoubtedly supported by national intelligence agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).¹⁹¹ The practice of torturing foreigners by the U.S. military is also supported by the FBI, who played an indirect yet significant role in what was probably the most memorable stop of the 1961 Freedom Rides: the stop in Anniston, Alabama.

A Comparison of U.S. Justice Departments Allowing Torture

At this stop, the Greyhound bus carrying the Freedom Riders was ransacked and firebombed by Alabama Klansmen. Arsenault writes that the Klansmen “had known about the Freedom Ride since mid-April, thanks to a series of FBI memos forwarded to the Birmingham police department...As the FBI monitored the situation during the last days before their arrival in [Anniston], there were numerous opportunities to warn the riders of the impending violence but FBI agents simply watched and waited as a final series of Klan conclaves sealed the Freedom Riders fate.”¹⁹² Even the executive branch under the Kennedy administration chose to focus attention on John Kennedy’s Cold War posturing with the Soviet Union rather than addressing the safety concerns of the Freedom Riders. Then attorney general Robert Kennedy’s Justice Department was apparently privy to less information than FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover, who did not relay the planning of violence to anyone in the Justice Department. However *Jet* reporter Simeon Booker who accompanied and reported on the Freedom Riders called and warned the Justice Department officials that violence might happen and, to his dismay he was ignored. The Justice Department clearly tried to defuse the situation rather than protect the Freedom Riders’ civil rights. Arsenault writes that they also made it a priority to keep the most sensational aspect of the story out of the press.¹⁹³ This was the priority of Alberto Gonzales, U.S. Attorney General and head of the Justice Department under the second Bush administration: keeping the discussion of torture out of the press despite than the leaked photos of the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. This thesis later argues that

Attorney General Gonzales regards the rights of foreign citizens with a disdain comparable to that of Attorney General Robert Kennedy.

The Conyers' report describes the failure of the current Justice Department, like the failure of the Justice Department during the Freedom Rides, to adequately prosecute those who commit acts of torture and other legal violations by contractors and others within its jurisdiction. According to Conyers' report, "despite evidence of CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] involvement in the deaths of at least four prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Justice Department has charged only one person linked to the CIA with wrongdoing in any of the cases; and that person, David Passaro, was a contractor, not an official CIA officer." This lackluster effort by the current Justice Department to prosecute those who attack or kill detainees is similar to the lackluster effort by Robert Kennedy's Justice Department to prosecute those who attacked Freedom Riders. After the Anniston firebombing, one local Alabama police officer reportedly told the attackers, "Don't worry about no lawsuits. I ain't seen a thing."¹⁹⁴ The Kennedy Justice Department at this time made absolutely no prosecutions. Nick Bryant writes that Robert Kennedy

...refused to publicly condemn the violence or issue any press statements on the crisis. He had apparently cut a private deal with segregationists on Capitol Hill to prevent the rhetoric from reaching a boiling point. As *Business Week* reported later, he had contacted southern lawmakers and urged them to maintain a moderate tone; in exchange, Kennedy promised he would not lend any sign of support for the freedom riders apart from offering them 'the protection of law.'¹⁹⁵

The kind of protection they received however were local police officials who sanctioned and sometimes supported the violent attacks of white segregationist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan.

The Gonzales Justice Department is similar to the Kennedy Justice Department in their willingness to turn a blind eye to infractions on democracy that involve proactive prosecutorial methods that try to uphold a rule of law. The Gonzales Justice Department, like the Kennedy Justice Department, places the safety of abused citizens in the hands of private entities: in Iraq currently it is in the hands of private military contractors that number over one hundred thousand while in Alabama in 1961 it was in the hands of local police and vigilante groups.¹⁹⁶ This similarity underscores the importance of nonviolent resistance in both cases because the nonviolent resistance in both cases is battling a private entity. These private entities in 1961 and 2004 are nonetheless subject to the control of a larger federal government. However the Gonzales Justice Department in cooperation with the Bush administration allow private corporations to execute torture because the same laws and treaties do not govern corporations as they would an arm of the government, as journalist Thom Hartmann writes:

a private corporation is not answerable to We the People. To the contrary, laws and Supreme Court precedents say that private corporations can hide things behind the secrecy of 'corporate personhood,' claiming Fourth, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendment 'human rights' in ways that governments never could. When you combine that lack of oversight with the profit motive, you get situations like the horrendous torture at Abu Ghraib, a process that, according to people who were there, was heavily influenced by the presence of and the orders from 'private contractors.' At least a thirty-strong team of interrogators at the prison for example were employed by CACI International, which is based in Virginia...private contractors told them to come in and do many of the things for which they went to jail: private contractors were in charge of many of the interrogations.¹⁹⁷

This practice of torture and relegating it to the domain of private industry, with no significant oversight, is simply an outgrowth of the practice of torture inflicted on Freedom Riders and other nonviolent resisters during the civil rights movement.

A Comparison of Torture Against Nonviolent Protestors

The international rule of law that dictates the actions of the U.S. military is not the U.S. Constitution but the Geneva Convention which technically prohibits deportation and forcible removal of foreigners, which according to human rights groups is an already active practice of the U.S military in their occupation of Iraq. However a March 19, 2004, U.S. Justice Department memo undermined the Geneva Convention's prohibition against deportation and forcible removal. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales testified in this memo that "there is no evidence that the [Geneva Convention's prohibition] is extended to illegal aliens from occupied territory [from Iraq]...and there is no evidence that international law has ever disapproved of such removals."¹⁹⁸ Here Gonzales is condoning the forcible removal and detention of foreign citizens by asserting that Abu Ghraib detainees are "illegal aliens," a term also popularly used to describe undocumented workers in the United States. However his reference to the mainly Arab detainees in Abu Ghraib as "illegal aliens" is inaccurate because they are not illegal but in fact native to Iraq, as Anthony Arnove confirms:

the Bush administration has returned to its mantra that Iraq is the central front in its battle against al-Qaeda and that the resistance in Iraq is largely foreign in origin. But this is fiction...In a detailed study for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, military analyst Anthony Cordesman found that 'the insurgency seems to remain largely Iraqi and Sunni dominated,' while 'an overwhelming majority of those captured or killed have been Iraqi Sunnis, as well as something like 90-95 percent of those detained.'¹⁹⁹

This negates the fiction of identifying the detained citizens as "illegal aliens." Not only are U.S. military forces invading and occupying Iraq, they are also torturing its citizens in a manner comparable to the torture experienced by many Freedom Riders, most notably in their experience at Parchman Prison. This was the destination for many

Freedom Riders who were arrested in Jackson, Mississippi, who were just one stop away from the final destination of New Orleans. Arsenault writes that at Parchman, Freedom Riders were ordered “to remove all of their clothes [and be] shocked with an electric prod.” Those who did not remove their clothes, had them forcibly ripped off, after which they were thrown into a holding cell where a crowd of curious white guards gawked at them through barred basement windows. Farmer recalled: “we were consumed by embarrassment, we stood for ages—uncomfortable and dehumanized. Our audience cackled with laughter and obscene comments. They had a fixation about genitals, a preoccupation with size.” To John Lewis at Parchman, the shower room evoked “images of Nazi Germany and concentration camps. ‘This was like 1961 in America,’ he later reflected, ‘here we were, treated like animals.’”²⁰⁰ Later in Parchman, Deputy Tyson would order his guards to spray the cell block with a high-pressure fire hose. Arsenault writes:

as the drenched Riders sat in their cells wondering what other indignities Tyson was planning, the cell block windows were opened and exhaust fans were turned on to confirm the message of intimidation. During the long, cold night that followed, there was more shivering and sniffing than singing in the cell block...female Riders had to deal with male guards who could not resist watching them undress and shower with a prison doctor who conducted invasive and unnecessary vaginal examinations. The strong suspicion that the doctor used the same cloth glove for all women he examined added to the feeling of victimization and served as a symbol of prison staff’s contempt for the female Riders...This was Parchman at its worst.²⁰¹

Cynthia Griggs Fleming writes about Ruby Doris Smith Robinson’s experience as one that changed her: “Ruby Doris found the view outside the infirmary window distressing: ‘there were fifty, sixty Negro men in striped uniforms, guarded by a white man on a white horse. It reminded you of slavery.’ While Ruby was in Parchman, she

spent a good deal of her time reflecting on her experiences in the black freedom struggle and on the dimensions of that struggle.”²⁰² Ruby’s comparison of the treatment of Freedom Riders to images of slavery confirms Du Bois’ observation that in order to fully abolish the oppressive situations that slavery created, entirely new democratic institutions would have to be created. However because the end of the first Reconstruction in 1877 disallowed any new democratic institutions and instead prolonged the same kind of oppressive situations such as debt peonage and the convict lease system, there exists the same master-slave dynamic that is most prevalent in the contemporary prison today which Freedom Riders experienced at Parchman, and outgrowths of that dynamic are the military detention centers in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. Angela Davis states that “the prison system continues to carry out this terrible legacy” of oppression that slavery created.

Ruby Doris Smith Robinson’s recollection at Parchman suggests that the treatment of the Freedom Riders in Parchman Prison is a haunting remnant of the oppressive experience of slavery. This treatment is similar to treatment of detainees in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo according to the February 2004 report of the ICRC. Like the Freedom Riders, they were also forced to remove their clothing. The detainees at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo had their nudity made available for public display like the Freedom Riders. In Abu Ghraib they were videotaped and photographed. Here we see the pathological practice of torture used not only on Freedom Riders by domestic prison practices, but also on Iraqi citizens in foreign prison practices. This confirms Angela Davis’ observation that “the prison-industrial complex is a global phenomenon...as horrendous as recent revelations about the treatment of prisoners is not qualitatively

different from what happens in U.S. prisons.”²⁰³ Nor is this treatment of prisoners in Iraq qualitatively different from what has happened to the Freedom Riders in Parchman prisoners, particularly the aspect of the white male gaze on the nude black body. In Abu Ghraib, the nude body is no longer black but Arab but is still captive by the same industry. Arsenault quotes Bill Mahoney, a Nonviolent Group activist from Washington who spent forty days in cell 13 at Parchman, about those who tortured the Freedom Riders in Parchman: “the men who defend segregation...serve the same interests as those who develop ‘war industries[,]...recklessly speculate in other countries, and in general...meticulously exploit masses of people.”²⁰⁴ Mahoney essentially prophesied the function of the Bush administration in relegating the duties of torture to the private corporations or industries that meticulously exploit masses of people by specifically invading, occupying, and torturing the masses of Iraqis. The men who defend segregation are also trained to believe that those detained, be it in Parchman or in Abu Ghraib, are somehow foreigners or people who are not native to the land in which exploitation takes place. Gonzales styled the victims who, according to him, are not protected by the Geneva Convention, as “illegal aliens.”

Freedom Riders Versus the State of Mississippi

White segregationists claimed that Freedom Riders were mainly “outside agitators,” who wanted to disturb otherwise content Negroes in the American South. However, by July of 1961, Arsenault writes about the Jackson (Mississippi) Non-Violent Movement which was a shocking development for many white Mississippians because it completely shattered their assumptions about Freedom Riders mainly coming from the North. On July 7th, “eleven young members of the Jackson Non-Violent Movement

attempted to desegregate the white waiting room.”²⁰⁵ This was one day after Martin Luther King gave an inspirational speech that called for students to fill the jails, the same message that Lawson gave less than a year prior to this date. In his speech, King praised the local heroes arrested during the past two days and proclaimed: “let the Negroes fill the jail houses of Mississippi. We are not agitators and rabble-rousers, but in a true sense the saviors of democracy. We must learn to live together as brothers or die together as fools.”²⁰⁶

SNCC worker James Forman recalls how the Freedom Riders inspired the young high school students near Jackson to nonviolently protest the expulsion of their fellow students Brenda Travis and Ike Lewis who staged a sit-in in a local lunch counter:

that afternoon [of October 31, 1961] more than a hundred students walked out again. This is the statement they issued: ‘we, the Negro youth of Pike county feel that Brenda Travis and Ike Lewis should not be barred for acquiring an education for protesting an injustice. We feel that as members of Burglund High School they have fought this battle for us. To prove that we appreciate their having done this, we will suffer with them any punishment they have to take. In the schools we are taught democracy, but the rights offered by democracy have been denied...by our oppressors; we have not had a balanced school system; we have not had an opportunity to participate in any of the branches of our local, state, and federal government; however, we are children of God, who makes the sun shine on the just and unjust. So, we petition all our fellowmen to love rather than hate, to build rather than tear down, to bind our nation with love and justice with regard to race, color, or creed.’²⁰⁷

Now that local blacks became brave enough to join the Freedom Rider movement, Mississippi’s insistence on arresting any Freedom Riders created a war of attrition, where the state of Mississippi’s ability to accommodate wave after wave of Freedom Riders was at war against the Freedom Riders’ movement’s capacity to sustain them financially; by the end of July, CORE had already spent \$138,500 on the Freedom Rides and there was no end in sight to counter the spiraling costs of CORE’s fighting for freedom in the deep

South. Four days after proof that the Freedom Rider movement in Jackson was not strictly from the North, but in fact a growing grassroots effort, the Kennedy Justice Department joined an existing NAACP suit seeking a permanent injunction barring the city of Jackson and its police from arresting Freedom Riders. Arsenault writes that this move was the first time that the Justice Department was sanctioning an all out assault on segregated transit laws. In addition, they petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to issue a ban on segregated travel and segregated bus terminals. The ICC announced that it would begin hearings on the Freedom Rider issue on August 15th. However the state of Mississippi continued their war of attrition against the Freedom Riders and CORE by requiring a five hundred dollar bond for each defendant and by dragging the court cases of Freedom Riders out as long as possible in an effort to deplete their funds.

By mid September 1961, Thurgood Marshall helped CORE with a \$300,000 grant to CORE from the NAACP to help finance the Freedom Rider movement, and on September 21, 1961, the ICC issued a unanimous ruling prohibiting all racial segregation in interstate bus transit. The ICC ruling required that all interstate buses would be required to display a certificate that read: “seating aboard this vehicle is without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin, by order of the Interstate Commerce Commission.” However Arsenault writes that compliance with the ICC order was “haphazard at best and in many Mississippi communities anyone asserting the constitutional right to equal access to transit facilities risked arrest for breach of peace.”²⁰⁸ Still, all of the efforts of the Freedom Riders were cumulative in their ability to persuade the Kennedy administration to ultimately petition the Interstate Commerce Commission and gradually

by the end of 1961 acquire the ban against all segregated interstate travel. The Freedom Riders confirmed the power of public protest, signaling the emergence of a new democratic ethos.²⁰⁹

A Comparison of Nonviolent Strategies by Conyers and the Freedom Riders

John Conyers in his role as U.S. Representative and his initiative to publish *George W. Bush Versus the U.S. Constitution*, has fulfilled several basic steps of Gene Sharp's framework for nonviolent action: publicity of the grievances and making efforts at negotiation. His book detailing the constitutional infractions of the Bush administration and the Justice Department serves as publicity of the grievances or, as the Conyers report describes it, the infractions of the U.S. Constitution. Conyers himself has also made significant effort in negotiating, by requesting information about the Downing Street Minutes before issuing his report. Conyers is continuing a legacy of nonviolent resistance that is markedly different and much less direct than the kind of nonviolent resistance that the Freedom Riders engaged; however it is nonetheless significant in resisting the policies of a department and administration that seeks to continue oppressive remnants of slavery. What made the Freedom Riders successful in eventually acquiring the ICC order is: a combination of a grassroots willingness to protest, financial support for that protest, and a presidential administration willing to petition and lobby the very conservative members of the ICC. What makes John Conyers thus far unsuccessful is a substantial lack of two of these factors. Today, to protest the practice of torture at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, there is not enough of a grassroots willingness to protest this injustice, perhaps because it is taking place in a different country, but also because the lack of cooperation with a presidential administration to ultimately make a concerted

commitment to end the practice of torture that is only fueling a stronger ideological resistance against this racism.

The 1961 and 1962 Albany Movement and Lessons From the Messiah Complex

As the Freedom Rider movement of 1961 accomplished its goal of the Interstate Commerce Commission's ban on segregated bus terminals, a new grassroots movement was getting underway in southwest Georgia: the Albany (Georgia) Movement. However compared to Atlanta and Jackson, the institutionalized segregation in Albany would prove to be very difficult to overcome. James Forman describes its history:

the area around Albany had at one time been plantation country, with Albany its slave trading center. Du Bois describes in *The Souls of Black Folk* how it was then: 'for a radius of hundred miles about Albany stretched a great fertile land, luxuriant with forests of pine, oak, ash, hickory, and poplar, hot with the sun and damp with the rich black swamp; and here the cornerstone of Cotton Kingdom was laid.'²¹⁰

Even after the Freedom Riders and the upcoming ICC order banning segregation in interstate travel, Albany was still and would continue to be a rigidly segregated city. Charles Sherrod and Cordell Reagon were dispatched as SNCC field secretaries to try and build a local movement in Albany, then a city of about 60,000 people with blacks making up about forty percent of the population. Their ultimate aim was to build a campaign to promote voter registration. However, after following the pulse of the people in Albany, Sherrod and Reagon found themselves guiding a direct action protest, and found that there was little difference between the two, as Ella Baker had previously advised the group.²¹¹ The beginnings of this movement started with a sit-in in a racially segregated Albany bus terminal on November 1, 1961. The results of this sit-in were unusual in that the protestors planned to leave, however, "from that moment on,

segregation was dead,” Sherrod conveyed to Carson.²¹² After this planned withdrawal, a coalition of SNCC, the NAACP, the ministerial alliances, and the Negro Voters League, formed the Albany Movement. According to Aldon Morris, the Albany Movement worked toward the lofty goal of ending “all forms of racial domination in Albany.”²¹³ Demonstrations were planned against bus terminals, libraries, bowling alleys, restaurants, swimming pools, as well as other public facilities.

Following the plan of demonstrations, members of the NAACP Youth Council were arrested by Albany Police Chief Laurie Pritchett as they attempted to use the whites only dining room at the Trailways bus station. These arrests only galvanized the community, which was becoming unified by the power of singing, due to the work of Bernice Johnson. Two days later on November 27th, a mass rally took place at the trial of the NAACP Youth Council students, which resulted in two students, Bertha Gober and Blanton Hall, being expelled from Albany State College. After SNCC member Charles Jones led demonstrators on a march, he got four hundred people to sign a petition demanding the reinstatement of the students. On Sunday, December 10th, ten activists arrived in Albany via another later Freedom Ride, one of the riders was James Forman who writes:

arriving in Albany, where about three hundred blacks were at the station to meet us, we went into the white waiting room and the police closed the doors behind us. Chief Laurie Pritchett then moved in and arrested eight of our group, although by that time some of us were no longer in the waiting room but just standing outside the station...Pritchett appeared to be following the same policy used by the Jackson, Mississippi, police toward the Freedom Riders of 1961: Arrest quickly, quietly, and imprison.²¹⁴

Michael Nojeim writes that Albany Police Chief Pritchett knew that if he responded to the nonviolent protestors using violence and police brutality, he would

instigate a national crisis that would bring national media and national government attention to Albany, which is the last thing the whites in Albany wanted. So Pritchett and his police force behaved respectfully without violently attacking them.²¹⁵ Despite this tactical move by Pritchett, the principles of group-centered leadership taught by Sherrod, Reagon and Charles Jones had already spread among the people in Albany, to the extent that hundreds of black Albany residents joined protest marches and were willing to face arrest and jail time. Barbara Ransby writes that Ella Baker's concept of progressive leadership helped people help themselves and allowed grassroots people to determine their own future. This is apparently the kind of progressive leadership that Charles Sherrod, Cordell Reagon, Bernice Johnson, and Charles Jones brought to Albany, Georgia; a kind of leadership based on the themes of participatory democracy taught by Ella Baker. It was this kind of leadership that was undoubtedly responsible for the large numbers of Albany residents that were willing to be arrested: the ability to appeal to the grassroots level of the community, the minimizing of a hierarchy, and the call for direct action. Sherrod describes the journey to get Albany to the point where it had hundreds of black citizens willing to be jailed:

The population of Albany was, in the first days of our stay here very apprehensive. The first obstacle to remove was the mental block in the minds of those who wanted to move but were unable for fear that we were not who we said we were. But when people began to hear us in churches, social meetings, on the streets, in the pool halls, lunchrooms, nightclubs, and other places where people gather, they began to open up a bit. We would tell them of how it feels to be in prison, what it means to be behind bars, in jail for the cause. We explained to them that we had stopped school because we felt compelled to do so since so many of us were in chains. We explained further that there were worse chains than jail and prison. We referred to the system that imprisons men's minds and robs them of creativity...The people knew such evils existed but when we pointed them out time and time again and emphasized the need for concerted action against them, the people began to think. At this point, we

started to illustrate what had happened in Montgomery, Macon, Nashville, Charlotte, Atlanta, Savannah, Richmond, Petersburg, and many other cities where people came together and protested against an evil system.²¹⁶

This kind of organizing by Charles Sherrod and Cordell Reagon explains why on December 14th in Albany over five hundred blacks total were arrested. The Albany Movement was at this point in full force. The willingness of so many Albany residents to get arrested, after their initial resistance is a testament not only to the organizing strategies of Sherrod and Reagon; it is also a testament to the guidance of Ella Baker and James Lawson.

In November of 1961, the Albany Movement appointed osteopathic doctor William Anderson as president, immediately distinguishing itself from SNCC in its insistence on a traditional hierarchy that negates the ideals taught by Ella Baker of minimizing hierarchy with a single leader who delegates most of the responsibility. His role as president would later prove to contribute to the overall failure of the Albany Movement. On the same day that so many blacks were arrested, Anderson appealed to Dr. King and the SCLC for help and asked him to come to Albany. King came to Albany, led a prayer march to City Hall and was arrested along with more than two hundred fifty demonstrators. King's arrival in Albany was strongly resented by James Forman who said:

I opposed the move, pointing out that it was important to keep the Albany Movement a people's movement—to keep the focus on the ordinary people involved in it, especially the unusual number of adults—and that presence of Dr. King would detract from, rather than intensify this focus. A strong people's movement was in progress, the people were feeling their own strength grow. *I knew how much harm could be done by interjecting the Messiah complex—people would feel that only a particular individual could save them and would not move on their own to fight racism and exploitation [italic emphasis added].*²¹⁷

Ransby writes that Ella Baker saw King's highly publicized visit to Albany as undermining local people's confidence and autonomy and lessening the visibility of the Albany Movement's own spokespersons.²¹⁸ The mass jail-in of hundreds of black Albany residents is exactly the kind of personal sacrifice that James Lawson called on SNCC to make at the beginning of 1961. However the success of this jail-in was based on a precarious balance of negotiations between the Albany Movement plus King and the City Commission who actively resisted the Albany Movement's goals of racial integration.

One significant factor led to what was the ultimate failure of the Albany Movement to achieve its goals: the presence of King. It upset the balance of negotiations and made the City Commission, in Adam Fairclough's words, more "intransigent" than pliable to the Movement's requests. After King arrived, Anderson apparently gained more confidence and hastily issued an ultimatum to the City Commission. This upset the City Commission, and as a result of it, Albany mayor Asa Kelley "fired off a curt rejoinder in which he accused Anderson of bad faith and broke off negotiations."²¹⁹ Later, both King, and Ralph Abernathy endorsed a stale and fickle "settlement" where the City Commission allegedly promised to comply with the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Adam Fairclough writes that both King and Abernathy posted bond and left jail after this "settlement" because they had to get Anderson out of the Albany jail since he was on the verge of a mental breakdown.²²⁰ However, as Clayborne Carson writes, "city officials stalled on implementing the concessions they had granted and refused to seek desegregation of the city bus service, which became the target of a black boycott early in

1962. SNCC workers continued to use direct action tactics in attempts to revive the movement [later in 1962 as well], but these protests received little attention [mainly because] the momentum that had developed during December [of 1961] dissipated rapidly.”²²¹ This confirms James Forman’s initial concern about the effect of the “messiah complex” and its effects on Dr. Anderson, who seemed to depend more on King than on the effects of the mass jail-in to fulfill their goals in the best way. In this case, the messiah was easily picked off and became a disruption to accomplishing Albany’s goal. Ultimately, this was King’s ultimate function in Albany.

When King was jailed in Albany, editor of the staunchly segregationist paper *Albany Herald*, James H. Gray, who had a longtime friendship with the Kennedy family, addressed southwest Georgia on his television channel. He accused King of being motivated by “the acquisition of a buck,” and, as Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff wrote, he later called both Asa Kelley and Police Chief Laurie Pritchett to insist that they negotiate King’s release. King’s presence became not only a publicity magnet for the cause, but also an opportunity for the Albany City Commission, including Gray, to fully exercise the power of their white racism. This concern is confirmed again when King and Abernathy returned to Albany for their sentencing. They were jailed a second time in Albany in 1962, and were ultimately bailed out with payment from a mysterious donor. Historian Nick Bryant solves this mystery, writing:

B.C. Gardner, a senior partner in [Asa] Kelley’s law firm, set off on a flight to Washington where he met with Robert Kennedy. Both agreed that King’s continued incarceration did not serve the administration’s interest or those of Albany politicians. But how to secure his release? As Gardner flew back to Georgia, a plan took shape in his mind. Secretly, the Albany City Commission could pay King and Abernathy’s fines and then spread a cover story about how a mysterious donor had proffered the funds...on Thursday morning Gardner handed over \$356 in fines to a

sergeant on the duty desk at the Albany jailhouse, and a short while later King and Abernathy were told to leave. When Police Chief Pritchett refused to reveal the donor's identity, King protested—putting himself in the peculiar position of arguing for his right to remain in jail.²²²

Although this position might popularly be seen as peculiar, staying in jail was the endorsed position of SNCC and the position which could have potentially got the Albany Movement closer to fulfilling its goals. However because King left the jail house for reasons not exactly related to himself personally, the ultimate direction and goal of the Albany Movement saw a fickle settlement and came short of its goal. Certainly if Anderson had not depended on the role of the messiah within a sort of hierarchy that relegated power to those who gave the most inspirational speechmaking, the Albany Movement might have ended quite differently. King's bail out in both cases disobeyed Lawson's exhortation at the October 1960 conference to remain in jail and protest the racist society instead of accepting bail. King's bail out also weakened his own claim that nonviolent resisters have transformed jails and prisons from dungeons of shame to havens of freedom and justice because the racial segregation in Albany both before and after King's arrests remained unchanged. King's presence did not fulfill the goals of the Albany Movement which were to end racial segregation. However Michael Nojeim presents the ethical dilemma King faced,

King was the only person who could raise money for the movement [through his speaking engagements]. But the longer King remained in jail, the less money he could raise; after some difficult soul searching, King posted bond and left jail to go on a speaking tour. This opened him up to attacks of hypocrisy. He later admitted that it was a tactical error for him to accept bail and leave jail during the Montgomery Bus Boycott because if he had stayed in prison, it would have dramatized and deepened out movement.²²³

The Albany Movement teaches an important lesson about how the dangers of the “messiah complex” can undermine, via leader-centered publicity, a grassroots movement.

The most important lesson the Albany Movement teaches us today is not to depend on any individual leader for social change, but to rely on changes in the way that Charles Sherrod and Cordell Reagon were organizing changes: through the grassroots community.

A Brief Background of Charles Rangel and Sheila Jackson-Lee

Use of the jail-in is a strategy that few CBC members have used in order to create social change in a similar way that Charles Sherrod and Cordell Reagon were trying to create social change and inspire the grassroots sector of the black community. Within the twenty-first century, U.S. Representative Charles Rangel has used it to call attention to the lack of punitive actions against the Sudanese government for their allowance of atrocities in the genocidal killings taking place in the Darfur region of the Sudan. The personal and political backgrounds of Charles Rangel indicate a clear devotion to attack social injustice in a nonviolent way. Like Conyers, Rangel served in the Korean War. However Rangel was wounded while on active duty and later earned the prestigious Purple Heart. After his military service, in 1960 Rangel earned his law degree like Conyers. Within the sixties, Rangel became legal counsel to the Speaker of the New York State Assembly and began to learn the art of negotiating Democratic and Republican politics. In his memoir, he writes that “during those heady early sixties when I first became a lawyer, racism had positioned an amazing cadre of brilliant black legal and political minds for takeoff on the Harlem and national scene, and I had put myself into position to benefit from it.”²²⁴ Rangel writes in his memoir that New York State Assemblyman Percy Sutton had an invaluable influence on his political philosophy. Rangel later earned a seat in the New York State Assembly in 1967 and was elected to

the U.S House in 1972. Rangel continues to fight the racism he refers to in his memoir by engaging in nonviolent action, particularly by deliberately going to jail in order to call attention to the lack of action against the Sudanese government. Rangel's jail in is one form of nonviolent action that is trying to fight the kind of racism that continues from the 1960s.

Over twenty years since Rangel's election to the U.S. House in 1972, U.S. Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee was elected to the U.S. House in 1995 and continues a pattern of jailing-in to bring attention to international crises. Like Rangel indicated in his memoir, Jackson-Lee also recognized the existence of white racism before becoming a U.S. Representative and resisted it in a nonviolent way. She recalls growing up in Queens, New York:

I had a consistent roof over my head, my mother worked everyday and my father was in there battling, but he was just a product of what happened to black men in the forties and fifties. Job opportunities were not available. He was a talented artist and you don't really find your niche in that unless you are able to get on with some Madison Avenue company...I got to Yale on scholarship, I sure didn't get there by my parents paying for it...I had no recollection of any college interviewer interviewing me because no counselor referred them to me. And in the twelfth grade, I actually had no college to go to. I had not been advised or counseled, I was left to the wind, and I had been in honors classes. That was clearly racism in New York, in the North...[As a U.S. Representative], I decided early on that representation was representation. My constituents wanted me here to represent them on their issues because they could not be here.²²⁵

In getting arrested in front of the Sudanese embassy, Jackson-Lee might not have only been representing her congressional constituents in Houston, she might have also been representing the thousands of Sudanese whose lives were threatened if not destroyed by the ongoing genocide in the Sudan. In saying "they could not be here," "they" clearly means not only Jackson-Lee's constituents in Houston but also those in the Sudan.

Jackson-Lee is using the jail-in strategy not only to call national attention to international crisis, she is expanding her constituency across national borders.

A Comparison of Jail-In Strategies by King, Rangel, Jackson-Lee, and Dellums

Often times these social movements such as the Albany Movement or the Montgomery Bus Boycott can begin with a simple arrest. On Monday, July 12, 2004, Charles Rangel was arrested outside of the Sudanese Embassy in Washington, DC, to protest the Sudanese government's role in the genocide in the Sudan, most notably those in the Darfur region. Although this received scant media attention, this is yet another significant act of nonviolence because in accordance with King's definition, Rangel attempts to appeal to the conscience of the Sudanese government of course, and also to the greater American public who hears about his arrest. Also in accordance with King's definition of nonviolence Rangel "takes direct action without waiting for other agencies to act." He said: "I wanted to help bring attention to an outrageous situation...and I am thoroughly convinced if the voices of good Americans are around our great country [care, then they] would send a signal to those terrorists in Sudan to stop this terrible plundering of people."²²⁶ His nonviolence is similar to another act of nonviolence by King himself on July 10, 1962, because both acts of nonviolence show similar surface approaches to the "jail, no bail" principle encouraged by SNCC. However, in both cases, the protestors do not remain in jail to call attention to the unjust societal conditions. Rangel's act of nonviolence is significantly different from that of King in that King was invited to Albany to protest racial segregation whereas Rangel took his own personal initiative to

protest the genocide in the Sudan, stating that he wanted to “help bring attention to an outrageous attention.” King writes that in Albany:

discrimination of all kinds had been simultaneously brought under our sights: school segregation, denial of voting rights, segregation in parks, libraries, restaurants, and buses...The Negroes of Albany suffered in quiet silence. The throbbing pain of segregation could be felt but not seen. It scarred Negroes in every experience of their lives. They lived in segregation; they ate in segregation; they learned in segregation; they prayed, and rode and worked and died in segregation. And in silence. A corroding loss of self-respect rusted their moral fiber. Their discontent was turned inward on themselves. But an end came with the beginning of protest.²²⁷

This more extreme form of discrimination exists in the Sudan where groups of people are killed in order to displace them from the Darfur region. While one form of discrimination is meant to instill a feeling of inferiority in its victims, the other form of discrimination is meant to exterminate their lives. On July 10, 1962, King was arrested and jailed for refusing to pay a fine on charges of “disturbing the peace” for a December 1961 demonstration. King’s 1962 arrest in Albany and Rangel’s 2004 arrest in Washington are similar in two important ways: each is part of a concerted nonviolent strategy and each is done to specifically attract attention to the plight of a disenfranchised or dispossessed people. However in both cases, both activists bail themselves out and leave jail to the detriment of the greater cause they fought for. Rangel did not have the support of over five hundred people imprisoned with him in the jail, however King did. King did not have the financial status of a U.S. Representative while Rangel did. This comparison of Rangel and King’s arrests shows the similar ways that nonviolent resistance is carried out through the jail-in strategy and supports the argument that select Congressional Black Caucus members such as Rangel continue the work of nonviolent resistance in their own way.

Certainly King tried to prolong his stay to bring national attention to the societal crisis at hand. After being arrested for leading a protest in Albany, King says in his autobiography: “We gradually concluded that we had no alternative but to serve the time if we were sentenced...Ralph [Abernathy] and I immediately notified the court that we could not in all good conscience pay the fine, and thereby chose to serve the time.”²²⁸ However his expressed reason for leaving the Albany jail and not staying was Dr. Anderson’s near nervous breakdown. The implementation of this strategy of “jail, no bail” is certainly analogous to Rangel’s strategy of protesting a country’s genocide by blocking the door of their embassy in the United States. This nonviolent protest of the “door block” strategy at a nation’s embassy in Washington, D.C., is the continuation of a long line of nonviolent protest in the Congressional Black Caucus spearheaded by the work of former U.S. Representative Charles Diggs who encouraged other members to not only call on sanctions on the South African government, but to bolster their legislative efforts with “extra-institutional behavior,” as Alvin Tillery writes.²²⁹ Charles Rangel writes that “Diggs became my first mentor in Congress...he headed the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, and spoke early and often against South African apartheid like no other member.”²³⁰ Another Congressman who engaged in significant “extra-institutional behavior” is Ronald Dellums who sponsored significant legislation that was the foundation of ending apartheid. Dellums writes in his memoir, *Lying Down With The Lions*:

It was clear that Nixon was not going to act, however, so we [John Conyers and Ronald Dellums] would have to proceed legislatively. The research and legislation-drafting tasks fell to him [Conyers]. By February of 1972 we had introduced a disinvestment resolution for consideration by the House. Committed from the first meeting, Conyers was an original co-sponsor. (It would be more than a decade before the Congress was

prepared to come to grips with ending U.S. complicity in the perpetuation of the [South African] apartheid regime)...He [former U.S. Congressman Walter Fauntroy] told me to meet him on Capitol Hill, so I put on my suit and headed across town to my office. He explained what the plan was, although I was pretty familiar with the technique they were employing. We got in the car and headed across the mall and up Massachusetts Avenue to the South African embassy. Three of us were going to be acting together: Mark Stepp from the United Automobile Workers Union, D.C. council member Hilda Mason, and me. When we arrived at the embassy, students, labor union members, clergy and other activists were picketing. A police line had been set up that established the perimeter for the protest. At a certain point, Robinson and Fauntroy told the three of us that it was time to act. Linking arms, we walked past the police barriers and toward the embassy entrance. We rang the bell and sought admission. As we expected, the embassy personnel denied our request and asked that we leave the property. We refused, stood our ground, and started to sing the spiritual that had become the civil rights movement's international anthem: 'We Shall Overcome.' Since we had now violated the law by refusing to leave embassy property, the officer in charge of the police detail issued us a warning that we should disperse. Of course we continued to sing. The officer dutifully gave us a second warning, which included the admonition that we would be arrested if we refused to leave after a third notice. We remained on the embassy grounds, arms linked, singing our anthem. Upon our third refusal to move, we were escorted away from the door, patted down, handcuffed, placed in police cruisers, and driven to jail.²³¹

Dellums' protest, along with the 1987 Rangel Amendment, was responsible for the eventual toppling of apartheid in South Africa. The amendment articulated several economic sanctions: "[it] disallowed a tax break for U.S. firms doing business with apartheid in South Africa: the measure increased the tax rate on profits made in South Africa from 58 percent to 72 percent, a 24 percent hike that truly made a difference...Mobil Corporation, the largest U.S. investor in South Africa, had long resisted pressure that caused some 170 American multinational firms to divest their South African holdings between 1985 and 1989. But in April 1989, citing the new bottom line impact of my amendment, Mobil finally withdrew."²³²

King's arrest, Dellums' arrest, and Rangel's arrest each deliberately drew attention to the plight of a disenfranchised or dispossessed people, respectively: for King it was then in Albany, for Dellums it was in South Africa and for Rangel it was in the Sudan. In his autobiography about this 1962 Albany arrest, King writes:

we chose to serve our time because we feel so deeply about the plight of more than seven hundred others who have yet to be tried. The fine and appeal for this number of people would make the cost astronomical. We have experienced the racist tactics of attempting to bankrupt the movement in the South through excessive bail and extended court fights. The time has now come when we must practice civil disobedience in a true sense or delay our freedom thrust for long years.²³³

The decision to remain in jail rather than pay the fine clearly indicates that King was going along with a strategy of trying to fill the jails and attract press coverage in order to attract as much public attention and appeal to the conscience of those who condoned segregation in Albany. Charles Rangel continues King's nonviolence by calling his "door-block" an act of civil disobedience. Rangel writes: "my act of civil disobedience in blocking the doors of the embassy was to make the point that sanctions and travel restrictions will not alleviate the crisis; we need to get an international peacekeeping force on the ground to save lives immediately."²³⁴ Sheila Jackson-Lee recently also continued this surviving legacy when she nonviolently acted in the "door-block" strategy and said that "in a civil disobedience manner, it was important to make an international statement about this inhumanity."²³⁵ From King to Charles Rangel to Sheila Jackson-Lee, all these nonviolent actors have tried to "appeal to the conscience of the great decent [conservative movement] who through blindness, fear, pride, or irrationality, have allowed their consciences to sleep." This is the surviving legacy. The

most important lesson that the Albany Movement teaches about the fight to end the genocide in Darfur is that a greater number of people willing to go to jail must be present.

The 1963 Project C Campaign in Birmingham and the Lessons From Concentrating Direct Action

The Project C campaign has important lessons to teach about the nature of nonviolent resistance that exists within the past five years and how it can continue and be utilized even more efficiently. After the Albany Movement, the Project C campaign in Birmingham proved successful because they focused on goals that demanded an end to the employment discrimination that plagued Birmingham, even after the diligent boycott in 1956. King writes: “the fact remained that in Birmingham, early in 1963, no places of public accommodation were integrated except the bus station, the train station, and the airport...In Birmingham, you would be living in a community where the white man’s long lived tyranny had cowed your people, led them to abandon hope, and developed in them a false sense of inferiority.”²³⁶ Along with Fred Shuttlesworth’s Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR), the Project C (C stood for confrontation) campaign chose to focus on the merchants of Birmingham. They planned to sit-in those establishments that actively discriminated against blacks. Some two hundred and fifty people had volunteered to participate in the initial demonstrations and pledged to remain in jail at least five days. King writes:

by the end of the first three days of lunch counter sit-ins, there had been thirty-five arrests. On Saturday, 6 April we began the next stage of our march with a march on city hall. When they reached a point, three blocks from their goal, where Bull Connor’s officers loomed in their path, they stood silently by as their leaders politely but firmly refused to obey Connor’s orders to disperse. They were escorted with amazing politeness into the paddy wagons, and they allowed themselves to be led without resisting, singing freedom songs on the way to jail. From then on, the

daily demonstrations grew stronger. Our boycott of the downtown merchants was proving amazingly effective...Ten days after the demonstrations began, between four and five hundred people had gone to jail; some had been released on bail, but about three hundred remained...by the fifties and by the hundreds, these youngsters attended mass meetings and training sessions...looking back, it is clear that the introduction of Birmingham's children into the campaign was one of the wisest moves we made...by the end of April, the attitude of the national press had changed considerably...and when the Birmingham youngsters joined the march in numbers, an historic thing happened. For the first time in the civil rights movement, we were able to put into effect the Gandhian principle: Fill up the jails. At the height of the campaign, by conservative estimates, there were 2500 demonstrators in jail at one time, a large proportion of them young people....Burke Marshall informed us that representatives from the business and industrial community wanted to meet with the movement leaders immediately to work out a settlement. After talking with these men for about three hours, we became convinced that they were negotiating in good faith. On the basis of this we called a twenty-four hour truce on Wednesday morning.²³⁷

What the Birmingham Project C had which the Albany Movement lacked was a higher number of committed young people. Both these movements successfully employed the jail in strategy, still used by Congressional Black Caucus member Charles Rangel and Sheila Jackson-Lee within the past five years. One significant difference between the ability to mobilize now and then is the willpower to protest among the young people. The most important lesson the success of the Project C campaign teaches is making goals of any nonviolent protest very specific and not too broad based. King writes in *Why We Can't Wait* that one of the principal mistakes of the Albany Movement was their scattering their efforts too widely:

We concluded that in hardcore communities a more effective battle could be waged if it was concentrated against one aspect of the evil and intricate system of segregation. We decided therefore, to center the Birmingham struggle on the business community, for we knew that the Negro population had sufficient buying power...²³⁸

This decision to focus on the business community proved to be successful and probably resulted in the success of the Project C campaign unlike the Albany Movement.

The Project C was not weakened by many of its leaders yielding to the messiah complex the way the Albany Movement was. The Project C campaign was successful because it had a specific goal to concentrate on one aspect of segregation whereas the Albany Movement's goals were too broad and numerous to be accomplished.

Chapter Six: A Discussion of Examined Comparisons

Background of Sharp's Definition of Nonviolence

This chapter is devoted to discussing the combined findings from the previous four chapters and it ultimately aims to argue that the similarities made between those who worked in the modern civil rights movement and those within the CBC illustrates that specific CBC members have engaged in resistance to the policies of the Bush administration and that their acts of resistance are significant acts of nonviolent protest. This chapter will discuss each step of Gene Sharp's nine-step framework of nonviolence, and discuss how each of the pointed similarities conforms to this framework. The discussion of Sharp's framework is divided into two main parts, persuasion and protest. This two-part structure is binary and was identified during a discussion with a significant mentor to many students during the 1960 student sit-in movement: James Lawson. In a personal interview with James Lawson, when I asked him whether the activism of Congressional Black Caucus members such as Barbara Lee in voting against the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan was comparable to the activist strategies of the 1960s, he replied affirmatively and mentioned other notable examples of nonviolent resistance by African Americans that have been overlooked:

The first category of nonviolent techniques that Eugene Sharp has classified is called 'persuasion and protest' and there are some fifty odd techniques that are classified. Gandhi would have added the word 'agitation.' That is supposed to be what politics tries to do on a daily basis. Persuade, enlighten, investigate, and demonstrate. But even in the sixties, Thurgood Marshall did not see legal action as a form of nonviolent action. I did and taught that. Legal action, the agitation action,

persuasion, the letters, the phone calls, button hole-ing people to try to talk to them about what the issues [are], all of that, that's the initial stages of the nonviolent method. The nonviolent approach has a two fold sort of a thing. On the one side, you see the sin of evil of violence in speech, in philosophy, in war, and violence of themselves, physical. So you say no to the violence, you say no to war. Then the second half of nonviolence is to try to say yes to doing justice, doing good; devising imaginative ways to handle conflict without anger or fear.²³⁹

This method of nonviolence outlined by Lawson consists of two steps: persuasion followed by direct action. This binary method of nonviolent practice is also reiterated by Martin Luther King in his 1962 article: “we will take direct action against injustice without waiting for other agencies to act...We will try to persuade with our words—but if our words fail we will try to persuade with our acts.” Events or historical incidents are identified as nonviolent according to a framework for nonviolent action outlined by Gene Sharp in his book entitled *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. Sharp's framework for nonviolence is established in nine basic steps. These nine steps are: investigation of alleged grievances, a formulation of desired changes, publicity of the grievances, efforts at negotiation, a clarification of minimum demands, concentrating direct action on the weakest points in the opponent's case, publicity of developing issues by the nonviolent group, the pursuance of different kinds of direct action, and finally issuing an ultimatum. These nine basic steps are outlined in the ninth chapter of *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* entitled “Laying the Groundwork for Nonviolent Action.” The first five steps of Sharp's framework are devoted to persuading with words while the last four steps of Sharp's framework are devoted to persuading with actions. The forthcoming discussion of this framework aims to affirm the existence of a surviving legacy of nonviolence among CBC members.

Fulfilling the Persuasion Phase of Sharp's Framework

The first step of Sharp's framework of nonviolence is the investigation of alleged grievances. This investigation is something that each and every CBC member has continued in resisting the neoconservative policies of the Bush administration. Barbara Lee's main grievance was against the military deployment of troops into Afghanistan and Iraq. Her suspicions about opposing the military invasion into Iraq and Afghanistan have been largely confirmed according to the increasing wealth gaps that have accumulated during the Iraq invasion. These wealth gaps only exacerbated the issues of race and class oppression that the modern civil rights movement aimed to end. She stated that "we are pumping billions into public works projects in Iraq, while the infrastructure in our towns...are crumbling...When social service programs are cut to balance the budget and pay for war, the African American community is disproportionately affected."²⁴⁰ This step of investigating alleged grievances is also seen in the work of Chaka Fattah who demanded an investigation of Edison Schools' management of Philadelphia public schools; Fattah does not significantly engage in further nonviolent action until a formal investigation of Edison schools is completed. Maxine Waters also investigated alleged grievances when she took the time to organize the Iraq Book Fair. Like Lee, her alleged grievance is not just the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, but the military occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. More than Lee and Fattah, Waters is making a priority of publicizing the investigation of alleged grievances when she organizes a book fair that she says was meant "to help members of Congress and the American people understand the many issues that surround the war." John Conyers has also shown alleged grievances to be true in the extensive documentary research undertaken to prepare his

publication of *George W. Bush Versus the Constitution* where he documents the numerous public statements by members of the Bush administration that prove their infraction of the Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. There is less evidence that both Sheila Jackson-Lee and Charles Rangel have followed the first step of investigating alleged grievances, however their attempts to bring attention to the humanitarian crisis in the Sudan suggests that they investigated their grievance about the Bush administration's inaction towards the crisis.

The second basic step of Sharp's framework of nonviolent resistance is the formulation of a statement of desired changes. This step is exemplified in several pairs of nonviolent practice from the civil rights movement and from 2001 to 2006, however the practice that best exemplifies this basic step of a nonviolent framework is provided by the example of Daisy Bates and U.S. Representative Chaka Fattah, whose work has been able to prevent the unsatisfactory corporate control over the Philadelphia public school system. The nonviolence of Daisy Bates is very similar to the nonviolence of Chaka Fattah in four important respects. First, per King's definition of nonviolence in relation to first trying to persuade, both Bates and Fattah tried to persuade state governors to allow more citizens access to a quality public education. Second, both were able to garner community support behind their nonviolence and use such support to protect students from bodily harm or educational neglect. Both used nonviolence to enable students to acquire a quality education. In reaction to the acts of nonviolence practiced by Bates and Fattah against a mob violence based on a mischaracterization African Americans; both were able, according to Sharp's second step of his nonviolent framework, to formulate desired changes that were significantly similar. Daisy Bates was

able to formulate a demand that the Little Rock Nine attend Central High School during the 1957-1958. Chaka Fattah was able to formulate a demand that the governor of Pennsylvania hold the corporation of Edison Schools accountable for its poor control of the public school systems in Philadelphia where record numbers of students drop out each year. Both Bates and Fattah clearly fulfill this second step of nonviolent resistance. The formulated desired change by Barbara Lee was most clearly expressed on September 13, 2001, when she voted against sending military troops to Iraq and Afghanistan. Ella Baker as a critical civil rights organizer taught people at the grassroots level how to clearly express the formulation of desired changes in order to have their organization have a greater meaning and purpose. She taught the members of Parents In Action Against Discrimination how to call on the city to comply more with the *Brown v. Board* decision. Doing this kind of work prepared her for the teaching SNCC how to end racial segregation: through direct action and also through voter registration.

Maxine Waters continues this kind of direct, expressed formulation of desired changes when she called for withdrawal of all troops from Iraq, as stated in her position as co-chair of the Out of Iraq caucus. John Conyers' more indirect formulation of desired changes focused on ending torture in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. In his publication, he serves to expose the shortcomings of the administration more than he formulates a desired change. Evidently Waters fulfills this second step of nonviolent action more so than Conyers because she has created an institutional organization that is named after the desired change she is working to accomplish: the Out of Iraq caucus. Therefore, Daisy Bates, Maxine Waters and Chaka Fattah fulfill the second step most thoroughly.

The third step of Sharp's groundwork for nonviolent action is to give publicity to grievances and other facts of the case. Sharp writes that publicity may in fact bring pressure or change. Because of the political climate that was saturated with vengeance in the days after 9/11, Barbara Lee did not give significant publicity to her grievances. A publishing company, Third World Press, gave substantial publicity in their decision to publish her speech in the book *The Paradox of Loyalty*. Also, the arrest of Rosa Parks was heavily publicized not by Parks herself but by Women's Political Council leader Jo Ann Gibson Robinson.

The importance of publicizing grievances is a skill that Daisy Bates deftly demonstrates, as co-editor of the Arkansas black newspaper *State Press* with her husband, L.C. Bates. Daisy Bates is able to publicize first hand the shortcomings of the Little Rock School Board in allowing the Little Rock Nine to attend Central. Of this paper she writes: "from the beginning the *State Press* expanded its crusading role on an ever widening front. It fought to free Negroes from muddy, filthy streets, slum housing, menial jobs, and injustice in the courtrooms."²⁴¹ The *State Press* was thus able to galvanize the black community around the cause of Daisy Bates in trying to integrate Central High School. Sharp writes that the publicity may bring pressure or change, and Daisy Bates' publications and editorials criticizing the school board did inform surrounding citizens of the efforts to integrate the school. Her experience as a newspaper editor in letter writing and in contacting powerful government officials gave her undoubtedly a clear advantage in managing to get the Little Rock Nine to attend Central High School for some time period.

In his press releases dating back from 2002, Chaka Fattah has shown a tremendous amount of commitment to improving Philadelphia's public schools by first calling on Edison schools to be accountable.²⁴² Fattah did not begin his trek to improving public schools by attacking the corporation's practices; he first demanded accountability. This step is a significant part of what Sharp has called the importance of negotiation.

The third and fourth steps of the groundwork of nonviolent practice are primarily concerned with being able to negotiate. Negotiation in this case means giving the opponent the benefit of the doubt and meeting them halfway instead of attacking the group as negligent. Before accusing Edison Schools of being negligent in its running Philadelphia public schools, Fattah first tries to negotiate by asking Edison schools for crucial information such as the amount of funding it provides each Philadelphia public school in terms of textbooks. At first he did not receive a reply from Edison Schools. He then publicizes his request in order to try and encourage a response from Edison Schools.²⁴³

Fattah's publicity eventually brought the necessary change of Edison Schools Corporation being withdrawn from over half the schools they had control over prior to Fattah's vigilant demand for an investigation. Bates's publicity eventually brought the necessary change of federal troops being sent in to enforce the desegregation order by President Eisenhower, inspired by the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court ruling. The work of Chaka Fattah proves that a nonviolent legacy of resistance, in terms of demanding an adequate education according to the Fourteenth Amendment, continues from Daisy Bates' work to his work on improving public schools. Both Bates and Fattah have shown

a willingness to publicize the injustices of an unfair, racially segregated public education in order to arouse attention. This kind of willingness to publicize by both Bates and Fattah is indeed a central tenet of the persuasion side of the binary model of nonviolence. Both Ella Baker and Maxine Waters have a penchant for publicizing their events. Ella Baker went to great lengths, with the help of Carl Braden, to publicize grievances by planning the hearing “The Voteless Speak” which preceded the Greensboro sit-ins by one day. These hearings were meant to publicize the poor enforcement of the 1957 Civil Rights Bill that still allowed massive voter disenfranchisement. Maxine Waters in planning the Iraq Book Fair also intended to publicize the poor oversight of the privatized military industry in Iraq. James Farmer has also attempted to publicize grievances by including members of the press in his Freedom Rides. Raymond Arsenault writes of an organization, then led by James Farmer, that made a significant attempt to publicize their grievances:

despite a spate of CORE press releases, the beginning of the Freedom Ride drew only token coverage....two weeks earlier the CORE office had sent letters describing the impending Freedom Ride to President Kennedy, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the chairman of the ICC, and the presidents of Trailways and Greyhound. But no one had responded, and as the Riders prepared to board the buses there was no sign of official surveillance or concern. At Farmer’s request, [*Jet* magazine reporter] Simeon Booker, who was known to have several close contacts in the Washington bureaucracy, called the FBI to remind the agency that the Freedom Ride was about to begin, and on the eve of the ride Booker had a brief meeting at the Justice Department with Attorney General Kennedy and his assistant John Seigenthaler.²⁴⁴

The publicity of grievances surrounding racially segregated bus terminals at first did not have a substantial effect for James Farmer. However their continued commitment eventually produced what became national attention. John Conyers’ publicity of grievances is indicated by the publication of *George W. Bush Versus The U.S.*

Constitution by Academy Chicago Publishers. Concerning this third step of nonviolence, Chaka Fattah, Maxine Waters and John Conyers most clearly fulfill this step of trying to seriously publicizing grievances. Barbara Lee did not try to publicize her grievance as much as Fattah, Waters, and Conyers perhaps because like Parks, she did not want to subsequently call attention to the suffering she endured because of her very unpopular vote against the invasion. They are continuing the practice of publicizing grievances; a practice started by Ella Baker, most notably in her panel, “The Voteless Speak” and continued by James Farmer in his inclusion of *Jet* reporter Simeon Booker as a Freedom Rider.

The fourth step that Sharp outlines is a distinct effort at negotiation, through personal meetings and letters. The aforementioned pairs of nonviolent resisters in Parks and Lee as well in Bates and Fattah each conform to this step very clearly. Both Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah make efforts to meet with their respective opponents: the Little Rock School Board and Edison Schools, respectively. However both Bates and Fattah have a considerably difficult time in trying to meet with their respective opponents. In requesting data of graduation rates from Edison Schools, Fattah makes a distinct effort at negotiation—giving Edison Schools a chance to explain its poor performance. Daisy Bates also makes a distinct effort at negotiation with the Little Rock School Board when she agreed with the board to postpone the date of the students’ entrance from early to late September. Bates’ negotiation in fact gave her enough time to garner support from the NAACP and from President Eisenhower. During this time when Bates’ very life was threatened by a note attached to a rock that crashed through her window which read: “stone this time, dynamite next,” Paula Giddings writes that “Bates had unshakable faith

that the time had come ‘to decide if it’s going to be this generation or never.’ Events in history occur when the time has ripened for them, but they need a spark. Little Rock was the spark at that stage of the struggle of the American Negro for justice.”²⁴⁵ In order for this spark to occur, Daisy Bates had to be seen as a person who engaged in efforts at negotiation, which was Sharp’s third step. Sharp writes that this kind of negotiation can essentially help the opponent and the negotiators achieve a relationship between human beings as such. This kind of relationship is especially important for people like Daisy Bates who within many negotiations with powerful political men, are prone to be immediately underestimated because of her sex and race. However because of her asserting her right to fight for the Little Rock Nine to receive a quality education, she was able to force her oppressors to see her as a fellow human being.

Ella Baker makes a distinct effort at negotiation with executive powers several times in her organizing career. Her most direct effort at negotiation was perhaps during her work with the Parents In Action Against Discrimination, where she called on parents to speak directly with public officials who have the ability to improve public education. Maxine Waters also made a distinct effort at negotiation with the executive powers when she appealed to Republicans in the U.S. House and was able to sway some Republicans to join her Out of Iraq caucus. The membership of several Republicans in the Out of Iraq caucus is indicative of Waters’ successes in making efforts at negotiation. As it concerns his direct appeals to the U.S. Constitution, John Conyers demonstrated a direct effort at negotiation by requesting and allowing a reasonable amount of time for intelligence information that justified the Bush administration’s case to invade Iraq and Afghanistan. Ultimately no response to this request was made and like many previous efforts at

negotiation in the 1960s, the executive power was unyielding with its results. There are significant differences between the ways that Lee, Waters, Fattah, and Conyers make an effort at negotiation. This is primarily because there are significant differences goals of their negotiations. Lee is negotiating with other members of Congress to stop or relent the military invasion and occupation of Iraq. Both Lee and Waters are negotiating to have more members achieve desired changes at an individual level. Fattah is negotiating for desired changes at a citywide level. Conyers is negotiating for desired changes at the national level. The involvement of these levels of negotiation (individual, citywide, and national) are each essential in the practice of nonviolence in order for drastic social change to eventually take place.

The fifth step of Sharp's nonviolent framework is the clarification of minimum demands. This is essential because it has many far reaching implications, one in particular which includes a terribly lofty goal of ending white racism. Within the writings of both Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah, the demands of both are to allow African Americans a quality education. Within the writing of Barbara Lee and within the activism of Rosa Parks exists the clarification of minimum demands. In particular, with Barbara Lee, the minimum demands clarified are at the least, an end to the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. She protests by directly voting against the war, but also engages in verbal persuasion in her House speech just before it when she says: "let us not become the evil we deplore."²⁴⁶ Her demand is literally to avoid repeating the kind of attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. The clarification of minimum demands provided by Rosa Parks is particularly shown more implicitly. Paula Giddings writes in a personal interview with Jo Ann Gibson

Robinson that “well before Parks’s arrest, the Women’s Political Council had decided [that] a bus boycott would be an effective tactic, ‘not just to teach a lesson but *to break the system,*’ said Robinson.”²⁴⁷ Here the clarified demands are to break the system of racially segregated busing that contributed to an overall dehumanizing condition for African Americans in Montgomery, who by the time of Parks’ arrest, had gotten used to letting whites board the bus first, then going to the front, paying their fare, exiting the bus, then walking to the back of the bus to board it.

The lawsuit by the Montgomery Improvement Association, represented by attorney Clifford Durr, ultimately represented the side of Rosa Parks that defended her right not to give up her seat. It was this court case, focused on Rosa Parks’ right to her seat, that ultimately became the minimum demand, which was conflated with a larger struggle of the issue of racial segregation in Montgomery. The clarified demands of Daisy Bates are meant to allow the Little Rock Nine to attend Central High School in Little Rock. This demand was made clear not only to the school board, but also to Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus and to President Eisenhower. In the tradition of Daisy Bates’ activism, Chaka Fattah makes clear his demand to improve the general quality of public education for public school students in Philadelphia. He does this by his press releases, and also significantly by his citing of facts such as the deplorable facts or statistics proving the horrendous drop-out rates in Philadelphia’s public high schools.²⁴⁸

John Conyers’ minimum demand is an explanation if not a greater obeisance to the U.S. Constitution. Sharp writes that during this clarification of minimum demands, it is generally recommended that any sort of demands be unchanged during the struggle. That is exactly what Barbara Lee, Ella Baker, Maxine Waters, James Farmer, and John

Conyers have been able to do around their act(s) of nonviolent resistance: fight for nothing more or less than their expressed objective.

Fulfilling the Protest Phase of Sharp's Framework of Nonviolence

The sixth step of Sharp's framework of nonviolent resistance marks the beginning of the protest phase within the second component of the binary method of nonviolence outlined by Lawson and King. The sixth through ninth steps are within the protest phase and concerned with ways in which the practice of nonviolent resistance takes place. The sixth step in particular is meant to show wisdom in concentrating action on the weakest points in the opponent's case, policy or system. The weakest point in Lee's case is the Administration's role in falsifying information to justify a military invasion. Barbara Lee concentrates action on the weakest points in the opponent's case by mentioning in her speech the historical precedent established during the invasion of Vietnam of falsifying intelligence prior to voting against the military invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. John Conyers concentrates action on the weakest points in the opponent's case by pointing out in *George W. Bush Versus The U.S. Constitution* and *What Went Wrong In Ohio* that Bush and his administration are operating torture prisons in a manner that violates the Geneva Convention. Lee argues that granting the president war powers will not resolve the issue of facing terrorist attacks since granting the president war powers in the past did not resolve the issue of Vietnam, which became what is seen as the first significant long term military failure of the United States. Conyers argues that the president is exercising extraordinary use within the executive branch and not respecting the balance of power within the U.S .government. Lee is concentrating action on preventing pre-emptive military strikes based on intelligence information falsified within the control of the

executive branch of the U.S. government. Under Lyndon B. Johnson's consent, intelligence information was falsified to support a military invasion in the 1960s and under Bush's consent, intelligence information was again falsified to support a military invasion in the new millennium. Both Lee and Conyers aim to ultimately prevent what they see as the falsification of intelligence to support a military invasion. They attack this weakness and try to prevent its recurrence by recalling its historical precedence in U.S. history.

Barbara Lee mentions the Vietnam War while Rosa Parks mentions Jim Crow discrimination. Rosa Parks also shows wisdom in concentrating action on the weakest point of choosing not to give up her seat on a Montgomery city bus, which was a mode of transportation gravely needed for many African Americans to reach their white employers. Arguably this boycott began at the worst possible economic time, where employers and business owners were expecting significant profits during the holiday season. However, the Montgomery citizens working in the boycott held fast to it, and for it, the white business owners paid a heavy price. The work of Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah also demonstrates how to show wisdom in concentrating the action on the weakest points in the opponent's case, policy or system.

There is a singular point in Daisy Bates' work with the Little Rock Nine where she showed wisdom in her concentration. On the morning of the first day that the Little Rock Nine attended Central, on September 23, 1957, Bates used her wisdom in sending the members of the black press from her home to the school as a decoy to allow the Little Rock Nine to enter more clandestinely and avoid the gathering mob. Bates was very familiar with the ways in which the white mob would notice a young-looking member of

the black press such as Alex Wilson, think he was a potential high school student, and then attack him while the actual students enter the high school. She was concentrating direct action on the weakest point of the opponent's case which, in this case was the mob's desire to physically threaten and attack black people and prevent them from entering Central High School. Here Daisy Bates in her nonviolent organizing was facing a more direct form of resistance than one that Chaka Fattah was facing. Fattah was facing the resistance of a corporation in providing the information that would in fact prove that they were not at all providing a quality education for Philadelphia public high school students. He showed his wisdom by concentrating his nonviolence on the weakest points in the opponent's system, and that was requiring that it produce data on the efficiency it claimed to be maintaining in public education. Bates, however, faced clear opposition if not open defiance and ignorance from her pleas to Governor Faubus that he help the Little Rock Nine attend Central High School.

Even after the broken window, the rock, a burning cross on her lawn, and an announcement from Faubus that ultimately rouses the mob to organize around Central High School, Bates originates the salient idea of asking local white and black ministers to accompany the Little Rock Nine on their first day of school, on September 5, 1957, so that they would not only provide a human shield but also serve as powerful symbols against the bulwark of segregation.²⁴⁹ The function of the ministers in serving to physically and spiritually protect the Little Rock Nine is very similar to the function of the Montgomery ministers in their influence on the citizens of Montgomery at the Holt Street Baptist church meeting days after Rosa Parks' arrest. Here Daisy Bates shows wisdom in concentrating her action on the church clergy to emphasize her ultimate goal

of physically getting the Little Rock Nine on September 23, 1957, inside Central High School.

John Conyers in his publications and his lawsuit against George W. Bush has also shown wisdom in concentrating his legal case on the weakest points in the opponent's case, which is on his cooperation with the falsification of intelligence leading to the military invasion. Most of his publication is focused on what Conyers identifies as the Bush administration's manipulation of intelligence. Maxine Waters continues a tradition of Ella Baker's organizing when she focuses on the weakest point of the opponent's case which is the small but potentially growing number of Republicans in the U.S. House that are currently joining the Out of Iraq caucus in order to literally get out of Iraq as soon as possible. The weak point in this case is the lack of the usual unanimous support among House Republicans for the continued military occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. John Conyers however focuses on the weakness of equivocating rhetoric by the Bush administration not only in their case to invade Iraq and Afghanistan but also in Gonzales' case of allowing torture in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. Ultimately, John Conyers, Maxine Waters, and Chaka Fattah make the most concerted efforts to focus on the weakest point in the opponent's case.

The seventh step of Sharp's nonviolent framework is to publicize the facts, issues, and arguments advanced by the nonviolent group. Sharp writes that this step may proceed by stages moving from the effort to inform the public in general of the grievances, to encouraging people to feel that nonviolent action is needed to correct these grievances. This step is probably the most important of Sharp's stated nonviolent methods. He adds that a variety of means may be used for the purposes of encouraging

people to feel that nonviolent action is needed to correct these grievances. Indeed, Rosa Parks, Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, Daisy Bates, Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, Barbara Lee, Chaka Fattah, John Conyers, Maxine Waters, Charles Rangel, and Sheila Jackson-Lee have all worked in some capacity to publicize the facts, issues, and arguments advanced by the nonviolent group in an attempt to encourage people to feel that nonviolent action is needed to correct these grievances. Rosa Parks did this in her work within the Women's Political Council spearheaded by Jo Ann Gibson Robinson. In particular, Robinson furthered the nonviolent activism of Rosa Parks by encouraging Montgomery citizens to stay off the bus and, in essence, "break the system." Within a few days after Rosa Parks' arrest, Jo Ann Gibson Robinson copied and disseminated 35,000 handbills stating Ms. Parks' arrest and calling on the Birmingham community to boycott the bus. Each handbill stated: "This woman's case will come up on Monday. We are, therefore, asking every Negro to stay off the buses Monday in protest of the arrest and trial. Don't ride the buses to work, to town, to school, or anywhere on Monday."²⁵⁰

Rosa Parks let her actions speak for themselves in terms of it being publicized. However Paula Giddings writes that this incident alone was responsible for encouraging people to feel that nonviolent action is needed to correct the grievances. This seventh step is also seen implemented in the work of Daisy Bates, who managed to attract national attention to the crisis in Little Rock. With the arrival of NAACP lawyers Thurgood Marshall and Wiley Branton to Little Rock, the national attention was drawn to Little Rock and an attempted resolution was made through the legal system. It is in this seventh step of Sharp's nonviolent framework that most effective persuasion can take place. Bayard Rustin in fact writes that in terms of persuasion, "women are more

intelligently inquisitive, open for discussion, and liberal in their sentiments than men.”²⁵¹ Richard Gregg, from whom Rustin and Glenn Smiley studied nonviolent activism added that “women are more effective in it than men.”²⁵² The truth of this belief is suggested by the work of Rosa Parks, Daisy Bates, Barbara Lee, and Maxine Waters. All CBC members have significantly publicized their arguments.

The eighth step of Sharp’s nonviolent framework is the pursuance of different kinds of direct action. This is something that each CBC member did. Waters and Lee not only voted against the Iraq invasion and occupation, they attended rallies against it. The purpose of these various kinds of nonviolent action is used to dramatize the issues. Perhaps the most unique or different kind of direct action is the jail-in. At this stage of nonviolent action, the leaders of nonviolent activities may experience hardship and suffering.²⁵³ King experienced more jail time than Ronald Dellums, Charles Rangel, and Sheila Jackson-Lee for their arrest at the foreign embassies. However they all pursued the same kind of direct action which was the jail-in, which ultimately brought public attention to the humanitarian crises. Ultimately, both Lee and Waters have pursued different kinds of direct action more thoroughly than any other CBC member.

The ninth and final step of Sharp’s framework of nonviolence is issuing an ultimatum. An ultimatum in this context is defined as a stated goal that each instance of nonviolence is trying to accomplish. Each of these acts of nonviolence have issued an ultimatum in their own way. Barbara Lee’s vote against the war has issued an ultimatum to the Bush administration to return U.S. troops from Iraq as soon as possible or else suffer more alienation from the world and domestic community. Chaka Fattah’s insistence on an adequate public education in Philadelphia has issued an ultimatum to the

private corporations in general to maintain a certain standard of quality education or else face public humiliation for negligent handling of Philadelphia public schools. Maxine Waters issued ultimatum, like Barbara Lee's to return U.S. troops from Iraq as soon as possible or else suffer further alienation from the world and domestic community. John Conyers ultimatum is to demand that George W. Bush follow the U.S. Constitution and consult the other branches of government in his foreign and domestic policy. Charles Rangel's ultimatum is for the administration to take decisive action against the Sudanese government because of their role with the genocide in Darfur or else suffer further alienation from the world community. While these ultimatums might not have considerable punitive measures if they are not fulfilled, they represent at least some measure, on the part of those who issued them, an effort to resist continued race and class oppression domestically and internationally.

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) is one of the nation's oldest, largest, and most diverse civil and human rights coalition. They issue voting records at the end of each two year congressional term that show how all members of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate vote on meaningful civil rights legislation, policies, and executive branch appointments. Each congressperson is given a score, from zero to one hundred percent indicating their commitment to civil rights, depending on the number of meaningful civil rights legislation on which they voted. For each of the past three congressional terms between 2001 and 2006, Barbara Lee, Chaka Fattah, Maxine Waters, John Conyers, and Charles Rangel have all earned a score of 100% on their voting record which includes yearly votes from 2002 to continue funding the Iraq war. This indicates their unyielding, uncompromising commitment to civil rights; these representatives are

carriers of a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance. In the voting record of the 109th congress, from 2004 to 2006, current U.S. Senator Barack Obama has distinguished himself as being apart from these carriers of nonviolent resistance because he voted to confirm Judge Thomas Griffith for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Judge Griffith has supported a series of recommendations that would have seriously weakened Title IX that guarantees that male and female students are provided with equal opportunities. The LCCR's voting record shows that Griffith's record as a judge indicates that he would not find any actions necessary to remedy past race and sex discrimination.²⁵⁴ This raises serious questions about whether Obama's commitment to civil rights is as strong as the carriers of nonviolent resistance and whether this kind of commitment will help or hinder his 2008 presidential campaign. In fact, on the issue of the Iraq invasion and occupation, Obama's 2005 statement that opposes an immediate end of military occupation of Iraq differs drastically from Lee and Waters' statements. In a speech before the Council on Foreign Relations on November 22, 2005, Obama essentially endorses continued military occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan when he says:

I believe that U.S. [military] forces are still part of the solution in Iraq...At the same time, sufficient numbers of U.S. troops should be left in place to prevent Iraq from exploding into civil war, ethnic cleansing and a haven for terrorism.²⁵⁵

Continued military occupation will, further the race and class oppression that disproportionately affects poor and working class communities. This belief that military forces are still part of the solution is a weak commitment to civil rights. This kind of commitment to civil rights is unmistakably weaker than that of those carriers of the surviving legacy on nonviolent resistance.

Lessons From Each Case Study of Nonviolence

Each discussed similarity has an important lesson to teach about how nonviolent activism can be practiced in the twenty-first century. These similarities will be called case studies with the comparison between Lee and Parks being the first case study; the comparison between Fattah and Bates being the second case study; the comparison between Waters and Baker being the third, and the comparison between Farmer and Conyers being the fourth. The first case study has its most important lessons to teach about preparing for nonviolence. Both Barbara Lee and Rosa Parks teaches us in this new millennium to study practitioners of nonviolence before engaging. Both Lee and Parks had mentors in Ronald Dellums and Septima Clark, respectively to learn nonviolent methods. Lee and Parks did not practice nonviolent protest in exactly the same manner as Dellums and Clark, however both had mentors who taught them the utility of nonviolent protest. Lee and Parks might have helped to teach younger generations how to engage in nonviolent protest in ways different from the way they learned nonviolent protest, just as they themselves practiced nonviolence differently from the way they were taught. Both Lee and Waters demonstrate the importance of challenging foreign policies that will exacerbate race and class disparities.

Daisy Bates, in her organizing of the Little Rock Nine to integrate Central High School, had a significant effect on the integration of public schools across the nation. She taught important lessons about how one can practice educational activism: by creating a relationship with the school board and with the press. Chaka Fattah has also taught the incredibly crucial lesson of being scrupulously cautious against private control

over public education. The most important lesson this second case study provides is the need to be an advocate at the individual level for education.

Ella Baker's organizing teaches us the important lessons of building a cross-racial coalition and creating a decentralized leadership structure. Maxine Waters has continued this with her co-leadership along with Lynn Woolsey and willingness to allow Nancy Pelosi and the Democratic Leadership Council to persuade fellow Democrats in the U.S. House to vote for a March 2007 supplemental spending bill that would fund further occupation of U.S. troops. Waters did not try to assert her personal beliefs about this supplemental over other members of the Out of Iraq caucus; she let them vote for the bill and maintained the decentralized nature of the Out of Iraq caucus. Waters past leadership as well as her disagreements with popular political leaders teaches us to challenge such leaders on a consistent moral basis. For example, if one opposes any foreign policy that does not allow people of other countries their right to economic self-determination, then that would include opposition to not only the Iraq invasion but also opposition to NAFTA, which was Waters' position. Many Democrats who have grown to oppose the Iraq invasion, however were in support of NAFTA, despite the reality of its preventing Central American citizens their own right to economic self-determination. Maxine Waters' leadership has provided the lesson of challenging to executive leadership on a consistent moral basis.

The events of the 1961 Albany Movement teaches important lessons about the perils of the messiah complex, the most important of which is to avoid focusing on a single leader to do what can be done by our individual selves on a local level. This messiah complex in the minds of many American citizens is fostered by the American

media to the extent that it is believed if the “messiah” is not simply alive, then no work can be done. As Edward Morgan writes, the press has a vested economic interest in promoting the messiah complex. The most important lessons that the nonviolence of the 1961 and 1962 Albany Movement teach is not to depend on a single leader as the two instances of King being bailed out of jail has shown. These bail outs weakened the Albany Movement and ultimately demoralized the overall thrust of the nonviolent jail-in movement that had strengthened the hand of civil right action in Albany. The 1961 Freedom Rides prove the importance of financial support, provided in September of 1961 by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and allowed the Freedom Rides to continue until the Interstate Commerce Commission officially legalized the ban of racially segregated bus terminals.

The 1963 Project C in Birmingham teaches the importance of setting realistic goals that are not too broad-based. This campaign provides one essential lesson for any American city when engaging in nonviolent protest: set a specific goal that will threaten the economic power of the opposing party. Overall each case study that compares nonviolence in one time period with another time period has an important lesson to teach citizens in the twenty-first century about how to practice nonviolent activism and resist the policies of a neoconservative political agenda by an executive branch of government.

Limitations of this Methodological Study

There are three significant limitations of the study presented in this thesis. First is the arbitrary standard of similarities that were used to compare each person in each case study. The first case study compares the personal characteristics of Rosa Parks and Barbara Lee while the rest of the case studies focus on the actions of the studied persons.

For example, the religious beliefs of Parks and Lee are discussed while those of Bates and Fattah are not. A future improvement on this study would be a focus on comparing the personal characteristics of all studied persons with a deeper historiographical look at the CBC members' religious beliefs and socioeconomic status. The second significant limitation of this study is conflating two goals. The goal of proving significant historical similarities at many times is lost in the quest for identifying instances of nonviolence. This is more evident in the fourth and fifth chapters where more of a historical background of 1961 Freedom Rides is presented at the expense of showing that recent CBC member John Conyers is indeed practicing nonviolence. Often in the fifth chapter, there is no clear distinction between identifying nonviolence and identifying similarities.

Third is the limitation of applying Sharp's Framework of Nonviolence to selected figures. This nine step framework of nonviolence more directly applies to the studied figures within the modern civil rights movement and not within the Congressional Black Caucus. This is because those within the civil rights movement had more autonomy than those within the Congressional Black Caucus, while those within the Congressional Black Caucus can be co-opted or controlled by the power of the CBC chair or by the Democratic Party. As a U.S. Representative who is essentially under the authority of the Speaker of the House, their range of nonviolent action can be seriously limited. The Speaker of the House can essentially work to challenge or silence the work of members who do not follow the status quo of the Democratic Party. For example, former U.S. Representative Cynthia McKinney lost her seniority as a member of Congress although she did serve a previous term in Congress, due to the will of the then House Leader Nancy Pelosi. Conversely, Daisy Bates for example can take more liberties in expressing

the white racism while Chaka Fattah, as a U.S. Representative, in some cases cannot be as frank about issues of white racism for fear of alienating his white constituents. Bates wrote a paper that was circulated within the Black Press while if Fattah were to express candid comments about white racism, his comments might be construed as incendiary. Therefore, Bates can afford to follow more steps of Sharp's nonviolent framework such as the pursuance of different kinds of direct action while Fattah cannot because he might be pressured not to do by Pelosi. This is one example of the ways that the U.S. House is a venue of political compromise that can weaken the nonviolent effort in ways that could not happen for figures in the modern civil rights movement.

Conclusion: Implications Of This Study

This thesis suggests that a deeper study into the ways in which the American and international news media function differently is in order. Hank Klibanoff and Gene Roberts, in their book *The Race Beat*, provide important insight into how the American newspaper press functioned in the fifties and sixties, however this thesis suggests that an even more in-depth comparison of the function of the American press between the twenty first century and in the fifties and sixties would provide a more complete picture of why significant work by Congressional Black Caucus members are being ignored.

The main implication of this study is to endorse a certain kind of activism that stands uncompromisingly against the neoconservative policies of the Bush administration and future administrations with similar political goals. This study is meant to teach future generations exactly how one can, within the political institution of the U.S. House, practice nonviolence and resist the policies of a neoconservative legislative branch, an ever-increasing conservative judicial branch along with a neoconservative executive

branch. The methods of resistance and protest presented in this thesis is meant to provide a framework for future U.S. Representatives interested in advancing the struggle for human equality for all peoples regardless of skin color. While this thesis examined comparisons in chronological order, approaching these four case studies from a different, non-chronological order will demonstrate a very important implication of this study, which is a critical framework for advancing the struggle for human equality for all peoples. The four main steps of what can be called a social justice framework is: education, organization, initial agitation, and committed agitation. This social justice framework is perhaps the most important implication of this study and is intended to be practiced by young people. This framework should help explain why these figures in both the Modern Civil Rights Movement and the Congressional Black Caucus were chosen in the first place. This social justice framework addresses how one would first engage in nonviolence based on the examples provided by these four comparisons. According to the provided comparisons, one would first get educated about the issues. Second, based on that education one would organize to address the issue specifically. Third one would engage in symbolic agitation the way that Barbara Lee or Rosa Parks did. And fourth, one would devote oneself to a committed agitation the way that Ronald Dellums, Charles Rangel, and Sheila Jackson-Lee did in their willingness to be arrested by staging a jail-in. In summary, this four step social justice framework consists of: education, organization, initial agitation, and committed agitation.

The first step of this social justice framework is to get educated on the particular issue in which you would like to see broad social change.. No comparison illustrates the importance of this step more clearly than both Daisy Bates and Chaka Fattah. More

specifically, Chaka Fattah demonstrates through his battle with Edison Schools that the very first step toward closing the achievement gap is ensuring adequate public schools. The fight for public education is so important because it is the tool through which millions of Americans will depend on for skills to utilize in the future workforce. Fattah has clearly seen this investment and has been able to rid the Philadelphia public school systems of hindrances to a quality public education. Likewise, Daisy Bates's work with the Little Rock Nine had a profound effect on the nature of public education across the United States. Her activism eventually forced then U.S. President Eisenhower to send federal troops to Central High School to essentially enforce the 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision, and sent a resounding message to the rest of public schools across the country about the lengths that presidential executive power can take in enforcing a Supreme Court decision. Her work was an inspiration to many across the country about what one can do to ensure a quality public education for all others. While Daisy Bates did not succeed in ultimately ridding Little Rock's public schools of private control as her biographer Grif Stockley writes, Chaka Fattah did succeed in ridding Philadelphia public schools of a lot of private control when Edison Schools was forced to withdraw its management of many Philadelphia public schools. Daisy Bates would perhaps marvel at this accomplishment, especially since she never came across the political machinery of an intractable corporation such as Edison Schools. However she would perhaps recognize the stark similarities in cultural values and the degree of latent racism that exists within the private control of public schools.

The second step of this social justice framework, after fighting for a quality public education is the importance of organization. Once one acquires the education a quality

public education can provide, he or she has the tool needed to organize. No comparison illustrates this more clearly than the work of Ella Baker and Maxine Waters. Both these women have been selected for this comparison because of the effective organizing skills. Ella Baker's skill as an organizer is effective precisely because she helped the young students of the 1960s who led sit-ins to form their own group. Maxine Waters's skill as an organizer is effective precisely because she helped members of the U.S. House understand the implications of a continued military occupation in Iraq and aimed to relent or stop such an occupation. Organization is the second key to acquiring social justice. Ella Baker would perhaps congratulate Maxine Waters on the willpower to organize the Out of Iraq caucus, yet would question the Democratic Party's decision in May of 2007 to vote for funding for continued occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan without a withdrawal timetable. While Waters and Lee vociferously voted against this vote in May 2007, this turn of events undoubtedly confirms what Ella Baker said in 1969 that in order for a poor and oppressed people to become a part of a society that is meaningful. Baker was speaking not only to organizers but to young people in the twenty first century interested in social change when she said that they must "think in radical terms...[they must face] that system that does not lend itself to your needs and [devise] ways to change that system."²⁵⁶ This implicitly suggests a withdrawal from leaning on the Democratic Party as a party that can make any serious social changes to the huge class and race disparities widened during the Bush administration. Certainly Ella Baker would applaud the efforts today of select young people in their decision to sit-in U.S. Senator John McCain's office. This group of young people are part of the Occupation Project: Voices for Creative Nonviolence. This is clearly a continuation of the kind of work she inspired

in John Lewis, Diane Nash, Charles Sherrod, and the other founding members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. On Monday, February 5, 2007, members of the Occupation Project were arrested for sitting in the U.S. Senate office of John McCain. Members of this project state that they plan to occupy the offices of lawmakers who refuse to pledge to vote against additional war funding.²⁵⁷ Certainly these members would not know about how a military occupation or invasion can happen unless they knew about the function of the U.S. government, which is provided by what an adequate public school education would provide. Therefore, an adequate public school education allowed the ability for people to organize like those in the Occupation Project, who clearly illustrate how the comparisons in this thesis provide a framework for engaging in social justice. The Occupation Project: Voices for Creative Nonviolence is undoubtedly the best example of organizing that exists today.

The third step of this social justice framework that this thesis implies for young people is the need to engage in initial agitation. Agitation is a term mentioned by James Lawson in his describing the two fold nature of nonviolence. Initial agitation is considered here as the necessary next step to acquiring social justice after one has been educated, and then learned how to organize. Lawson stated that Gandhi would use this term to describe the ultimate nature of nonviolence; a step that exists in both the protest and the persuasion part. This step is illustrated by the work of Rosa Parks and Barbara Lee. Both these women, along with Daisy Bates agitate to fight race and class oppression. Both forms of initial agitation are symbolic in nature, yet illustrate an important tool in fighting race and class oppression. They are acts that go against the grain and take a very important initial step in what Ella Baker says in devising ways “to

change the system.” Clearly the system that Rosa Parks aimed to change was the system of racial segregation while the system that Barbara Lee aimed to change was the power of the military industrial complex over the U.S. government. Both systems encourage race and class oppression. And both systems were challenged by women who initially acquired what a public education can provide and women who benefited at some time in their life from political organization. Rosa Parks at one time belonged to the Highlander Folk School while Barbara Lee at one time belonged to the 1972 presidential campaign of Shirley Chisholm, where she first learned the influence of political organizing.

After fighting for a quality education for oneself or others, and organizing, and then engaging in symbolic agitation that devises ways to “change” the current political system, this thesis suggests that young people to prepare oneself to committed agitation. This is the fourth and final step of this social justice framework intended for young people to continue a surviving legacy of nonviolence. It is a kind of agitation that is committed to calling attention to an international atrocity such as the occupation of Iraq or the genocide in the Sudan. It is best illustrated by the jail-in strategies of Charles Rangel, Ronald Dellums, and Sheila Jackson-Lee. Committed agitation is once again best illustrated by the work of the Occupation Project. This thesis implies that young people should be prepared to be arrested for the causes of not only unfair domestic policies that continue race and class oppression, but unfair international policies that continue this kind of oppression as well. This is the work of the Occupation Project. Since the modern civil rights movement, nonviolent resistance has not only been used to fight race and class oppression against domestic policies, nonviolent resistance has been used to fight race and class oppression against foreign policies such as torture and

genocide. This fourth step encourages a readiness on the part of potential resisters to be educated, to organize, and to initiate and commit oneself to agitation.

In summary, a surviving legacy of nonviolent resistance begins with acquiring a quality public education, organizing, and committing oneself to agitation. This is summarized in the following chart. The rightmost column of the chart shows which steps of the Sharp's nonviolent framework that each figure was perceived to adhere to the most. The numbers in this column for each figure refers to the step of Sharp's nine step framework which are provided at the bottom of the chart.

Table 1: Summary of Nonviolent Work by Modern Civil Rights Leaders and Select Congressional Black Caucus Members
by Rhone Fraser

<u>Year</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Significant Nonviolent Strategies Used</u>	<u>Rationale for Using Nonviolence</u>	<u>Steps Utilized of Sharp's Nonviolent Framework*</u>
1955	Rosa Parks	Refusing to give up her seat	Religious beliefs (12)	1,4,6
2001	Barbara Lee	Refusing to vote for invasion	Religious beliefs (12)	1,4,5,7,9
1957	Daisy Bates	Integrating Central H.S.	Role as journalist (39)	All (1-9)
2002	Chaka Fattah	Regulating privatization of Philadelphia Public schools	Role as Congressman motivated by dropout rate (33)	1-7, 9
1960	Ella Baker	Organizing SNCC	Separating SNCC from SCLC (62-63)	All (1-9)
2005	Maxine Waters	Co-founding the Out of Iraq caucus	Condition of her district's community (90)	2-9
1961	James Farmer	Organizing the Freedom Rides	Appealing to U.S. Supreme Court decisions (114)	All (1-9)
2004, 2006	John Conyers, Charles Rangel and Sheila Jackson-Lee	For Conyers, publications; for all others, the Jail-In	Calling attention to international atrocities, such as genocide in the Sudan (139)	3-7, 9

*The nine steps of Sharp's nonviolent framework in the rightmost column are: 1:

Investigation of alleged grievances; 2: A formulation of desired changes; 3: publicity of

the grievances; 4: efforts at negotiation; 5: a clarification of minimum demands; 6:

concentrating direct action on the weakest points in the opponent's case; 7: publicity of developing issues by the nonviolent group; 8: the pursuance of different kinds of direct action; and 9: finally issuing an ultimatum.

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- ⁴⁶ This 2007 Lee amendment is profoundly similar to that of her district’s congressional predecessor, Ronald Dellums. Maurine Christopher writes that early in 1971, Dellums had fought for a House resolution asking for withdrawal of all American troops from Southeast Asia by the end of the year; to his dismay the House passed a substitute proposal calling for a pullout by the end of 1972. Later Dellums also nonviolently protested the role of American corporations in advancing apartheid in South Africa. These protests led to the eventual dismantling of apartheid after demands were made by American corporations to divest from South Africa; one of these demands came from Ronald Dellums.
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- April 11:* Richmond, Va., meeting with staff of Richmond Beneficial Insurance Company
- April 12:* Baptist Ministers' conference
- April 15:* 9 AM, Southern Aid Society staff meeting; 9:30 AM, staff meeting of North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance; 7 PM, campaign report meeting
- April 16:* Independent Order of St. Luke meeting
- April 17:* 10 AM, Apex School of Beauty; 11AM, School of Modern Beauty Culture
- April 17:* Peaks, Va., 8:30 PM, staff meeting, Peaks Industrial School
- April 18:* Peaks Industrial School student assembly
- April 18:* Richmond, Virginia, meeting with staff of Mutual Insurance Company
- April 21:* Meeting of Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance; 2PM, luncheon meeting of branch.

- April 21: Victoria, Virginia, 8PM, meeting at Lunenburg County Training School regarding organizing a branch.
- April 22: Richmond, Virginia, closing meeting of branch campaign
- April 24: Mass meeting of student chapter, Virginia Union University
- April 24: Danville, Virginia, 7:30PM, conference with branch officers to plan campaign
- April 27: Opening mass meeting of Danville branch campaign
- April 28: Meeting held in county
- April 28: Martinsville, Virginia, meeting with group interested in organizing branch
- April 29: Youth council meeting at high school
- April 30: Nottoway County, Virginia, branch meeting held at Blackstone, Virginia
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Different grassroots organizers focused on different aspects of the black freedom struggle and Amzie Moore focused on voting and not on desegregation. Moore did not fight the Black Freedom struggle in the same way that many students who conducted sit-ins did, however his role was invaluable to other organizers later during the 1960s. The ways in which he carried it out nonetheless fulfilled the definition of the third theme of participatory democracy outlined by Carol Mueller, the theme of direct action. With the financial assistance of In Friendship, Amzie Moore practiced this theme of direct action in trying to register people to vote. SNCC member Sam Block called him the father of the movement, because of the vast network of black voters that he personally knew and used to get more people to vote. His role as a local contact very indispensable to the mission of SNCC in the early 1960s.

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