Black Liberation in the Midwest

The Struggle in St. Louis, Missouri, 1964–1970

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> "... *but goals must be achieved. They are not secured because it is just and right that they be possessed by Negro or white people. Slavery was not abolished because it was bad and unjust. It was abolished because men fought, bled and died on the battlefield . . . They must win them and to win them they must fight, sacrifice, suffer, go to jail and, if need be, die for them. These rights will not be given. They must be taken.*"[1]

The title of this introduction, "It Happened Here Too," reflects my own response to the past and present state of civil rights movement scholarship that continues to ignore the city of St. Louis and the Black liberation movement that took place there.

In her presidential address to the Organization of American Historians in 2004, historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall states, "remembrance is always a form of forgetting, and the dominant narrative of the civil rights movement—distilled from history and memory, twisted by ideology and political contestation, and embedded in heritage tours, museums, public rituals, textbooks, and various artifacts of mass culture—distorts and suppresses as much as it reveals."[2] In recent years scholars have broadened the boundaries of traditional and popular understanding and depiction of the civil rights movement, broadening the scope and expanse of this movement, extending the time and geographic boundaries while broadening the topics of discourse. These recent studies reveal much of what has previously been "suppressed" by the traditional narrative of the civil rights movement. This recent scholarship locates and relocates this movement and shifts our gaze from places it has been to places it needs to be, and adds new images, depth, and nuance to our field of vision thus contributing to Hall's goal "to make civil rights harder. Harder to celebrate as a natural progression of

American values. Harder to cast as a satisfying morality tale. Most of all, harder to simplify, appropriate, and contain."[3]

Scholars have begun to investigate local movements, uncovering the local nuance and forms of liberation beyond the South. While historians have begun to investigate local movements, they have also begun to erase the sharp division between the civil rights movement and Black Power movement, no longer seeing a strict demarcation between two separate movements. Rather, scholars are now investigating the civil rights movement and Black Power movement as part and parcel of the same struggle, or as Timothy Tyson states in his critically acclaimed work, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power*, "the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement grew out of the same soil, confronted the same predicaments, and were much closer than traditional portrayal suggests."[4] Tyson's work is one example of this new direction studies of the civil rights movement have taken in illuminating local movements and the symbiosis between the civil rights movement and the Black Power movement.

Furthermore, in their book, *The Making of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement*, Brian Ward and Tony Badger point out that since the 1980s, "a series of important community-based studies have combined to revise the standard chronology and shift the focus of attention away from national leaders and organizations toward the local figures, organizations and institutions which sustained Black protest."[5] Ward and Badger go on to state that within the last twenty years, "there has been a greater appreciation of the relationship between the southern movement and the struggles of Blacks elsewhere in the United States and a growing recognition of the importance and complexities of the Black Power era."[6]

These recent local studies have transformed the landscape of the civil rights movement, demanding that we look at the movement from multiple angles and at multiple levels, asserting that this is the only way to achieve an adequate view and understanding of the movement. In fact, based on the work of scholars such as Aldon Morris, Adam Fairclough, and Steven Lawson it becomes doubtful that one can even speak of such a thing as a "Civil Rights Movement."[7]According to Aldon Morris, "instead of one homogenous civil rights movement there were dozens of local movements with their own organizations, activists, inter-organizational relationships, boundaries, and funding bases."[8]

These studies have made important contributions toward our understanding of local movements, have redirected the spotlight from national leaders to local leaders, resurrected the central role of women in these

movements, and expanded upon what Adam Fairclough refers to as the "Montgomery to Selma story line." For example, *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940–1980*, co-edited by Jeanne F. Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, locates and relocates the Black freedom struggle outside of the South, and reveals this "movement" as more accurately a movement of local movements that operated independent of the major figures fixed within our popular vision of the civil rights movement. The traditional civil rights movement narrative largely isolates the movement to the Deep South, suggesting that racism, segregation, and racial violence are only southern manifestations. *Freedom North*'s co-editor Jeanne Theoharis states, "foregrounding the South has constricted popular understandings of race and racism in the United States during and after World War Two—making it seem as if the South was the only part of the country that needed a movement, as if Blacks in the rest of the country only became energized to fight after their Southern brothers and sisters did, as if southern racism was more malignant than the strains found in the rest of the country, as if social activism produced substantive change only in the South."[9] *Freedom North* reveals the pervasiveness of racism and segregation throughout the nation, not just in the South, and challenges isolation of racism and segregation in the past while encouraging us to recognize and confront racism in our own communities today.[10]

By looking at St. Louis, Missouri, this study also points out the deficiency of thorough investigation of the Black liberation movement in the Midwest. With specific regard to the movement's transition to Black Power, failure to examine the movement outside of the South has often led historians to focus primarily on the transition to Black Power by organizations such as Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, an organization that did not exist in St. Louis. On the other hand, when historians have examined the transition to Black Power in the North, the primary subject of focus has typically been the Black Panthers.

The following continues on the initial paths established by these studies by asking questions similar to those addressed by these previous works, but asking them of a city that has been left largely off the map of civil rights movement studies. In addition, this work expands our understanding of the "complexities" of the civil rights movement and Black Power movement, arguing that while the civil rights movement and Black Power movement "grew out of the same soil," the shift in tactics, philosophy, membership, and agenda that occurred as the banner of Black Power was raised over the St. Louis movement, by 1964, also brought a dramatic shift in gender, race, and class relations within the movement and a shift in the symbolic representation of the movement. For example, the embrace of Black Power in St.

Louis brought a shift in the structural role of women in the local movement as well as a shift in the manner in which the movement was symbolically represented by local groups and the local media.

Only recently have scholars discovered the St. Louis Black liberation movement. For example, Lorenzo Greene, Gary R. Kremer, and Antonio F. Holland's *Missouri's Black Heritage* is a general survey of the African American experience in the state of Missouri. Their work was and continues to be the only statewide survey of the African American experience. However, such surveys aimed at a large subject matter over a great length of time are often only capable of scraping the surface of many of its subjects. Such is the case with *Missouri's Black Heritage*. With particular reference to its treatment of the Black Power movement in Missouri, this book offers only three and a half pages to the Black Power movement in Missouri and deals solely with urban rebellions in Kansas City, Missouri following Martin Luther King's assassination.

On the other hand, George Lipsitz's *A Life in the Struggle* examines the St. Louis civil rights movement.[11] However, because his work is primarily a biography of Ivory Perry, it is also limited in its treatment of organizations and individuals outside the circle that surrounded Perry. These are the organizations and issues that will be discussed here, those groups and people that slipped through the cracks of these brilliant, important, groundbreaking but nonetheless limited studies of the St. Louis movement.

A more recent study of the St. Louis civil rights movement is Mary Kimbrough and Margaret Dagen's *Victory Without Violence: The First Ten Years of the St. Louis Committee of Racial Equality, 1947–1957*.[12] Their work is the first to focus solely on the St. Louis chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality. Because Margaret Dagen was one of the founding members of the local group, this book presents a valuable insider's perspective on the organization. From this perspective, the book emphasizes CORE's activities as well as the group's unwavering commitment to nonviolence and interracial cooperation and the familial atmosphere that characterized the group's first ten years.

Of course, with their study limited only to the group's first ten years, they fail to examine how the local movement changed by the 1960s. In addition, because their study only focuses on CORE and its activities, their work fails to provide a comprehensive study of the St. Louis civil rights movement during that time period. Thus, while one learns of CORE's activities from 1947 to 1957, we do not learn of any other organizations and their work during the same time. Therefore, while their work is a valuable study of St. Louis CORE, this work continues from where their work leaves off, examining CORE and other organizations that were involved in

the African American freedom struggle in the 1960s, but especially emphasizing the late 1960s when the local group's commitment to nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and the familial atmosphere evolved.

In addition, both *Missouri's Black Heritage* and *A Life in the Struggle*, focus solely on the local movement's male leadership and activists. Thus, women's involvement in the St. Louis movement has been overshadowed and marginalized to figures such as Ivory Perry, Percy Green, and William Clay. On the other hand, Kimbrough and Dagen rediscover women in CORE, emphasizing the central role of Bernice Fisher and Margaret Dagen. With specific regard to gender, recent historiography has only just begun to examine the structural role women played in the movement. Kathryn Nasstrom notes that it was on the local level that their role was most intense. She states, "state and local studies, the locus of much recent scholarship, deepen our knowledge of women's participation, for this body of literature suggests that women were more active in local movements than in the more intensively studied national organizations and campaigns."[13] This work continues this discussion of women in the local movement, but goes beyond the mere recovery of women's activism to analyze gender relations within the movement, noting how the embrace of Black Power brought a change to the structural role of women and the symbolic representation of the movement.

In his book, *The Black Crusaders: A Case Study of a Black Militant Organization*, sociologist William B. Helmreich provides an interesting and important insider's view of the Black Liberators, a group in St. Louis that modeled itself after the Black Panthers.[14] Helmreich served as a "participant—observer" in the Black Liberators for five months and served as the group's "liaison officer" during that time. While his work offers an insider's perspective of this organization, the book suffers from a major weakness. As the title notes, Helmreich maintains the anonymity of the organization, events, individuals, and city in which the group operated. Helmreich states in his introduction, "in accordance with the wishes of many of the respondents, fictitious names and places have been substituted in place of the real ones."[15] Subsequently, he refers to St. Louis as "Central City" and the Black Liberators as the "Black Crusaders." In protecting the group and city's anonymity, Helmreich does illustrate the universality and typicality of the group and city. However, by creating a fictitious name and city, Helmreich fails to consider the very unique and different experience found in the city of St. Louis. While his point concerning the similarities between the Black Liberators and St. Louis and other groups and other cities illustrates important commonalities, it is the differences that this author finds equally significant.

St. Louis is an important city to consider when discussing the Black liberation movement because of its unique history as a border city. St. Louis maintained a unique tradition of segregation and discrimination throughout the early and mid twentieth century. For example, the state constitution prohibited interracial marriages and supported school segregation. Specifically, in 1889 the Missouri legislature passed a law mandating separate schools for African Americans.[16] On the other hand, restaurants, hotels, theaters, hospitals, and other public accommodations were segregated through custom rather than law.[17] Local CORE activist Irvin Dagen commented on the unique nature of St. Louis as a border city. He stated, "St. Louis, in the pre-Civil War days and in the Civil War, was neither North nor South, containing abolitionists and slave holders, Blues and Grays, segregationists and those who were opposed. This left many areas open to discrimination, to custom and tradition, and left open the possibility for peaceful change on which CORE would capitalize."[18]

As the first chapter of this study explains, despite this tradition of segregation and discrimination, the city experienced the development of a strong African American community. The influx of African Americans from the South, beginning in the 1910s, enhanced this community, infusing it with new energy. Roughly 38, 000 African Americans migrated to St. Louis throughout the 1940s. By 1950, St. Louis City's African American population totaled 154, 000 or 18 percent of the city's population.[19] While African American migrants faced intense racism, housing, employment and education discrimination, police brutality and segregation, they contributed to the vitality of the African American community in the 1940s laying the foundation for this Black liberation movement.

Up to this point the term Black Power has been used numerous times without explanation or definition. Therefore, before continuing any further, it is necessary to give a brief explanation of Black Power. Historians have traced the origin of the term Black Power, as it came to be known in the context of the second half of the 1960s, to its use by Stokely Carmichael and Willie Ricks during the March Against Fear to the Mississippi capital following the attempted assassination of James Meredith on June 6, 1966.[20] However, Carmichael points out that "the concept of 'Black Power' is not a recent or isolated phenomenon: It has grown out of the ferment of agitation and activity by different people and organizations in many Black communities over the years."[21] Sociologist Rod Bush also notes that theories of Black Power and Black Nationalism have "been a significant component of African American social thought for more than two hundred years, varying in intensity according to time, place, and circumstances."[22]

The concept of Black Power intensified and became increasingly appealing among the younger generation of African Americans who came to question the utility of nonviolence and interracial cooperation. Furthermore, Black Power appealed to African Americans in light of the growing frustration and anger over continued police brutality, discrimination in housing, employment and education, government reaction and repression against the movement, the continuing decline of the city with regard to living conditions, rent, transportation, and the general failure of federal and state legislation to address the needs of African Americans in particular, and St. Louisans in general, regardless of race.

According to Charles Hamilton and Stokely Carmichael's *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, Black Power has several main goals. First, Black Power aimed at healing the "growing alienation of Black people and their distrust of the institutions of this society."[23] Next, Black Power was to create a sense of pride and unity in the African American community. In other words, "create new values and to build a new sense of community and belonging."[24] Finally, Black Power would put the control of institutions in the African American community in the hands of African Americans. Hamilton states, "Black Power must insist that the institutions in the Black community be led, and wherever possible, staffed by Blacks."[25] Similarly, Black Power would "work to establish legitimate institutions that make participants, not recipients, out of a people traditionally excluded from the fundamentally racist processes of this country."[26] Another key element to Black Power is economic development or what Hamilton refers to as the development of economic self-sufficiency. This can be achieved through the development of African American businesses or, as Hamilton states, through the creation of "capital producing instruments" which can then produce jobs.[27]

Scholars have often tried to pinpoint the exact time when the Black Power movement emerged and when the civil rights movement ended. We cannot do that. The concept of Black Power was embraced by local movements in varying degrees and at different times. As political scientist Dean Robinson asserts, "across time, political and intellectual activity among Black nationalists has differed enormously. There is no 'essential' Black nationalist tradition, despite similarities; the positions of nationalists of different eras have diverged because their nationalisms have been products of partly similar but largely unique eras of politics, thought, and culture. Missing this point can result in an ahistorical, teleological interpretation of Black nationalism as an historical phenomenon."[28] It is one of the central arguments of this study that there is no time line that applies to all local movements throughout the country. Thus, one cannot say that Carmichael's

use of the phrase "Black Power" in June 1966 during the "March Against Fear" in Mississippi marked the emergence of the Black Power movement and the end of civil rights movement.[29] Black Power as a program for African American liberation was embraced at different times, in different locations and to varying degrees, thus one cannot apply a universal time line or date to the emergence of Black Power. This raises the question of why, then, have scholars attempted to pinpoint the exact time when the Black Power movement emerged and when the civil rights movement ended.

Perhaps scholars have over-generalized this periodization because of preoccupation with the slogans and rhetoric of Black Power. By moving beyond the slogans, rhetoric, and hype of Black Power to examine the actual programs and ideology that lay at the heart of the movement, scholars will recognize that local movements, including those in St. Louis, embraced Black Power well before Carmichael popularized the phrase. Examining how local movements put the concept of Black Power into practice shifts the focus or central location of the Black Power movement away from national figures such as Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and Huey Newton; away from the national organizations and their rhetoric and slogans made infamous in the media. By examining the Black Power movement from the perspective of local people and organizations, it becomes evident that the concept of Black Power was put into practice much earlier than the term was popularized.

On another level, some scholars mark the Black Power movement as beginning with urban rebellions in northern cities in 1965 and '66.[30] The use of these events as the starting point for the Black Power movement further illustrates the fact that many associate Black Power only with violence and social unrest, rather than as a legitimate program for social, political, economic, and cultural change in the United States. In part this is the result of scholars' reliance on the media and the media's preoccupation with this violence. Historian Charles Payne makes note of this in stating "the focus on violence bore its own costs by discouraging the development of a more complex understanding of the movement and its evolution."[31] By relying on the media to define Black Power, many remained ignorant of the true meaning of Black Power, continuing to misunderstand, misrepresent, dismiss, fear, and attack local organizations and individuals that endorsed the concept.

On the other hand, some may in fact assert that Black Power was violent and did promote violence. While some Black Power advocates did, as part of a larger program, promote the right to self defense and revolutionary change, such an assertion provides an obtuse and narrow definition of Black Power, failing to consider the larger social, economic, cultural, and political agenda behind Black Power. It is the contention of this work that we need to pay closer attention to when the concept of Black Power was put into

practice as an actual program for change in local communities, rather than listening for the riots and gunshots. As was the case in St. Louis, while some scholars were waiting for the sounds of the Black Power movement, they missed the movement.

As the focus of study is shifted to the local movement, where the concept of Black Power was translated into programs for community and individual improvement and empowerment, it is important to pay close attention to the internal discourse within these local groups. For example, study of internal discourse within these St. Louis groups reveals that these groups considered themselves very much a part of the larger national and international struggle for Black liberation. This is evident in the use of other national organizations, such as the Black Panthers, as a reference point and model for local organizations such as the Black Liberators. In addition, these local groups invited national figures such as Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown to speak at local meetings and rallies. Furthermore, local groups studied the works of Franz Fanon, Mao Tse-Tung, Malcolm X, and Che Guevara, for example, and employed the revolutionary ideologies put forth by them to link their efforts in St. Louis to a larger national and international movement.

With these central points in mind one can begin to examine when, where, and to what extent the concept of Black Power was embraced by the local St. Louis movement. The following work consists of nine chapters following this introduction. The first chapter, "The St. Louis African American Community in the Twentieth Century: A Context for 'Revolution'" provides a brief history of St. Louis's African American community immediately following the Civil War through the 1950s. As the title of this chapter suggests, this chapter establishes the setting out of which the Black liberation movement arose after World War Two.

Chapter two, "An Early Battle: The St. Louis Movement Before 1964," examines the St. Louis African American experience in the post World War Two years until 1964. This chapter examines the early civil rights movement in St. Louis, focusing primarily on the work of the St. Louis chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality. It is in this chapter that the atmosphere of the St. Louis civil rights movement is defined, during both the early phases of the local movement, as well as during its crescendo. It is important that one get a true sense of this early movement in order to later understand how this atmosphere changed by 1964. This change is the subject of the third chapter, "Black Power: The Next Step." The year 1964 was a transition point for the St. Louis civil rights movement. It was in 1964 that the Jefferson Bank campaign targeting hiring discrimination in St. Louis's banking industry ended. When the bank agreed to hire African Americans,

hiring practices in the local banking industry altered and race relations in general were transformed in the city. It was in the wake of this success that the concept of Black Power was embraced by the local movement.

The embrace of Black Power by St. Louis CORE is examined in the fourth chapter, "Black Power: CORE and Coalitions in the St. Louis Region." This chapter discusses and analyzes how CORE, often working with other groups in the area, translated the concept of Black Power into a plan of action for the St. Louis region. Chapter five introduces several other local organizations that were instrumental in the Black liberation movement.

While introducing organizations that comprised the local movement, race, class and gender relations within these groups are analyzed. Also discussed is the symbolic representation of the individual groups and the larger local movement, the connection between this local movement and other movements, including freedom struggles by other minority groups in the United States and world. Analysis and debate over the meaning and utility of the concept of Black Power is the subject of the sixth chapter, "Black Power: The Ideological Debate." The concept of Black Power and the groups and individuals that endorsed it often came under fire from federal and local authorities. Challenges to the local movement are the subject of chapter seven, "Black Power Challenged: The War on Poverty and Black Capitalism," chapter eight, "Black Power Challenged: The Cold War, the FBI, and the Communist Threat," and chapter nine, "Black Power Challenged: Direct Conflict and Violence."

Chapter One

The St. Louis African American Community in the Twentieth Century: A Context for "Revolution"

Sociologist Daniel J. Monti writes of St. Louis,

> it is an interesting place. St. Louis is northern enough to have suffered
> more than its share of industrial divestment and urban blighting. It is
> southern enough to have cultivated a modest image of itself as a conser-
> vative and cultured community, yet one that yearns to assume its right-
> ful position among other 'sunbelt' cities filled with commercial vigor
> and a renewed sense of purpose. And it is just Midwestern enough to
> be satisfied most of the time with adopting someone else's innovations.
> If St. Louis is not a boring place . . . it certainly lacks the good natured
> rowdiness and corrupt charm of Chicago, its former stepchild to the
> north. For all these reasons, St. Louis would seem an odd place to stage
> a minor revolution in American race relations.[1]

Yet for all its uniqueness, the St. Louis African American liberation move-
ment of the mid twentieth century has received little scholarly attention.
While forthcoming chapters examine this "revolution," this chapter dis-
cusses the historical context in which this movement occurred, examin-
ing the St. Louis African American experience at the turn of the century
through World War Two.

The 1876 Compromise, recognized as marking the government's
abandonment of Reconstruction, allowed for the "Democrat Redemp-
tion" in the South. In response to "Redemption," legal disfranchisement,
economic exploitation, and intimidation and violence at the hands of the

Ku Klux Klan, thousands of African Americans escaped the South for the "promised land" of Kansas. Historian Suzanna Grenz notes, "for the most part Blacks sought refuge from the high rents and the crop lien and sharecropping systems of their Southern white landlords. They also hoped to escape the Southern suppression of the political and civil rights."[2] As these "Exodusters" made their way from the South to Kansas, the city of St. Louis was uniquely positioned geographically to serve as an important stopping point where they could replenish their resources and recuperate from the long journey.

On March 11, 1879 the first wave of migrants arrived in St. Louis aboard the ship, *Colorado*.[3] While this first group numbered 280, by July 1879 over six thousand Exodusters had arrived in St. Louis as part of their journey to Kansas.[4] Upon their arrival in St. Louis, many of these migrants had spent all of their money simply on their journey to St. Louis and were thus stranded. The cost of travel from Vicksburg, Mississippi to St. Louis was approximately three to four dollars, which often exhausted the migrants' funds.[5] Yet as Grenz points out, "despite their miserable situation, they refused to return South."[6]

Despite inadequate resources to provide passage along the final stretch to the "promised land," most Exodusters found their stay in St. Louis to be temporary. For example, as Grenze notes, "the federal census returns of 1880 recorded only a small increase in the number of Black citizens in the city. When compared with the census returns of 1870, the city's Black population increased by less than 200. The majority of the Exodusters just passed through or stopped temporarily."[7] Most of these migrants did not remain in St. Louis because of the animosity they faced there.

Almost immediately, these stranded Exodusters became a concern for the municipal government.[8] In response to these concerns, on March 15, 1879, St. Louis Mayor Henry Overstolz met with the St. Louis Board of Health to discuss the situation. The primary concern dictating the government's response to the Exodusters was the fear that any government aid or assistance would undermine their self sufficiency and even encourage them to stay and become further reliant on the municipal government for help. Grenz states, "the [Board of Health] members recognized the destitution of the Blacks and debated the possibility of opening the quarantine and smallpox hospital to provide them with shelter. Once again, however, fear of setting a precedent prevailed. The board concluded that if the Blacks were well taken care of, they would not be anxious to leave the city. In addition, the cost of maintaining them would severely reduce the city treasury."[9] Thus, after this meeting, Mayor Overstolz issued a public statement "warning Blacks against migrating unless they had enough money to pay

their way."[10] In addition, Overstolz threatened to stop the flow of migrants to St. Louis by "initiating legal action against [steamboat and railroad] companies carrying dependent people up the Mississippi."[11] However, Overstolz never followed through with this lawsuit.[12] The only help the St. Louis government agreed to finally provide the migrants was medical care.[13]

On the other hand, while the St. Louis mayor refused to assist in the larger relief efforts of the migrants, the St. Louis African American community provided aid and assistance to these "stranded travelers," providing them with food, shelter, and even employment. Grenz notes, "within three months after the arrival of the first emigrants, the inhabitants of St. Louis and Kansas City organized relief committees to look after these 'Exodusters.'"[14] Relief in St. Louis came predominantly from African American churches, which opened their doors to house roughly 650 Exodusters.[15] Additional aid was provided by the Committee of Twenty Five. Reorganized and renamed the Colored Refugee Relief Board of St. Louis on April 22, 1879, the organization aimed to provide immediate aid to the migrants as well as transportation to Kansas rather than facilitating their permanent establishment in St. Louis.[16]

As the Exodusters were completing their journey from St. Louis to Kansas, by the turn of the century the city they left behind had established a unique system of de facto racial segregation. Specifically, "custom prohibited Blacks from joining whites in facilities such as hotels, restaurants, theaters, and hospitals" while allowing integrated streetcars.[17] As the next chapter explains, this system of de facto segregation of public accommodations was challenged throughout the 1950s by one of the most successful direct action campaigns led by the local affiliate of the Congress of Racial Equality. This campaign successfully culminated in the passage of a 1961 ordinance mandating the desegregation of public accommodations in the city.

With the ratification of Missouri's Reconstruction Constitution in 1875, separate schools were established throughout the state. Yet some schools did admit both African American and white students. For instance, Grundy County admitted African American and white students until 1887, when a white teacher challenged the admission of African American students.[18] When the African American students were denied admission, their parents sued the teacher for violating their civil rights.[19] In 1889 the Missouri legislature passed a law mandating separate schools "for the children of African descent."[20] The following year the Missouri Supreme Court ruled against the parents of the African American school children, thus upholding the legislature's creation of separate schools.

With regard to housing segregation in St. Louis, Ernest Calloway asserted in 1979, "there is no city in America where this primary tool of racial bigotry and ghetto formation was used more successfully than in the city of St. Louis. For many years St. Louis was considered one of the most segregated city's in America in terms of distribution of Black/white living space. Much of this is due to the effectiveness of the planned program of racial isolation and containment."[21] This "planned program of racial isolation and containment" took the form of the restrictive covenant.

Restrictive covenants became the popular tool of residential segregation in St. Louis on February 16, 1911, when 30 residents in the area of Labadie and Cora Avenue agreed to "restrict the use of their property to whites."[22] Residents of this area were concerned with the expansion of the neighboring African American community in the Elleardsville area, also known as The Ville.[23] Specifically, these residents agreed not to sell, lease, or rent their property to African Americans.[24] As Ernest Calloway explains, following this initial agreement among Labadie and Cora Avenue residents, the restrictive covenant agreement "moved throughout the St. Louis area as a popular instrument in isolating and containing the Black population."[25] Calloway also points out that by 1942, 378 covenants had been created to restrict African American access to housing in the city of St. Louis.[26]

Residential segregation was officially established in the city of St. Louis on February 29, 1916, when the city passed a residential segregation ordinance by an overwhelming majority. Specifically, the ordinance prohibited African Americans from "moving into blocks occupied entirely by white families" and areas "in which 75 percent of the residents are white" and prohibited African Americans from occupying or using any "building or part of a building for a church, dance hall, school, theater, or place of assemblage for Negroes" in 'white' or mixed blocks."[27] Chilton Atkinson, a local pro-segregation attorney, was quoted in the *Missouri Republican* as stating, "the proposed law does not aim . . . at oppression of the Negro, but will really afford him a better opportunity to rise. It will apply to white residents in Negro neighborhoods, as well as to Negroes who would move into white districts. No given districts will be set aside for either race, but Negroes will have an opportunity to build up new neighborhoods of their own."[28] The ordinance, it was argued, was necessary, "for preserving peace, preventing conflict and ill feeling between the white and colored races in the city of St. Louis, and promoting the general welfare of the city by providing, so far as practicable, for the use of separate blocks by white and colored people for residence, churches, and schools."[29]

It is also interesting to point out that this ordinance was the first ordinance passed as a result of the "initiative petition" that was included in

the St. Louis city charter in 1914. This change to the charter "provided for the initiation of ordinances by direct action of the people and the repeal of ordinances by popular referendum."[30] The *Missouri Republican* reported that the segregation ordinance was carried by a vote of 52, 220 to 17, 877 or a vote of three to one. The *Republican* also noted that only about half of the registered voters voted. The total registration was 140, 010 with 9, 846 African Americans registered to vote.[31]

Moreover, the *Missouri Republican* went on to report that there was a general fear among the Election Board that racial violence could occur at the polls. In particular, the *Republican* noted, "at the request of the Board of Election Commissioners, Chief of Police Young yesterday issued stringent orders for the preservation of the peace at the special election on the segregation ordinances Tuesday."[32] Subsequently, the Board of Election Commissioners requested that two police officers be placed at each of the city's 474 polls.[33] The chief of police complied with this suggestion stating, "a vigorous fight even to the door of the polls is expected."[34] While this ordinance received overwhelming support at the polls, it was overturned by the 1917 Supreme Court decision of *Pittman v. Brabelle,* which declared all residential segregation ordinances unconstitutional on the grounds that they violated the 14th Amendment.[35] Subsequently, St. Louis's residential segregation ordinance of 1916 was not enacted.[36]

Having lost the legal basis for residential segregation in St. Louis, property owners and realtors then relied entirely on the restrictive covenant to maintain housing segregation in the city. As Calloway points out, although the Pittman case overturned the 1916 segregation ordinance, "this decision had the effect of proliferating the spread of restrictive covenants." In particular, the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* reported on August 31, 1923, "practically 99 percent of the 375 'realtor' members of the Real Estate Exchange have approved of the establishment of Negro sections in certain outlined districts of the city through a referendum of the organization."[37] According to this agreement the "Exchange would recommend that none of its members sell or rent property outside of the designated districts to Negroes."[38] As Calloway explains, "this continued until 1948 when the United States Supreme Court ruled that these anti-Black covenants were not enforceable in a court of law."[39]

In his 1979 talk entitled, "The Structure of Black Residential Containment in St. Louis as of 1916 and Discussion of Restrictive Covenants in St. Louis," Calloway explained the geographic boundaries of housing segregation in the city of St. Louis.[40] According to Calloway, the "first line of defense" to "contain" and isolate African Americans in the city was Grand Avenue.[41] Calloway went on to state, "until 1920 this was the Mason Dixon

line in the planned containment of the Black population in St. Louis."[42] The "second line of defense" became Kingshighway.[43] Yet this line of defense was legally challenged on May 3, 1948 in the Supreme Court's decision in *Shelly v. Kraemer* which ruled restrictive covenants unconstitutional. On January 31, 1964 the St. Louis Board of Aldermen passed the St. Louis Fair Housing Ordinance #52328 that made it illegal to discriminate against anyone because of his "race, religion, national origin or ancestry in the sale, lease or rental of any housing unit; in the financing of the purchase of any housing unit; and in the use, management or disposition of any housing unit."[44] While the restrictive covenant lost its legal foundation with the 1948 Supreme Court decision and residential discrimination was outlawed by the 1964 Fair Housing Ordinance, "informal arrangements" among residents, realtors, and financial institutions in the St. Louis area continued to sustain housing segregation.[45]

By 1920 the African American population in St. Louis had dramatically increased as a result of the migration of thousands of African Americans from the Deep South to northern and border cities such as St. Louis. This massive population shift has come to be known as the Great Migration. The Great Migration began during World War One when African Americans were motivated to leave the South by unemployment, the destruction of cotton crops by the boll weevil, floods, and social factors such as racism, segregation, disfranchisement, and violence. Conversely, African Americans were drawn to these northern cities by employment, education, and other social opportunities they offered. Between 1915 and 1918, roughly one half million southern African Americans migrated to the North. In St. Louis the African American population grew from 43,960 in 1910 to 69, 854 in 1920 and by 1945 grew to 180, 000.[46] Migrants to St. Louis and other cities experienced many challenges including overcrowding, crime, unemployment, and white hostility. These challenges came to a head in East St. Louis in July 1917.

Relations between African Americans and whites in East St. Louis became increasingly strained during the Great Migration. In particular, between 10,000 and 12,000 African Americans came from the South to St. Clair County in search of industrial jobs throughout 1917.[47] Like most northern cities that experienced rapid population growth during this time, East St. Louis did not afford employment, adequate housing, or protection to these migrants. In addition, white workers grew resentful of African Americans because they were perceived as willing to work for lower wages. Furthermore, sociologists Ben Johnson, John Raker, M.D. Foster, and Henry Allen Cooper state, "the failure to provide them [white workers] with better homes added to their bitter dissatisfaction with the burdens

placed upon them by having to compete with Black labor. This resentment spread until it included thousands who did not have to work with their hands."[48] In addition, in February 1917 approximately 470 African Americans were hired to replace striking workers at the Aluminum Ore Company in East St. Louis. Therefore, competition over employment further aggravated the relationship between African Americans and whites, thus setting the stage for future violence.

Spring brought the first outbreak of violence to East St. Louis in 1917. Intermittent outbursts of violence continued throughout May and June until the night of July 1. The flashpoint of the riot occurred when a car drove through an African American neighborhood firing gunshots randomly into homes. Two white plainclothed police officers arrived in the neighborhood to investigate but were subsequently shot by African American residents, who believed the officers were the individuals originally responsible for the attack. Upon hearing news of the shooting, the white population poured into the streets to attack the African American community.

Approximately thirty nine African Americans were killed and hundreds more wounded, while eight whites were killed. The riot resulted in the removal of African Americans from East St. Louis. As Johnson, Raker, Foster, and Cooper point out, "so many of these men were driven out of East St. Louis as the result of the July riot that the railroads could not secure necessary help."[49] For years after, African Americans continued to refuse residence in East St. Louis but rather chose to live "across the river in St. Louis, and would go over to East St. Louis in the morning to work and would return to that place before nightfall."[50]

On the other hand, as George Lipsitz asserts, "despite its widespread segregation and discrimination, St. Louis had long enjoyed a reputation as a vital center for African American life and culture."[51] Katherine Corbett and Mary Seematter also point out, "migrants who came to St. Louis found an established Black community as old as the city itself, with schools, churches, hospitals, newspapers, theaters, and social clubs paralleling those in the larger white community and with similar class distinctions based on family, income, and education."[52] These institutions would help sustain the local movement for Black liberation throughout the twentieth century.

One institution that contributed to the strength of the local African American community in the early twentieth century was the Homer G. Phillips Hospital. George Lipsitz explains African American demand for a "full service health care facility on the north side" of St. Louis was expressed as early as 1915, when African American leaders informed the city of the "need for a teaching hospital for training Black doctors, and . . . complained bitterly about the poor quality health care available to Blacks at the

poorly funded and segregated City Hospital #2." [53] It was not until 1923 that the city finally responded to the Black community's health care needs. In 1923 St. Louis Mayor Henry Kiel promised the African American community funds to build a new hospital in exchange for support for a "bond issue aimed at repairing the city's deteriorating infrastructure." [54] Kiel negotiated this agreement with Homer G. Phillips, the prominent African American attorney who defended Pittman in the 1917 landmark Supreme Court case. The bond ultimately passed and Mayor Kiel provided $87,000 for the construction of the hospital, which began in 1932. [55] The hospital received additional funding from New Deal programs. [56]

Unfortunately, construction on the hospital began a year after Homer G. Phillips was murdered on June 18, 1931. [57] On February 22, 1937 the hospital opened its doors and in 1938 was dedicated to Phillips. In 1979 city officials asserted that the city could no longer afford to keep the hospital operating as a full service health care facility. In 1981 the city held a city wide referendum to decide the fate of the hospital. Sixty percent of the voters wanted the hospital to remain open, yet in 1984 the hospital permanently closed. [58]

It is important to also point out that Homer G. Phillips Hospital, in addition to other local African American institutions including Poro College and the People's Finance Building, were built by white contractors who refused to hire African American workers. [59] Lipsitz notes, "the city insisted it could find no Black qualified to do the work, a flimsy excuse but an underhanded way of reinforcing the discriminatory practices of construction unions." [60] In the case of the construction of Homer G. Phillips Hospital, Lipsitz states, "city officials refused applications for work on Phillips by twenty Black plasterers, thirty one Black carpenters, thirty five Black electricians, and forty five Black painters, all of whom either had union cards from other cities or who had done comparable work in St. Louis." [61] The People's Finance Building was built in 1926 and provided offices for African American doctors, lawyers, photographers, the J. Roy Terry School of Music, the Moving Picture Operators' Union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the NAACP, the Peoples Finance Bank, Ernest Harris's Pharmacy, the *St. Louis American*, the Inge Real Estate Company, and the National Baptist Association and Bookstore. [62] In addition, there was a restaurant in the basement and a ballroom on the top floor of the People's Finance Building. [63] In addition, the Booker T. Washington Theater, owned by Charles Turpin and located at 2100 Market Street in downtown St. Louis, showcased the talents of Josephine Baker, Eubie Blake, Ethel Waters, and Bessie Smith. [64] Furthermore, Blues artists such as Mary Johnson, Alice Moore, Lee Green, Roosevelt Sykes, Walter Davis, Peetie Wheetstraw, and

Lonnie Johnson performed in local riverfront saloons, brothels, and gambling houses in the St. Louis and East St. Louis red light districts.[65]

Similar to the years immediately following World War One, St. Louis experienced a second influx of African Americans in the mid 1940s. According to Manning Marable, the influx of these migrants was the result of the mechanization of southern agriculture that left many unemployed, coupled with the "promise of higher wages and better working conditions."[66] St. Louis saw even more African American migrants from the South following World War Two than during the Great Migration. Approximately 38, 000 African Americans migrated to the city throughout the 1940s.[67] Most of these migrants came from the South in search of industrial jobs. As was the case throughout northern cities experiencing similar migration, migrants coming to St. Louis arrived in a city "with a rich history, a vibrant cultural life, and a tradition of civil rights activism" yet faced many challenges.[68]

Many African Americans migrated to northern cities such as St. Louis from the South in search of jobs in war industries. By 1944, local industries were in desperate need of labor. Although local industries such as Monsanto and McDonnell Douglas were experiencing a severe labor shortage, they continued to discriminate in their hiring. In addition, once hired, African Americans faced intense animosity from unions, which refused to allow African Americans to join their ranks. Despite challenges by the Urban League, these conditions remained. As historian Hollis Lynch points out, taken in whole, "a combination of hostile union attitudes and employer indifference was largely responsible for this situation and it persisted in spite of vigorous efforts of government agencies, the Urban League, and other interested organizations."[69]

World War Two was an important turning point in the struggle for African American liberation. For example, Manning Marable notes, "the blatant contradiction between the country's opposition to fascism and the Herrenvolk state and the continued existence of Jim Crow in the States after 1945 was made perfectly clear to all. Blacks and an increasing sector of liberal white Americans came out of the war with a fresh determination to uproot racist ideologies and institutions at home."[70] In addition, Penny M. Von Eschen points out that the formation of the United Nations as "a forum for international debate and organization" was instrumental in shaping post war African American liberation efforts. For example, on October 23, 1947, the NAACP issued to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights "An Appeal to the World: A Statement on the Denial of Human Rights to Minorities in the Case of Citizens of Negro Descent in the United States of America." According to Von Eschen, the appeal "focused on the hypocrisy of the United States and argued that the 'color

line' in America undermined its status as the leader of the free world."[71] Moreover, the Atlantic Charter, issued in August 1941, gave official international legitimacy to anti-colonialism among Western nations.[72] Steven F. Lawson also suggests that World War Two was a significant turning point in the African American freedom struggle. For instance he argues, "the war propelled a growth of racial consciousness and a burst of militancy that foreshadowed the assault on Jim Crow."[73] Lawson adds, "the World War Two era furnished the staging ground for the Black revolution. It revitalized Black solidarity, tested innovative protest tactics, and moved the federal government closer to the side of racial equality. Wartime urban migration and improved economic opportunities laid the basis for later social and political changes."[74]

Specifically, A. Philip Randolph's March on Washington Movement was responsible for Executive Order 8802 which created the Fair Employment Practice Committee to oversee equal employment in war industries. Perhaps more importantly however, the March on Washington Movement was a catalyst and model for African American agitation and liberation efforts in the decades following the war. Many African Americans in St. Louis supported Randolph's movement, and in May 1942 Randolph came to St. Louis to help organize a local chapter of the March on Washington Movement to help fight discriminatory hiring practices in local war industries.[75] Working with such local leaders as Theodore McNeal, chairman of the local Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and David Grant, a prominent African American attorney, a local MOWM affiliate was created with twenty-two members. It should also be noted that in limiting membership to African Americans, the MOWM served as a model for future African American liberation groups in St. Louis, such as the Black Defenders, that fought racism and segregation as non-integrated organizations.

One of the group's first battles was against the U.S. Cartridge Plant in June 1942.[76] On June 20, over four hundred people marched to the plant to protest its discrimination against African American workers. Specifically, the marchers, "demanded an increase in wages for Black porters, the employment of Black women, and admittance to training schools for defense jobs."[77] A week after the march, the U.S. Cartridge plant, hired 50 African American women as matrons, and advertisements for war industry jobs in the plant were placed in the local African American and white newspapers.[78]

Despite these initial gestures to the local MOWM, the U.S. Cartridge Plant continued to discriminate against African Americans in hiring, continued to deny promotions to qualified African American employees, and continued to segregate African American and white employees in separate

buildings.[79] Furthermore, according to local historian Patricia Adams, seventy five percent of companies with defense contracts in St. Louis refused to hire African Americans.[80] By August 1944 the FEPC began investigating discrimination charges against local companies such as Amertorp Corporation, Bussman Manufacturing, Carter Carburetor, McDonnell Aircraft, McQuay-Morris Manufacturing, St. Louis Shipbuilding and Steel, and Wagner Electric.[81] In fact, St. Louis presented such a massive case load for the FEPC that it was forced to open a local office in St. Louis in October 1944.[82] Following the war the local MOWM disbanded while Randolph continued to fight on a national level for the creation of a permanent FEPC.[83]

By 1950, the majority of employed African Americans in Missouri worked in unskilled positions.[84] Specifically, in 1950 there were 109, 024 employed African Americans in Missouri with 59, 081 employed in domestic and menial positions, 18, 000 employed as "common laborers," and 23, 305 employed in unskilled industrial positions.[85] This left only roughly 9, 000 African American employed in skilled positions in Missouri. Moreover, African Americans in St. Louis faced unemployment and low wages when compared to whites. In 1950 the gross average yearly income for African Americans in St. Louis was 58% of what white workers earned.[86] Furthermore, the unemployment rate for African Americans was 15% in 1954, more than two and a half times the rate for white workers.[87]

In addition, while African Americans represented 30% of the city's population in 1958, roughly 16% of the city's housing was open to them.[88] *Missouri's Black Heritage* also estimates that "ninety five thousand Blacks moved to St. Louis between 1950 and 1957. Despite that huge number, less than one hundred new homes were built for them."[89] Coupled with unemployment and housing discrimination, African Americans continued to face discrimination in public accommodations. For example, *Missouri's Black Heritage* notes, "it was difficult for Blacks to find lodging in hotels, motels, or boarding houses. They could not eat in restaurants, cafeterias, snack bars, or roadside stands. Soda fountains, drug counters, ice cream parlors, and similar facilities refused them service."[90] De facto segregation also kept places of recreation including "theaters, drive-ins, bowling alleys, skating rinks, swimming pools, and golf courses" segregated.[91]

Several significant legal challenges to segregation originated in Missouri. For example, May 3, 1948, in *Shelley v. Kraemer*, the United States Supreme Court ruled against the practice of restrictive covenants in nineteen states and the District of Columbia.[92] Moreover, in 1938 the Supreme Court ruled in *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada, Registrar of the University, et al* that the University of Missouri admit Lloyd Gaines to

the University of Missouri Law School or provide him and other African American students with a "separate but equal" alternative. The University of Missouri subsequently defended its all white law school and established the Lincoln University Law School in 1940.[93] In 1939 the state of Missouri saw another challenge to segregation in the state's institutions of higher education when Lucille Bluford desired admission into the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Once again the University of Missouri protected its all-white journalism school by refusing to admit Ms. Bluford and subsequently created the Lincoln University School of Journalism in 1941.[94] These legal challenges to segregation in Missouri helped build a successful foundation for continued agitation in proceeding decades, including the campaign to integrate outdoor public swimming pools.

Throughout the late 1940s African Americans continuously tried to gain access to outdoor public swimming pools in the St. Louis area. In response to these attempts to gain access to the pools, by Spring 1949 the Commissioner of Parks, Palmer B. Baumes and Director of Public Welfare, John J. O'Toole began considering a strategy to integrate the swimming pools. One week before the swimming season was to begin in the summer of 1949, O'Toole concluded that "he could see no basis for keeping Negroes out of the pools."[95] O'Toole added, "they are citizens like everybody else and have every legal right to enter any public facility."[96] O'Toole and Baumes then approached Mayor Joseph Darst, who agreed to support their proposal. This decision was highly praised by the African American community and the St. Louis chapter of the NAACP and CORE.

While the decision made by Baumes, O'Toole, and Mayor Joseph Darst to integrate the swimming pools was a decision based on legal and moral arguments against the continued segregation of the swimming pools, the actual process of achieving integration was uncoordinated and was responsible in part for the outbreak of violence when the pools eventually opened. For example, following Baumes's decision to integrate the pools, no coordination between the Public Welfare Department, Parks Department, Mayor's office, or Fairgrounds Park swimming pool office took place. In addition, Fairgrounds pool employees and park guards were not given any advance instructions concerning integration. Furthermore, no coordination with the St. Louis police department took place. Finally, realizing that pool integration had the potential to become an explosive situation if publicity of it was not handled in a responsible manner, Mayor Darst made a desperate and last minute attempt to keep St. Louis newspapers from reporting it.[97] This effort failed and the integration of the swimming pools was the front page headline of local papers on the first morning of the swimming pool season.

Tuesday, June 21, marked the beginning of the 1949 swimming pool season. That morning African American children arrived at several swimming pools in various areas of St. Louis and demanded admittance. For the most part, these children were allowed in and received no reaction from white patrons or pool employees. For example, roughly one hundred African American children visited the Mullanphy Community Center pool. These children were admitted and no violence occurred. Furthermore, four African American children were admitted to the Marquette swimming pool with equal success. In addition, several African American children went to the Soulard Playground swimming pool and faced no trouble. However, the Fairgrounds Park swimming pool was different.

When the Fairgrounds pool opened, roughly thirty African American boys and several hundred white boys were in line waiting to get in. Roughly one to two hundred additional white boys assembled outside the pool, where they verbally attacked and threatened the African American children. By 3:00 in the afternoon, tension among the crowd congregated outside of the pool area increased and had grown to include several white adults. When the afternoon swimming session ended, the police were called to escort the African American children out of the pool. In response to this confrontation, and in an attempt to prevent future violence, at 6:20 that evening Mayor Darst "rescinded the order opening the pools to Negroes."[98]

When the Fairgrounds Park pool reopened for its evening session at 6:45, roughly thirty African American children arrived at the pool expecting admission. These children were met by a crowd of about two hundred whites armed with blunt weapons. According to witnesses, the white children who comprised the majority of the crowd were provoked into attacking the African American children by a small group of white adults present among the crowd. As a result of this initial provocation, violence erupted outside the pool area as African American boys were attacked. Violence spread throughout Fairgrounds Park following this initial incident, with whites attacking African Americans throughout the Fairgrounds Park area. An African American resident of the area, Walter Hayes, recalled, "this memory [of integration at the Fairgrounds Park swimming pool] stands out in my mind because, before this incident, I never knew that hatred actually traveled in waves. I could feel and see those hate waves, similar to heat waves coming at you on a hot, sunny day in a desert, coming from the crowd. It was an eerie feeling."[99] As a result of this incident, outdoor public swimming pools were closed for the summer of 1949.

When outdoor pools opened the following June, 1950, African American children were still denied access. In response, several groups, including the NAACP and a coalition of religious leaders called the

Ministerial Alliance, brought a case to the federal courts attacking the continued segregation of the St. Louis City swimming pools. On July 17, 1950, District Court Judge Ruby Hulen ordered that St. Louis City admit African Americans to all outdoor public swimming pools. Furthermore, Judge Hulen mandated that "no rule or regulation shall be made applicable to members of the Negro race that is not equally applicable to members of all other races using the open air pools."[100]

U.S. District Court Judge Clyde S. Cahill of the Eastern District of Missouri recalled Judge Ruby Hulen, "was a tall guy with big glasses. He looked like Ichabod Crane. He sat at his bench and towered over everybody. And the chief of police said, 'Judge, we can't let these Blacks come in and swim. There's crowds out there, spitting, cussing, and throwing rocks. We've had several people killed. They're mad at the police and they may hurt some of our officers. We can't control them. Why don't you let it cool down for several months?' The judge pulled down his glasses and said, 'Chief, how long have you been chief of police? Do you want to remain chief of police? By God, if you can't control that crowd, I'll get a chief of police who can!' And there was dead silence. Dave Grant was smirking. The chief didn't say a word, he just stood there like he was paralyzed. And I thought, that's what I want to be, I want to be a federal judge."[101]

The injunction to integrate the pools was put into effect on July 19, 1950. No incidents of violence were reported on that day or the rest of the summer. To ensure peaceful integration, approximately one hundred and seventy five police officers patrolled the swimming pools throughout the city that summer. However, pool officials did report a noticeable decline in the number of whites using the facilities. In fact, following the District Court's decision many whites in the St. Louis area boycotted the swimming pools that summer.

The city of St. Louis learned several lessons from the integration of outdoor public swimming pools, lessons that led the city to take steps necessary to ensure that similar violence would be avoided during forthcoming challenges to segregation. The violence that erupted at the Fairgrounds Park on June 21, 1949 introduced institutional and attitudinal changes to the city of St. Louis that allowed these future challenges to occur peacefully without the reoccurrence of violence. Such changes included the formation of the Council of Human Relations designed to create an environment in St. Louis which provided "each individual the fullest opportunity to develop his talents and abilities without the limitations imposed by the destructive forces of discrimination."[102] Moreover, the Fairgrounds Park incident revealed and publicized racial oppression and segregation in

the city of St. Louis which forced the wider public and government to be more proactive and receptive to civil rights.[103]

Challenges to segregation immediately following World War Two received support from an extremely powerful and influential sector in the city of St. Louis, the Catholic Church. Before 1917 the local Catholic Church was an integrated institution. However, by 1917 Archbishop John Glennon mandated that local Catholic churches and parochial schools close their doors to African Americans, forcing African Americans to attend the Jim Crow Catholic Church, St. Elizabeth's.[104] This church was located on Pine Street and was also home to the Phyllis Wheatly YMCA, the local Black YMCA affiliate. Glennon asserted that his decision to segregate local Catholic churches and schools was based on his concern of offending white "wealthy patrons of the church."[105] According to historian and priest Donald Kemper, "the source of Glennon's racial beliefs remains speculative, but the suspicion lingers that finances loomed large in his calculations. Even the very limited documents available for the Glennon era demonstrate his deep fear of alienating wealthy contributors. At the same time, he seemed obsessed with the supposed financial ineptitude of Blacks. One of his statements suggests that if St. Louis Blacks had suddenly come upon great wealth, the archbishop would have personally escorted them in."[106]

Glennon's segregation directive was finally overturned on August 25, 1947 by Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter, who replaced Glennon after his death in Europe in the Spring of 1946.[107] A letter sent to all pastors by Ritter's Auxiliary Bishop, John P. Cody explained, "in response to inquiries from some of the Reverend Pastors about the admission of Catholic colored children in our parochial schools, His Excellency has instructed me to advise you that it is his mind that there should be no discrimination and that the same principles for admission are to be followed in admitting colored children as for others. This is in keeping with our Catholic teaching and the best principles of our American form of democratic government."[108]

According to Kemper, responses to Ritter's directive to integrate local churches and parochial schools varied according to geographic location.[109] Specifically, priests working in the suburbs and outlying areas where few African Americans resided were indifferent to the directive. On the other hand, priests working within the city and in and around African American neighborhoods in North St. Louis "felt at least chagrin if not anger" over the directive.[110] In addition, many parents reacted aggressively to the integration of the schools and took steps to actively fight integration. For example, parents from ten Parishes created the Catholic Parents Association of St. Louis and St. Louis County to fight integration in local Catholic schools.[111] The organization attempted to meet with Ritter, who refused

to meet with them. In reaction to his refusal, fourteen additional Parishes joined the ranks of the Association, which ultimately included forty three Parishes. Once again the Association attempted to register their complaints, yet Ritter refused to meet with them.[112] When the group threatened to seek an injunction to prevent integration, Ritter counter threatened them with excommunication. According to Kemper, Ritter "reminded the dissidents that according to Canon 2341 of the Code of Canon Law, an automatic excommunication . . . would descend upon any Catholics who interfered with the 'administrative office of their Bishop by having recourse to any authority outside the Church.'"[113] In late September 1947 the Association, faced with Ritter's adamant commitment to integration, folded. It is important to note that the Catholic Church continued to play a central role in the front line battles for African American liberation in the city of St. Louis. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the local Catholic Church—often in cooperation with other religious groups, labor groups and local human rights organizations— was a key ally of the local Black liberation struggle.

Despite the fact, as sociologist Daniel Monti suggests, St. Louis was an "odd place to stage a minor revolution in American race relations" this "revolution" has received little scholarly attention.[114] The following reveals this "revolution" by examining early challenges to segregation in St. Louis immediately following World War Two. As this chapter has explained, developments throughout the early twentieth century served as the bedrock upon which this battle was fought.

Chapter Two
An Early Battle: The St. Louis Movement before 1964

Many scholars mark the start of the "sit-in" phase of the Black liberation movement as February 1, 1960 in Greensboro, North Carolina. For example, Manning Marable states, "the Second Reconstruction actually began in earnest on the afternoon of February 1, 1960."[1] Historian Robert Weisbrot explains that the "sit-in" movement was sparked by four students from North Carolina A&T and refers to them as "an unlikely band of revolutionaries."[2] In addition, Lerone Bennett, Jr. writes, "in Greensboro, North Carolina, where, on February 1, 1960, four students from North Carolina A&T College sat down at the 'white' lunch counter in a Woolworth store and demanded service. This was the opening salvo of an unexampled student protest movement which shook the South to its foundation and set the stage for the student rebellions of the sixties."[3]

While these examples illustrate how most historians have attributed the start of the sit-in movement against segregation to the efforts of these North Carolina A&T students in 1960, the St. Louis chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality had been employing sit-ins since its inception in 1947. For example, Mary Kimbrough and Margaret Dagen assert in their study of St. Louis CORE, "it is frequently reported that the first sit-ins at lunch counters in the country took place in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1960 . . . But the St. Louis campaign actually preceded the one in Greensboro by almost thirteen years. Long before the demonstrations used peaceful protest in North Carolina, the members of St. Louis CORE had accepted the concept of 'passive resistance' and translated that concept into 'nonviolent direct action.'"[4]

While St. Louis CORE engaged in nonviolent direct action to attack segregation throughout the 1950s, these efforts have not received

the similar attention protests in Greensboro have received. One possible explanation for this limited recognition is the limited publicity these actions received in the local media. In 1990 the *Post Dispatch* addressed this very issue in an editorial entitled, "St. Louis' Silent Racial Revolution."[5] In this piece, the *Post* recognized, "historians have thus far neglected to give the Midwest and St. Louis in particular, its rightful credit for its role in the early phase of the civil rights movement."[6] The reporter, Richard Dudman, went on to confirm that he personally witnessed protests by CORE in 1950 yet was advised by an editor of the *Post* that "there was no need for a story."[7] While the local media failed and refused to report on these early protests, CORE often agreed to limit publicity of their actions. For instance, Margaret Dagen states, "the group always agreed, when asked, to do its best to prevent publicity."[8] Former *Post Dispatch* editors Selwyn Pepper and Evarts A. Graham asserted that the paper's policy of not reporting on CORE's actions was "appropriate, considering racial tension at the time, earlier interracial violence in St. Louis and the influence of such racists as Gerald L.K. Smith in the community."[9] The former editors went on to remark, "publicizing the sit-ins might have triggered renewed violence."[10] Confirming the absence of St. Louis in civil rights movement studies, Dudman concludes, "one result of the news blackout is that the history books do not yet mention an innovative, peaceful, and successful St. Louis venture in breaking down racial segregation."[11]

The formation of St. Louis CORE can be attributed to Bernice Fisher. Before coming to St. Louis Fisher, along with George Houser and Jim Farmer, founded CORE in Chicago in 1942. It was through the University of Chicago that Fisher met Houser and Farmer, both members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Fisher, Farmer, and Houser immediately became close friends, as Farmer states, "she and I quickly became pals and beer drinking cohorts, when one of us had the money, and we reveled in our private debates."[12] Farmer goes on to describe Fisher affectionately as, "wiry and impulsive, her clothes were sometimes ill matched, her red-dish-blond hair often in disarray, and her hose frequently had crooked seams and runs, which she failed to notice."[13] At the time of their meeting, Fisher was earning a Master's Degree in religious education and was finishing her thesis.[14] In addition, describing her as a passionate idealist, humanitarian, and pacifist, Farmer stated, "I think there was nothing on earth that she did not feel strongly about. An avid reader of such modern theologians as Kierkegaard, Buber, and Niebuhr, she always knew precisely how many angels could dance on the point of every needle."[15] Farmer added, "Bernice combined a fiery hatred of racism with a violent rejection of war. Both evils made her fighting mad. I often called her 'the most warlike pacifist I ever knew' . . .

The bombs that fell on Pearl Harbor caused the intensity of her feelings on both race and war to become even more explosive."[16]

In 1947 Fisher left Chicago for St. Louis to work as an organizer for the United Wholesale and Distribution Workers of America.[17] Fisher's work in St. Louis with the Union and her reputation for activism in Chicago drew the attention of Irvin and Margaret Dagen. The Dagen's formed Humanity Inc. in the late 1940s. Humanity Inc. was a small group of students and teachers from Washington University, labor activists, politicians, lawyers, journalists, and professors who met at the Dagen's apartment in University City to discuss politics and social issues.[18] In 1947 Bernice Fisher was invited by the Dagen's to speak to the group. According to Margaret Dagen, "Fisher told the Dagens about her involvement with CORE in Chicago" and "brought the message and the experience of Chicago CORE to the St. Louis group in 1947."[19] Margaret Dagen asserted, "without Fisher's challenge to the St. Louis group, it is unlikely that St. Louis CORE would have come into being that night in 1947."[20]

Margaret Dagen earned a Master's Degree from Northwestern and a Ph.D from Cornell University in labor relations. Dagen's mother was a Quaker and her father was a chief attorney for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in St. Louis from 1914 to 1950. In 1945 she began teaching at Clayton High School in St. Louis, where she taught a senior course in labor relations and human relations. Irvin Dagen was from Brooklyn where he worked in a leather importing firm. Margaret recalled that Irvin had been "influenced by the liberal political and social ideas that he heard vigorously debated at home, at Columbia University, and as a writer for the WPA Writer's Project in New York."[21] Irvin came to St. Louis in 1940 and attended law school at St. Louis University at night. He earned his law degree in 1954.

While the Dagen's Humanity Inc. was the soil from which St. Louis CORE grew, another organization associated with Washington University also provided CORE with its initial members and leadership. Members of the Washington University American Veterans Committee, Washington University YMCA and YWCA, and members of the George Warren Brown School of Social Work formed SCAN, Student Committee for the Admission of Negroes in 1947 to demand admission of African Americans to Washington University. On May 9, 1952 Washington University opened its doors to African Americans.[22] Following this victory, many SCAN members joined CORE. For example, Charles Oldham, after being discharged from the Air Force, attended Washington University Law School where he became a charter member of the American Veterans Committee and member of SCAN. Oldham went on to become one of the most active members

of St. Louis CORE and served as CORE's National Chairman. In addition, after receiving a Purple Heart in World War Two, Joe Ames attended Washington University Law School and became an active member of the American Veterans Committee, SCAN, CORE, and an organizer for the Teamsters Union. Marvin Rich was another veteran who, after returning from Korea, attended Washington University and became a member of SCAN and CORE and eventually head of CORE's National Community Relations Committee.

Judith Stix, a sixteen-year-old white college student at Washington University, also became involved in CORE through SCAN. Born in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1932, Stix spent most of her childhood in the Deep South. Stix was raised in a middle class family and according to her brief autobiography, she came from what can be considered a liberal background. Her mother held a law degree and practiced "for several years in Chicago as clerk to a Cook County judge."[23] Stix recalls that as a child in Chicago her mother laid the groundwork for her commitment to racial equality, noting for example, that unlike her playmates' parents, her mother instructed her never to use the word "nigger."[24] While she spent most of her childhood in the Deep South, she spent two years living in Memphis with her grandparents. Interestingly, she states that her grandparents lived in the African American "section" of town and were the only two white people on their block. Nevertheless, Stix noted that despite living in an African American neighborhood, "the color line was so clear that I knew no Black people as playmates or equals."[25]

In the fall of 1948 Stix traveled from Memphis to St. Louis to attend Washington University. While St. Louis was a segregated city, upon Stix's arrival she immediately recognized the difference between the de jure racial barriers of Memphis and the de facto segregation of St. Louis. For instance, she states, "St. Louis felt like the North to me, in large part I suppose because the streetcars had no color line."[26] Despite her initial impression of St. Louis race relations, it took little time for Stix to recognize the rigid local system of Jim Crow and in the spring of 1949, she and her roommate joined the recently formed student organization, SCAN.[27] Stix participated in SCAN activities throughout her freshmen year at Washington University. For example, during a SCAN parade she carried a Confederate flag to "symbolize Southerners for integration."[28]

Following her first year at Washington University, Stix returned to Memphis for summer vacation. There she began attending local NAACP meetings. She recalls being the only white member at that time. This experience contributed to her development as an activist and prepared her for St. Louis CORE's upcoming sit-in campaign against local lunch

counters. Upon returning to school in the fall of 1949, Stix met Marvin Rich through SCAN. Rich was also involved in CORE and introduced Stix to the organization.[29]

Along with Bernice Fisher, Charles Oldham, Irvin and Margaret Dagen, Marvin Rich, Joe Ames, and Judith Stix, St. Louis CORE's initial membership included three students from Stowe Teachers College, Margie Toliver, Jane Bowles, and Wanda Penny, and Norman Seay, a student at Vashon High school. As Margaret Dagen explains, "the earliest participants in St. Louis CORE were young idealists. They were an integrated group of students, graduates, and faculty from Washington University, Stowe Teachers College, St. Louis University, and a few local high schools. There were veterans, teamsters, lawyers, postal workers, labor organizers, and social workers."[30] By the early 1950s the young group outgrew the Dagen's apartment and through Bernice Fisher's contacts were offered meeting space, access to printing equipment, telephones, and other office equipment by Harold Gibbons, President of the St. Louis Teamsters.[31]

Another early member of St. Louis CORE was Marian O'Fallon Oldham. Oldham received her BA from Harris-Stowe Teachers College in St. Louis, where she was also a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. In addition, Oldham received an MA in education from the University of Michigan. From 1948 to 1967, she was employed as a teacher and counselor in the St. Louis Public School system. In 1977, she became the first African American women appointed by Missouri Governor Joseph Teasdale to the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri, a position she held until 1985. Also, in 1977, Oldham was appointed to the twenty-two person Missouri Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. This committee was designed to assist the Federal Civil Rights Commission "by conducting investigations on civil rights problems, publishing reports of its findings, and making recommendations."[32] Moreover, in the 1980s, Oldham served as chairperson of the Real Estate Board of Metropolitan St. Louis' Equal Rights Committee. Also, in the late 1980s, she was a real estate agent for A.K. Feinberg Real Estate Co.[33] In 1992 she received an honorary doctorate from the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

Oldham was introduced to St. Louis CORE through Alice Stewart, a professor at Washington University. Oldham attended CORE meetings every Tuesday night and joined Stewart at CORE's protests of the lunch counter at the Stix, Baer & Fuller department store.[34] Oldham explained that CORE fully educated its members in its philosophy and tactics. For example, Oldham noted that the group held frequent officer elections in order to give everyone the opportunity to serve as a leader and learn about leadership. Rather than be leader dominated, St. Louis CORE's practice of

frequent officer elections illustrates the group's community orientation and its commitment to developing organizational and leadership skills among all of its members. CORE also created and fostered a familial, community atmosphere through its social functions. For example, Oldham states, "we socialized. We had picnics as well as sit-ins, etc. We played bridge. We became a very close knit group. We were very dedicated and very sincere and very nonviolent. We studied Gandhi. We knew the techniques that he had used. And we were committed to what we were doing."[35] Yet despite this familial and community atmosphere, commitment to nonviolence and interracial cooperation would be challenged and eventually abandoned with the group's embrace of Black Power by 1965.

Oldham remained on the front lines of the local civil rights movement through the mid 1960s and her activism inspired many in the community.[36] Former St. Louis NAACP President Margaret Bush Wilson stated of Oldham, "she knew how to disturb the comfortable and comfort the disturbed."[37] When Wilson asked Oldham how she could be arrested and jailed for her activism, Oldham replied, "somebody has to."[38] Moreover, according to William Clay, "her quiet and dignified manner, grace and charm belied the toughness that she brought to the struggle."[39] Marian Oldham died on March 12, 1994 of cancer. She was 66 years old. Since her death, her lifelong commitment to human rights has been recognized and celebrated by the city of St. Louis. Following her death the University of Missouri, St. Louis created the Marian Oldham Scholarship for minority students and is co-chaired by Ozzie Smith and Jackie Joyner Kersey.[40] In December 1994 the City of St. Louis renamed the Pierre Laclede Station Post Office at 4021 Laclede Avenue, the Marian Oldham Post Office.[41]

From its inception St. Louis CORE proved itself a uniquely active and successful affiliate to the national organization. In part, its uniqueness came from its more strenuous membership requirements. Standard requirements for membership included a probation of "up to two months during which time the initiate participated in chapter activities and studied CORE philosophy" and was then approved for official membership by a special membership committee and then the entire chapter.[42] However, St. Louis CORE required a ten-week probation and the approval of two-thirds of the chapter.[43]

CORE members were firmly committed and well versed in the organization's philosophy. CORE based itself upon Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolent direct action. From its 1963 position paper "All About CORE" the group explained, "CORE seeks understanding, not physical victory. It seeks to win the friendship, respect, and even support of those whose racial policies it opposes. People cannot be bludgeoned into a feeling of

equality. Integration, if it is not to be tense and artificial, must, in CORE's view, be more than an armed truce. Real racial equality can be attained only through cooperation; not the grudging cooperation one exacts from a beaten opponent, but the voluntary interaction of two parties working toward a solution of a mutual problem."[44] While nonviolence served as the bedrock to CORE's actions, interracial cooperation was also central to the organization. According to its 1963 position paper, "CORE sees discrimination as a problem for all Americans. Not just Negroes suffer from it and not just Negroes will profit when it is eliminated. Furthermore, Negroes alone cannot eliminate it. Equality cannot be seized any more than it can be given. It must be a shared experience."[45] Explaining its commitment to interracial cooperation, the organization went on to assert, "CORE is an interracial group. Membership involves no religious affiliation. It is open to anybody who opposes racial discrimination, who wants to fight it and who will adhere to CORE's rules."[46] Furthermore, CORE distanced itself from other civil rights groups such as the NAACP and Urban League and their legal strategies. Specifically, CORE stated, "a great deal has been achieved for civil rights through the courts, and legal action has an important place in the civil rights movement. But legal action is necessarily limited to lawyers. CORE's techniques enable large numbers of ordinary people to participate in campaigns to end discrimination."[47] CORE added, "direct action has a value that goes beyond its visible accomplishments. To those who are the target of discrimination, it provides an alterative to bitterness or resignation and, to others, an alternative to mere expressions of sentiment."[48]

In the late 1940s, St. Louis CORE began sit-ins every Saturday at the lunch counter on the main floor of Stix, Baer & Fuller Department Store in downtown St. Louis. White and African American protesters alternated their seating at the counter while sitting with signs that read, "I am waiting for service."[49] Judith Stix distinctly recalled the detailed organization, preparation, self control, cooperation and professional manner in which these early protests occurred. For example, Stix states, "my recollection is that we moved with persistence but with every attempt to avoid friction and to win hearts . . . We were expected at all times to be very calm and very courteous. There were discussions of how we should behave if arrested. Actions were undertaken only with unanimous agreement . . . my recollection is that we actually sought to avoid publicity."[50]

St. Louis CORE protested against Stix, Baer & Fuller Department Store from July 1948 to December 1951. According to Margaret Dagen, Stix Department Store was targeted by CORE for several reasons. First, "Stix was owned by St. Louisans who were leaders in the civic and cultural life of the community."[51] Being prominent members of the community

and "leaders in retailing," it was believed that the owners would be more responsive to the protests, while integration at their department store might lead the way for the larger local business community. Moreover, the location of the store's lunch counter "provided visibility for CORE's efforts."[52] However, despite almost three years of demonstrations, the lunch counter at Stix Department Store continued to deny service to African Americans. In 1951 CORE decided to withdraw from the department store in order to regroup and to give the department store "an opportunity to voluntarily open the lunch counter while saving face."[53] Finally, in December, 1954 Stix agreed to desegregate its lunch counter.

In addition to CORE's campaign against Stix, Baer & Fuller Department Store, CORE held similar protests against Woolworth's in December 1949 and Kresge's in 1950. Representatives from Woolworth's stated that the store would desegregate only if their competitors did the same. Subsequently, CORE began negotiations with the managers of other lunch counters but was unsuccessful in reaching an agreement. Therefore, CORE continued to demonstrate at Woolworth's for five additional months. During these five months CORE targeted Woolworth's branches throughout the city of St. Louis. By 1950, Woolworth's agreed to serve African Americans on a limited basis which included only sandwiches and salads.[54]

In 1950 the Kresge dime store and its segregation policy was similarly targeted by CORE. Kresge store managers defended their service policy by simply stating that it was the decision of their waitresses not to serve African Americans and they, as managers, were not in a position to alter this decision. CORE asserted that the store managers were in fact instructing their waitresses not serve African Americans or whites seated in the Jim Crow area, and were insisting that African American employees not serve white patrons. During their test cases, African American and white CORE members attempted to order food in the segregated sections. White CORE members seated in the Jim Crow section who were served often purchased food and passed it to the African American members seated in other parts of the restaurant. As demonstrations continued, store managers threatened to fire their 59 African American employees if CORE did not end its campaign. Faced with this threat, CORE agreed to end its campaign. Between 1950 and 1951, similar demonstrations were held at Pope's cafeteria, Forum cafeteria, F-E Food Shops, Woolworth's, and Katz's in Kansas City.[55] By 1953 nearly all of the downtown lunch counters in St. Louis had agreed to desegregate.[56] This victory represented one of the most successful campaigns of any CORE affiliate since the creation of CORE in 1942. Moreover, according to the July 28, 1960 *Sit-Down Newsletter* of CORE, St. Louis CORE was also successful in causing the McCrory-McClellan

dime store to promote three African American dishwashers to the position of waiters and waitresses, and agree to hire two more African American women as sales people in the immediate future.[57]

In April 1952, after CORE pulled out of its campaign against Stix Department Store, the group sent its pamphlet "A Plan for Establishing Equal Restaurant Service in St. Louis Department Stores" to Stix Department Store executives and local civic leaders.[58] This pamphlet was important not only because it publicly articulated CORE's demands for integration but, as Margaret Dagen points out, the pamphlet illustrated the "atmosphere" and philosophy of the burgeoning local civil rights movement. Specifically, Dagen states that the Plan "is a good example of the polite, rational, informative manner of negotiation employed by CORE, and it gives a feeling for the atmosphere in St. Louis at that time."[59] The Plan revealed St. Louis CORE's early strategy of negotiation and community cooperation to encourage the larger public's acceptance of the gradual integration of public accommodations. For example, the Plan stated, "we realize that this plan is far from perfect and welcome constructive criticism from interested groups or individuals. It is a plan, however, which permits flexibility and provides a method of positive, gradual change."[60]

As illustrated by CORE's "A Plan for Establishing Equal Restaurant Service in St. Louis Department Stores," negotiation, compromise, cooperation, flexibility, and gradualism defined the group's approach to integrating eating establishments in the 1950s and early 1960s. Moreover, CORE's approach to integration reflected the relationship members had with one another. For instance, Dagen asserts that in the 1950s and early 1960s "CORE's style was simple. The weekly meetings were held first in an apartment and then in a church basement. There were no dues, ceremonies, banquets, awards, or special recognition. Social life consisted of an occasional whist tournament or bridge game, parties and visits in each other's homes, and of course, the Sunday picnic demonstrations. Members became close friends and found common interests. Skin color was regarded as no more significant than eye color."[61]

While this "atmosphere" encouraged Black and white members to participate equally in demonstrations and negotiations, CORE's "style" also allowed women to participate equally and play central roles in the day-to-day confrontations and sit-ins as well as negotiations with store owners. As part of their strategy for integration, CORE sent "test" groups to local eating establishments comprised of various CORE members. Often these groups were comprised solely of women. For example, in May 1951 St. Louis CORE's newsletter, *Up to Date*, reported the daily efforts of the group's women members in protesting at Kresge dime store in downtown

St. Louis. For instance, the newsletter reported, "during the first couple of days that the store was open, Judy Saul [Judith Saul Stix] and Allyce Stewart were refused service at the large first floor lunch counter."[62] In addition, Irvin and Margaret Dagen, and Wanda Penny, met with the owner of Kresge's, R.L. Schoonover, to negotiate the integration of the dimestore's lunch counter. Later, Margaret Dagen met individually with Schoonover several times to discuss desegregation. *Up to Date* went on to report that the development of an affable relationship between Dagen and Schoonover directly led to the successful integration of Kresge's lunch counters.[63]

Margaret Dagen also played a critical role in negotiations with Katz Drugstore in Kansas City, Missouri. On several occasions Dagen traveled alone to Kansas City to personally negotiate with Earl Katz, owner of the drug store. At these private meetings, Katz assured Dagen that he would be receptive to CORE's demands for desegregation. *Up to Date* reported the success of their meetings, noting in particular the amicable terms on which the two negotiators parted. The newsletter stated, "Margie left amid a feeling of friendliness and was given a box of face powder and a bottle of elderberry wine."[64] It was further concluded in the newsletter that her negotiations established an affable relationship that prompted CORE to terminate further protests at the drug store. *Up to Date* stated, "because of the friendly relations which had been established, CORE discontinued demonstrations in the Katz Drug Store."[65]

From Dagen's example it becomes clear that women played a key role not only in the day-to-day confrontations or sit-ins, but were instrumental in developing working relationships with store owners to negotiate desegregation. As will be explained in forthcoming chapters, the movement's embrace of Black Power challenged gender and race relations in groups such as CORE. With the endorsement of Black Power, the traditional philosophy of interracial cooperation was eventually replaced by African American self determination and autonomy. In addition, although women remained central in their activism, the movement's transformation from a struggle for civil rights to Black liberation brought an increasing sense of the movement as a masculine endeavor.

The fact that St. Louis CORE was one of the leading chapters in the country is illustrated in the number of local members who went on to hold important positions in the national leadership. For example, at CORE's annual convention in Cincinnati held June 14–17, 1951, Billie Ames was elected National CORE Chairperson, Lynn Kirk was elected Vice Chairperson, Loraine Edelen became Secretary, and Catherine Raymond was elected Treasurer.[66] Billie Ames also served as a paid Group Coordinator from 1954 to 1955. Henry Hodge, a social worker who joined St. Louis

CORE in 1947, formed CORE's Los Angeles affiliate in 1955 and became National Vice Chairman in 1959. Charles Oldham served as National Chairman from 1956 to 1961, and Marvin Rich joined the National Action Committee in 1956 and in 1959 was hired as the Community Relations Director.

Moreover, since their involvement in CORE, many individuals played significant roles in the St. Louis community, attributing their success to their previous activism in CORE. For example, Charles Oldham remarked, "Marian honed her leadership skills in CORE; she learned those skills chairing CORE meetings. We were all talkative and had ideas and wanted to express them. At the same time, chairing a meeting and getting a program mapped out required some skill. Marian was excellent at it, and later, when she was on the board of curators at the University of Missouri, and also on the boards of the New City School, John Burroughs School, and Community School, she used those lessons and skills that she had learned in CORE. She always had a certain agenda that had to do with the admission of Blacks or the hiring of more Blacks in jobs.[67] In addition, Maggie Dagen served as Associate Director of Admissions at Washington University from 1963 to 1981. Before she died in 1994, Wanda Penny was an Assistant Professor of Art and head of the Arts and Sciences Department at Harris Stowe-State College.

In 1961, segregation in public accommodations legally ended when St. Louis Mayor Raymond Tucker passed the Public Accommodations Ordinance. It is important to note, however, that the struggle over the passage of this ordinance began thirteen years earlier in 1948. On May 6, 1948 the first public accommodations bill was introduced by three St. Louis Aldermen, Jasper C. Caston, Walter Lowe, and Sidney R. Redmond. This bill stated, "all persons within the city of St. Louis shall be entitled, without discrimination or segregation, to the full accommodations, advantages and facilities, and the privileges, of any place of public accommodation . . . It shall be unlawful for any persons being the owner, lessee, proprietor, manager, superintendent, agent, servant, or employee of any such place, directly or indirectly, to exclude, discriminate against, refuse, withhold from or deny to, any person any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, or privileges thereof."[68] This bill was rejected and additional bills mandating desegregation of public accommodations were subsequently reintroduced in 1953, 1955, 1956, 1958, 1959, and 1960, all to be defeated.[69] Finally, on May 19, 1961, by a vote of 20 to 4, Ordinance #50553 was passed. It is also important to bear in mind that by 1953 virtually all of the downtown lunch counters in St. Louis had already agreed to desegregate, largely as a result of CORE's protests.

The year 1961 not only marked a turning point in the local movement with the passage of the Public Accommodation Ordinance, but was also the year CORE launched the Freedom Rides to test the 1946 Supreme Court decision that outlawed segregated seating on interstate buses.[70] The Freedom Rides quickly became one of the defining events in the modern Black liberation movement and projected CORE as one of the leading national civil rights organizations. According to Margaret Dagen and Mary Kimbrough, the Freedom Rides put CORE "at the center of the Black protest movement."[71]

St. Louis and Columbia, Missouri affiliates planned their own Freedom Rides throughout southern Missouri the last week of April, 1961. Similar to the Freedom Rides through the Deep South, Missouri's Freedom Rides experienced resistance from segregationists in southern Missouri. For example, upon entering Sikeston, Missouri, fifteen Freedom Riders were arrested for protesting when they were refused service in a bus terminal restaurant. Their arrests raised concerns among CORE members for the national Freedom Rides scheduled to begin a week later. For example, one CORE member asked, "if bus protests end in arrests in Missouri, what can be expected when Freedom Ride gets to Georgia and points South?"[72]

As CORE's publicity and popularity grew as the result of the Freedom Rides, the organization was flooded with people wanting to join the organization. New members brought new ideologies and goals that challenged CORE's traditional tenets of nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration. Dagen and Kimbrough point out that as CORE's popularity grew following the Freedom Rides, "the nature of the organization changed. The new members, young Black activists, began to differentiate between integration and equality, and to choose the latter as their goal. The old methods and ideas of CORE were seldom brought up."[73]

While negotiation, compromise, cooperation, flexibility, and gradualism defined CORE's approach to integrating public accommodations in the 1950s and early 1960s, the nature of CORE, its goals and philosophy were eventually challenged and altered. As the following chapter explains, following St. Louis CORE's most celebrated and defining campaign, its protests against the Jefferson Bank, CORE's traditional philosophies and goals were further challenged and ultimately replaced by the concept of Black Power. Margaret Dagen asserts that in the wake of the Jefferson Bank campaign, "the original members of St. Louis CORE faced a period in which their interracial composition and Gandhian philosophy of patient negotiation and nonviolent direct action were challenged by hostile words and deeds."[74] While these early years of the movement were, on the surface, successful in ending legal segregation in public accommodations and hiring

discrimination, human rights issues were not similarly improved. Issues such a police brutality, housing, health care, employment, and economic development were not positively affected by these efforts in the 1950s and early 1960s. Black Power was therefore embraced as a concept by which these human rights issues could be successfully addressed.

Moreover, the embrace of Black Power transformed the organization, often alienating many of the group's original members. Judith Stix recalled that as the civil rights movement progressed and embraced the concept of Black Power, she became increasingly repelled. For instance, she states, "my interest in social justice was always based on my belief that each person has a right to be considered as an individual . . . Many later developments, such as affirmative action, renewed Black nationalism, the notion of race separations, have been philosophically repugnant to me."[75] Like other white activists who became disenchanted with the movement's embrace of Black Power, her commitment to human rights and racial equality prevented her from supporting the movement as it "closed" its ranks to white participation to promote Black empowerment and self determination. While members celebrated the initial approach to integration, venerating the fact that their "style" was not "militant" (illustrated by the title of Dagen and Kimbrough's book *Victory without Violence*) the movement's strategies and goals were challenged and dismissed when Black Power was embraced as the concept by which African American liberation could be achieved in St. Louis.

Chapter Three
Black Power: The Next Step

Major incidents and events following World War Two have served as markers for shifts, changes, and redirections in the ideologies, tactics, strategies, targets, and goals of the Black liberation movement. However, as this work argues, such incidents and events can not be employed as universal guides for the construction of a timeline that applies to a movement that existed uniformly throughout the country. Rather, the concept of Black Power has been embraced at different times, to varying degrees, in different locations. For example, the 1960 protests by students from North Carolina A&T College are traditionally regarded as the start of the sit-in movement, yet St. Louis CORE began sit-ins at Stix, Baer & Fuller Department Store in the summer of 1948. Stokely Carmichael's use of the phrase "Black Power" on June 6, 1966 during the "March Against Fear," and the outbreak of riots in northern cities in 1965 and 1966, have similarly been employed to construct a united, homogeneous, national movement.

On the contrary, it has been one of the central points of this work that the concept of Black Power has been embraced at different times, in different locations, and to varying degrees. As political scientist Dean Robinson asserts, "across time, political and intellectual activity among Black nationalists has differed enormously. There is no 'essential' Black nationalist tradition, despite similarities; the positions of nationalists of different eras have diverged because their nationalisms have been products of partly similar but largely unique eras of politics, thought, and culture. Missing this point can result in an ahistorical, teleological interpretation of Black nationalism as an historical phenomenon."[1] Scholar Tunde Adeleke states, "as radical as the nationalism of the 1960s seemed, its character was complex and . . . movements and leaders often displayed complex, fluid, and dynamic idiosyncrasies. This fluidity was not peculiar to the 1960s, but it has been a consistent feature of Black nationalism and Black American

leadership."[2] Explaining nineteenth century Black nationalism in particular Adeleke states, "this nationalism exhibited a kaleidoscope character, embracing various economic, political, cultural, religious, and intellectual visions, including aspirations and strategies that were sometimes radical, sometimes conservative, sometimes revolutionary, and sometimes accomodationist."[3] Historian Jeffrey Ogbar adds, "Black Power was many things to many people and an enigma to most."[4] Self defense, the promotion and celebration of African American and African cultures, Black pride, identity and group consciousness, control of community institutions, economic and political empowerment, and self sufficiency have been some common themes associated with the larger concept of Black Power. Adam Fairclough states, "Black Power's emphasis on institution building was a development of a long historical tradition, one that went back to the Reconstruction era, and in some communities still further; rather than a novel concept."[5] Ogbar also notes the "two fundamental themes" of Black Power include "Black pride and Black self-determination."[6] These themes stretch beyond St. Louis and the 1960s yet the local movement endorsed these themes and constructed its own local programs based on local circumstances. In other words, certain incidents and events have illuminated common trends and themes that have echoed and reverberated throughout the African American freedom struggle. Yet, it is critical to examine how local movements, rooted in their own local circumstances, embraced Black Power to construct local programs to fit local needs.

Efforts to date the beginning and end of the civil rights movement and the beginning and end of the Black Power movement fail to consider the connection between the two movements and recognize that the concept of Black Power was not new to the 1960s and '70s. For example, Timothy Tyson points out, "the civil rights movement and the Black Power Movement grew out of the same soil, confronted the same predicaments, and were much closer than traditional portrayal suggests."[7] Moreover, Black Power was not a dramatic divergence from the Black freedom movement of the 1960s and '70s but was a recurring concept for liberation throughout the African American experience. For instance, Rod Bush states, "the intensification of nationalist consciousness among the Black population almost always appears to most whites as a great ideological transformation, and a quite unfathomable transformation at that. But it should be no mystery. Black nationalism has been a significant component of African American social thought for more than two hundred years, varying in intensity according to time, place, and circumstances."[8] Floyd McKissick goes on to state, "white fear of Black nationalism is illogical when viewed in historical context, for historically nationalism means simply a commitment to a group, a

sense of responsibility to one's own kind. Sometimes it is demonstrated by loyalty to a country or state, sometimes by devotion to the traditions of one's forefathers. Black nationalism in America continues in a tradition centuries old, adapting historical forms to the needs and desires of today."[9] Manning Marable also explains the historic roots of Black Power stating, "since the 1850s, a significant portion of the African American people have tended to support the ideals of Black nationalism, defined here, in part, as a rejection of racial integration; a desire to develop all-Black socio-economic institutions; an affinity for the cultural and political heritage of Black Africa; a commitment to create all-Black political structures to fight against white racism; a deep reluctance to participate in coalitions which involved a white majority; the advocacy of armed self defense of the Black community; and in religion and culture, an ethos and spirituality which consciously rejected the imposition of white western dogmas."[10] It is critical to understand that Black Power is a recurring theme but not a static or consistent theme. Scholars such as Ogbar and Adeleke have revealed greater complexity and fluidity of Black Power, pointing out its variance across time.

Specific incidents and events have been employed to denote the start of the civil rights movement as well as its termination. For example, James Farmer asserted, "I nonetheless believe that the march [March on Washington, 1963] marked the beginning of the end of the civil rights movement because the great march was, in my opinion, probably the last gigantic middle class demonstration. It cut across race line, and it involved workers from many but not all unions . . . But they were largely workers of the middle classes, not the poor workers. The working poor were not there . . . The people from the streets, particularly the North, were simply not there. It was a middle class gathering."[11] Moreover, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act often serve as the final death rattle for the civil rights movement. Historian Robert Norrell suggests that the 1965 Voting Rights Act signaled the end of the civil rights movement because no federal civil rights legislation has since captured the public's attention.[12] The passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act signaled for many, whites in particular, that victory had been achieved, the field had been leveled. For instance, Norrell states, "it became increasingly clear after 1965 that Blacks' and whites' notions of equality were not the same. Whites defined it as equal treatment before the law and in vaguest terms as equality of opportunity. Many whites were satisfied that such equality had been achieved."[13]

It becomes clear that legislation cannot signify the rise and fall of the movement. Passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts by no means signaled total victory for the African American liberation struggle.

As historian Charles Payne asserts, relying on the passage of legislation to signal the victorious end of the civil rights movement, "puts too much emphasis on legal changes, which, while welcomed, were only part of what local people wanted. For local people, the movement was about freedom, not just civil rights."[14] In St. Louis the passage of the 1961 Public Accommodations Act was a celebrated victory for the local movement, as was the victory for fair hiring practices in the city's banking industry by 1964. Yet such victories were incomplete without addressing additional issues of human rights, which became the focal point of the local movement following these initial victories. As federal and local legislation addressed civil rights as officially recognized by the law, "bread and butter" issues remained unaddressed. Civil rights victories that brought federal and local legislation to define and protect African American civil rights presented what Adam Fairclough calls a "crisis of victory." Fairclough states, "the goals of civil and political equality under the law had largely been accomplished: public accommodations had been desegregated, the battle for the vote had been won, discriminatory statutes based on race had been erased. But if the civil rights movement had toppled the legal scaffolding of white supremacy, the edifice itself remained largely intact. Civil rights legislation had, so far, had singularly little effect on the distribution of wealth and the structure of the employment market; indeed the individualists ethic implicit in the Fourteenth Amendment and the 1964 Civil Rights Act reflected a deeply rooted ideological commitment to free market capitalism, to the belief that the removal of artificial racial barriers would enable Blacks to enter the economic mainstream under their own efforts."[15]

The 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act gave rise to expectations among African Americans, expectations that brought disillusionment, frustration, and anger when equal access to public accommodations and federal protection of the franchise brought little improvement to their everyday lives. Eventually these rising expectations, frustration, and anger brought increased scrutiny to the tactics, ideology, strategy, and goals that achieved these previous victories. Black Power was embraced to achieve the remaining ground to human rights.

The failure of federal and local legislation to affect larger human rights led many to embrace Black Power. However, anti-colonialism movements and urban rebellions also contributed to this embrace. Dean Robinson states, "the general orientation toward African culture reflected the extent to which, beginning with Ghana in 1959, African nationalist movements served as models for Afro-American nationalists. Nationalists also formulated their positions with respect to government policies tied to civil rights, economic justice, and the Vietnam War. Of particular

importance to nationalists' efforts in the 1960s were the riots that ripped the urban landscape. These 'rebellions' of the late 1960s suggested that the era of nonviolence in Black politics was over."[16] Legislation protecting African American civil rights increased expectations that human rights would similarly be addressed. Sociologist William Helmreich explains, "a new level of consciousness was reached as an increasing number of Blacks realized that integration was not the panacea for the myriad of problems they faced. There was also a recognition that nonviolent tactics had certain limitations and would not always work. This realization was accompanied by mounting frustration and despair, of which the riots were but one indication."[17]Helmreich adds, "indicative of this shift in emphasis was the wave of urban riots that began engulfing the country from coast to coast. The issue of community control became a rallying cry for large segments of the Black population. Black nationalism and identity became dominant themes of the movement, along with a general tendency toward revolutionary ideology, as increasing numbers of Black people, especially among the young, began to question the ability of 'the system' to respond to their needs in a meaningful fashion."[18] Urban rebellions signaled the transition of the movement to Black Power, the rejection of the traditional tactics and goals of nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration, and the rededication of the movement to bring revolutionary change to improve the lives of all African Americans.

Scrutiny of nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration increased among African Americans in St. Louis by mid 1964 following the campaign against the Jefferson Bank. The campaign to bring fair hiring practices to the Jefferson Bank and the larger local banking industry was the defining event in the post World War Two Black liberation struggle in St. Louis. Yet, the campaign's success in challenging hiring discrimination contributed to a crisis of victory out of which came increased disillusionment, frustration, and anger that larger human rights were not similarly improved as the local movement reached its peak. Such frustration and anger led many in the local movement to reject nonviolence, interracial cooperation and integration, and to embrace Black Power as a concept by which human rights could be achieved. This transition is best illustrated by the evolution of St. Louis CORE in the aftermath of the Jefferson Bank campaign.

Since its inception in 1947, St. Louis CORE was committed to nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration. However, following the successful campaign against hiring discrimination at the Jefferson Bank, CORE came to scrutinize these central tenets, questioning the viability of interracial cooperation and nonviolence and integration as a desired goal.

In order to understand this transition in the local movement, it is important to first briefly discuss the campaign that was the catalyst for this change.

The Jefferson Bank campaign occurred from August 1963 to March 1964 during what historian August Meier describes as the "zenith" of CORE's activities and the civil rights movement.[19] Specifically, it was in 1963 and 1964 when several events occurred which came to symbolize the civil rights movement. The first event was the Project "C" campaign in Birmingham, Alabama led by Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. This campaign and the violent response it evoked from the Birmingham police, led by Eugene "Bull" Connor, served as one of the defining images of the movement and helped galvanize support for the civil rights struggle. Moreover, the March on Washington in August, 1963, stands out as another defining event in the civil rights movement. The march culminated at the Lincoln Memorial, where Martin Luther King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech. Finally, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party's challenge to Mississippi's delegation to the 1964 Democratic National Convention has also symbolized the Movement.

Meier and Rudwick also point out that 1963 marked the beginning of "an extraordinarily vigorous era of direct action" during which CORE membership increased while affiliates launched successful local campaigns. Meier notes that on the national level, "CORE involved more people than ever before, heightened its demands, conducted massive and tactically more radical demonstrations in both the North and South, and mounted major voter registration campaigns against overwhelming odds in Mississippi and Louisiana."[20] It was in this national context that St. Louis CORE's campaign against hiring discrimination at the Jefferson Bank began.

Following the success of the lunch counter demonstrations in the 1950s and the passage of the Public Accommodations Act which integrated public facilities in 1961, St. Louis CORE targeted employment discrimination. CORE understood that despite the desegregation of public accommodations, African Americans continued to experience widespread poverty and unemployment. The annual median income for African American families in St. Louis in 1963 was $3,100 while the annual median income for white families was $5,600. In addition, the unemployment total for St. Louis was 52,000 of which 18,000 or 34.6 percent were African Americans.[21] As these figures indicate, despite major victories in securing the desegregation of public accommodations in St. Louis, economic conditions for African Americans had not improved. Recognizing this fact, St. Louis CORE began preparing for its largest assault.

In 1958, St. Louis CORE began investigating the hiring practices of St. Louis area banks and businesses. During its investigation, CORE discovered

that African Americans were grossly under-employed in numerous industries in St. Louis. In 1960, CORE began negotiating for equal hiring at several banks and department stores. These negotiations were successful in that they "obtained over twenty white collar jobs in downtown businesses— including two at the Bank of St. Louis, the only financial institution to drop its color bar, and three at a furniture store, where the victory required fifteen negotiating sessions extending over a period of more than a year."[22] In July 1963, St. Louis CORE reached an agreement with two St. Louis dairies that agreed to establish preferential hiring policies which required that African Americans comprise 15 percent of their work force.[23]

It should be noted that hiring discrimination in the banking industry had gained not only the attention of St. Louis CORE but affiliates throughout the country. For example, CORE in Boston began negotiations in September 1963 with the Merchants National and Shawmut National banks. These negotiations succeeded with the hiring of 150 African Americans to white collar positions by February 1964. Following its success with these two banks, Boston CORE turned its attention to the First National Bank. In April 1964 the bank agreed to hire forty-three African Americans.[24]

In addition, California experienced a statewide campaign against hiring discrimination in financial institutions in 1964. Under the leadership of San Francisco chairman William Bradley, the Bank of America Negotiating Committee, a coalition of California CORE affiliates, was created to organize the attack on the nine hundred branches of the Bank of America throughout California, the largest privately owned bank in the world. The difficulties of coordinating a statewide campaign became apparent from the start. Plagued by apathy and limited community support, the campaign quickly lost steam by August, forcing Bradley to terminate the campaign. It is important to note however, that the campaign did cause the Bank of America to hire roughly 240 African Americans to white collar positions in its various California branches.[25]

Following CORE's previous negotiations with local banks in 1958 and again in 1961, CORE went back to reinvestigate the hiring practices of St. Louis banks in 1963, only to find that their hiring practices had changed little since CORE's previous investigations. In fact, CORE's 1963 investigation into the hiring practices of St. Louis banks revealed that of the 5,160 people employed in banks throughout the city only thirty African Americans were employed in administrative or white collar positions.[26]

In August 1963, CORE publicized its dissatisfaction with the hiring practices of St. Louis banks by issuing a demand to the Jefferson Bank that they hire one African American administrator and two African Americans in what CORE called "menial capacities." It is important to

note that CORE had made similar requests in 1958, 1960, 1961, and 1962, which were dismissed by Jefferson Bank officials. During these earlier attempts, bank officials asserted that they did not discriminate in their hiring and that they expected to hire more African Americans in the near future.

In light of the lack of progress and cooperation from the Jefferson Bank following their demands in August 1963, CORE went back to the Jefferson Bank with the new ultimatum that it hire four African Americans within the next two weeks. In response to CORE's second set of demands, the bank publicly claimed that there was simply no need for more employees at that particular time and issued a statement to CORE that it would not comply with any of their employment demands. Furthermore, the bank argued that the proposed quota was unconstitutional and was "not a proper method of implementing a program of fair and equal opportunities for all qualified persons."[27]

After continued resistance to its demands, in addition to achieving the cooperation of other local banks, CORE concluded that their initial requests to the Jefferson Bank were too conservative to effect real change, and as a result added to its initial demand for the hiring of four African Americans in the next two weeks the stipulation that it implement a hiring policy which in six months would result in African Americans comprising 10 percent of the bank's total work force.[28] In justifying this new mandate, CORE leaders argued that these numbers represented a fair employment percentage at that particular time and if accepted, would demonstrate the Jefferson Bank's willingness to change its hiring practices.

In response to the Jefferson Bank's failure to accept CORE's hiring demands, a two hour sit-in was held outside of St. Louis Mayor Raymond Tucker's office on August 27, 1963. An integrated throng of demonstrators picketed outside of the Mayor's office demanding he investigate the hiring practices of local banks. In addition, CORE representatives asked the Mayor to withdraw city funds deposited in the Jefferson Bank. At the same time CORE presented its demands to the Mayor, approximately eighty people demonstrated outside City Hall with signs that read, "remove city money from Jim Crow banks." Protests also occurred outside several other government offices that had accounts with the Jefferson Bank. These included the St. Louis Land Clearance, St. Louis Housing Authority, and the St. Louis Board of Education.

Following this first wave of protests, on August 29, 1963, seven area banks, including the Jefferson Bank, met with the St. Louis Council on Human Relations and drafted the Ten Point Program for Equal

Employment Opportunity to ensure "progress toward equal job opportunities for Negroes" in the local banking industry.[29] Mayor Tucker endorsed the Ten Point Program and demanded its full implementation.[30] The Jefferson Bank failed to endorse the Ten Point Program and CORE subsequently planned a protest for August 30, 1963.

In anticipation of demonstrations later that day, Jefferson Bank officials obtained a restraining order on the morning of August 30. This restraining order prohibited demonstrations that would stifle the daily business activities of the bank. In addition to receiving a restraining order the morning before the protests began, the Jefferson Bank also solicited the support of the St. Louis City police department, which sent several plain-clothed and uniformed police officers. When the demonstration began later that day, over one hundred individuals arrived to protest outside of the Jefferson Bank.

Nine individuals were arrested and charged with violating the court's restraining order during the first day of protests.[31] These nine individuals were denied bail and remained in jail for a week before their trial began. Throughout their week-long imprisonment, protesters held vigil outside the city jail. Throughout the campaign over 300 individuals were arrested. Those arrested were commonly charged with contempt, trespassing, blocking police vehicles, blocking the street, or general peace disturbance. It is important to note that throughout the campaign against the Jefferson Bank, there was no violence and no arrests were made for violent activity, such as assault or destruction of property.

By March 1964, the Jefferson Bank agreed to hire five African Americans. Within months approximately eighty four African Americans received jobs throughout St. Louis's banking industry. The campaign against the Jefferson Bank challenged hiring discrimination in the St. Louis banking industry which had farther reaching effects. The employment of African Americans in St. Louis banks improved the opportunity for African Americans to receive home and business loans. Moreover, the campaign against the Jefferson Bank forced St. Louis to reevaluate its tradition of racial oppression. The Jefferson Bank campaign was the crescendo of the St. Louis civil rights movement. No other civil rights campaign in St. Louis garnered the same level of publicity and community support since the Jefferson Bank. According to the Jefferson Bank Demonstration Commemoration Committee, "the Jefferson Bank demonstration, in the opinion of the Planning Committee, has been the most powerful catalytic civil rights action to improve the quality of living for African Americans in the history of St. Louis. We African Americans organized, coalesced, and became a major force to be respected."[32]

Yet during the campaign, relations between CORE and the NAACP were aggravated over CORE's direct action tactics against the Jefferson Bank. For example, the president of the St. Louis NAACP, Evelyn Roberts, argued that "the ends doesn't justify the means . . . we do not condone or absolve CORE for its program in this campaign."[33] Despite the NAACP's support for the ultimate goal of fair hiring practices, the organization criticized CORE's tactics and demands. Roberts asserted, "although we feel the objectives are justifiable, sound and respectable" the NAACP "deplore[d]" CORE's tactics. The NAACP suggested that African Americans should be hired by local banks "as their firms grow and as replacements for white persons who retire or resign."[34] Put simply, the NAACP preferred that businesses hire African Americans as necessitated by the demands of their business rather than in response to "quotas" established by CORE. The NAACP's criticism of CORE's tactics against the Jefferson Bank signaled a larger debate over movement strategies and goals that loomed on the local horizon.

The Jefferson Bank campaign was successful in challenging blatant hiring discrimination in St. Louis's banking industry and drawing attention and support to the local civil rights movement. Yet, the campaign's success, like the passage of civil rights legislation, brought rising expectations, greater frustration, anger, and disillusionment with the fact that "bread and butter" issues were not similarly affected. Although fair hiring was implemented in the local banking industry, challenges in housing, education, police brutality, poverty, and health care were not similarly addressed by this campaign. Meier and Rudwick assert, "it was becoming evident that even where social change had occurred, CORE's demonstrations had not significantly affected the life chances of the Black poor."[35] As a result, the success of the Jefferson Bank campaign illuminated the limits of the movement's ideology, tactics, and goals. Meier and Rudwick note, "the failure to obtain 'Freedom Now' in the South during the summer of 1963 and the limited victories that followed the hard fought campaigns in the North, produced a crisis over tactics in the nonviolent direct action organizations."[36] Meier and Rudwick add that in St. Louis, "by the spring of 1964 it was beginning to be evident that direct action itself was a limited instrument, that the ultimate bounds of what it could achieve may have been reached."[37] In addition, Meier and Rudwick explain, "the greater the achievements, the clearer it became how much remained to be done and how little, relatively speaking, had been achieved by the quieter, more 'respectable' forms of nonviolent direct action."[39] Put simply, the city's major civil rights victory brought greater recognition of the distance that still needed to be covered for human rights. This recognition brought rising

expectations as to what should and could be achieved as well as greater frustration and disillusionment with the ideology and tactics that failed to achieve these additional goals. Recognition of these limits highlighted the possibilities of Black Power.

The arrest of CORE activists during the first day of protest had a dramatic effect on the future St. Louis civil rights movement. Specifically, the constant threat of arrest had a "frightening and dampening" effect on CORE members.[39] Faced with the threat of arrest and imprisonment, some CORE members left the organization concerned with the affect of official repression on their personal lives. The loss of some members left a smaller group of individuals who embraced Black Power as the only viable program to achieve human rights for African Americans in St. Louis.

Meier and Rudwick summarize this transition in CORE's leadership and tactics following the Jefferson Bank campaign when they state that "the Jefferson Bank campaign and the militancy spawned in its wake had transformed St. Louis CORE in significant ways. It brought new faces and new energy into the group, but also changed its practices and philosophy."[40] The Jefferson Bank campaign and subsequent arrests brought greater publicity and support to St. Louis CORE. The influx of new members brought a new dynamic to the movement, which contributed to CORE's evolution. Historian Charles Payne observed a similar phenomenon in Mississippi, where the success of the local movement brought new members and activists who displaced the original members. Payne explains, "the energies they [local movements and organizations] unleashed made participation in movement-generated activities attractive to groups and individuals that had previously stood on the sidelines. When it became clear that the movement was going to bear some fruit, those who had worked hardest to make it happen were systematically pushed aside."[41]

This becomes clearer when we look at the surge in St. Louis CORE's membership following the Jefferson Bank Campaign. The success of the Jefferson Bank campaign brought new individuals into St. Louis CORE, individuals who were swept up in the energy of the movement and its potential, yet were not as familiar or firmly committed to CORE's traditional tactics, ideology, and goals. These new individuals, weighing the possibilities of direct action against the circumstances in which they continued to live, challenged CORE's traditional beliefs and the original individuals committed to these beliefs. For example, new members criticized Charles Oldham as an "old fogey conservative."

New members recognized and experienced the limits of CORE's tactics in their everyday lives and thus embraced Black Power to challenge enduring racial oppression. As these new members questioned interracial

cooperation, integration, and nonviolence, the larger atmosphere of CORE was fundamentally altered. Charles Payne asserts, "the newcomers came in part because of changes in the rewards available for movement participants. Those same changes altered the internal moral climate of the movement, undercutting the sense of community and identity among activists. The movement had become alien to the people who built it, and many of them didn't wait to be pushed out by the new leaders; they simply withdrew."[42] Margaret Dagen goes on to explain, "the nature of the organization changed. The new members, young Black activists, began to differentiate between integration and equality, and to choose the latter as their goal. The old methods and ideas of CORE were seldom brought up."[43] By 1965 the familial atmosphere of the Sunday afternoon protest picnics in Forest Park that had once defined St. Louis CORE were gone, as were many of CORE's founding members.

The rejection of interracial cooperation had a particularly dramatic affect in motivating white members to leave the organization. For example, Judith Stix explained, "my interest in social justice was always based on my belief that each person has a right to be considered as an individual . . . Many later developments, such as affirmative action, renewed Black nationalism, the notion of race separations, have been philosophically repugnant to me."[44] In addition, after working with CORE on both a local and national level, Marvin Rich left the organization when it rejected interracial cooperation and integration. Stix explains, "after becoming an employee of national CORE, I believe he [Rich] left it in the later 'white boy get out' days, worked at the New School for Social Research, and was a staff member at Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, New York."[45]

White participation in the movement was increasingly scrutinized by African American activists until it was asserted that Black Power meant Black self determination and African American control of all facets of the movement. Perhaps A. Philip Randolph summed up the concept of closed ranks best during his keynote address to the March on Washington Movement in 1942. Randolph established the MOWM as an African American organization, created by and for African Americans. He argued that the March on Washington Movement should be led by African Americans in stating, "our policy is that it be all Negro, and pro-Negro but not anti-white, or anti-semitic or anti-labor, or anti-Catholic. The reason for this policy is that all oppressed people must assume the responsibility and take the initiative to free themselves . . . This does not mean . . . that our movement should not call for the collaboration of Jews, Catholics, trade union and white liberals . . . No, not at all . . . The essential value of an all-Negro movement such as the March

on Washington is that it helps to create faith by Negroes in Negroes. It develops a sense of self reliance with Negroes depending on Negroes in vital matters. It helps to break down the slave psychology and inferiority complex in Negroes which comes and is nourished with Negroes relying on white people for direction and support."[46]

In the wake of the Jefferson Bank campaign, the traditional philosophies of CORE were challenged and a reorientation to Black Power altered the general atmosphere of the organization. Margaret Dagen suggests that following the Jefferson Bank campaign, "the original members of St. Louis CORE faced a period in which their interracial composition and Gandhian philosophy of patient negotiation and nonviolent direct action were challenged by hostile words and deeds. Originally St. Louis CORE had been formed as a 'Committee *of* Racial Equality.' [her italics] Members at that time practiced true personal equality in private and in public, in all their life activities, in their attitudes, and in their actions."[47] However, CORE's evolution to Black Power changed these dynamics. Dagen states, "the small group no longer met at the Dagen's apartment or at the Centenial Christian Church. CORE members no longer sat neglected or poorly served at eating establishments."[48] As the movement shifted from a struggle for civil rights to a liberation movement for human rights, the familial atmosphere and relationships that once stood as the foundation to the organization changed. By the mid 1960s new tactics, strategies, and goals were embraced by CORE in order to move the struggle forward to cover the remaining ground to human rights and freedom.

The evolution of St. Louis CORE following the Jefferson Bank campaign reflected a larger trend that was spreading throughout the civil rights movement in the mid and late 1960s. Historian August Meier notes that it was during the mid 1960s that "unquestionably the psychological commitment to nonviolent direct action was dissolving."[49] Continued failure of the Justice Department, FBI and other law enforcement agencies to protect activists and enforce civil rights, government repression through COINTELPRO and other counterintelligence programs, and anti-colonial movements such as the Algerian Nationalist Movement documented in Franz Fanon's classic work *The Wretched of the Earth,* and the Kenyan Land and Freedom Armies served as important models for the African American liberation movement and demonstrated the viability of violence as a tactic for liberation. While African Americans have always been connected on various levels to Africa and its people, independence movements on the continent had a particularly dramatic affect on the African American struggle and its evolution from a movement for civil rights to a liberation movement for human rights.

By 1965 the limits of nonviolence and interracial cooperation became increasingly apparent, particularly as viewed through the lens of African anti-colonialism. In August 1965 the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* reported, "most St. Louis civil rights leaders recognize that changes have been made but that significant improvement has not yet been seen." This article went on to state that "progress that had been made had not touched most Negroes." According to St. Louis CORE Chairman, Lucien Richards, while "job opportunities had increased for skilled Negroes, that housing had opened somewhat for middle class Negroes and that advances had occurred in public accommodations . . . deep resentment and frustration . . . are still felt by many Negroes in the slums who cannot find jobs, who feel they are being exploited by landlords and merchants, who are patrolled for the most part by white policemen, and who feel that they are trapped in a ghetto."[50] Dr. John Ervin, associate Dean of the Washington University School of Continuing Education, responded to the limits of the 1964 Civil Rights Act stating, "the 1964 law in particular had a profound impact on the affluent Negro . . . but to the Negro in the ghetto, it virtually is meaningless."[51] Ervin went on to note that "millions of Negroes living in this country's urban areas are mired in a jungle of frustration—because there is a lack of opportunity in education, in employment, and in housing."[52] He then predicted that unless things change, the violence which has "swept across the nation's cities" will occur in St. Louis.[53] Meier similarly concluded, "embittered at the inability of nonviolent direct action to solve the basic problems of the Black poor, some of them [CORE members] angrily began to conclude that Black America could never be liberated from white oppression except through force and, if need be, violence."[54]

Following the Jefferson Bank campaign in the spring of 1964, recent CORE members began criticizing CORE's traditional tactics as being outdated, old fashioned, and more importantly unable to address the human rights issues that persisted despite the gains made thus far. Sociologist Inge Powell Bell states, "direct action was best suited to campaigns for equal service and employment in retail services and public accommodations. Here, boycott pressures and legal issues could be used to greatest effect. The broader problems of unemployment, slum clearance, public housing, and improvement of schools were less amenable to the direct action approach."[55] In other words, while these tactics had forced St. Louis businesses to reconsider their hiring policies, issues such as housing segregation and police brutality remained unaffected by these tactics.

Influenced by the anti-imperialism struggles in Africa and Vietnam, the outbreak of urban rebellions in the United States, and enduring poverty and racial oppression, CORE drifted from its firm commitment to integration,

interracial cooperation, and nonviolence. It became clear to St. Louis CORE that its previous efforts at integration and fair hiring had accomplished much but still left much to be done. As CORE drifted from its traditional philosophies, the organization came to perceive "any compromise, even if employed as a temporary tactical device, as anathema, they spoke more and more of the necessity for 'revolutionary' changes in the social structure and, especially after the Watts riot of August 1965, were inclined toward a rhetoric of violence."[56]

An editorial originally published in the *Chicago Defender* and reprinted in the *St. Louis Argus* explained this evolution. The editorial explains that while a "belief" exists, particularly among "academic historians" that "the civil rights movement was died out after 12 years of 'romantic crusading,'" the movement was in a state of "quiet interlude" following the passage of federal legislation in 1964 and 1965.[57] The editorial notes, "what is happening is that the leadership of the Black revolution is passing into younger and more aggressive hands. During this period of transition the freedom fighters are regrouping their forces and reorienting themselves for the remaining battles."[58]

This editorial describes this shift or evolution as a split between generations, a split between the older generation of activists who continued to endorse the traditional tactics and goals, and the "young turks" who challenged the traditional goals and tactics. According to the editorial, "there is a schism in the ranks. The old conservative Negro leaders such as those representing the NAACP and National Urban League never have been much on the side of militancy. They prefer the negotiating table to the street demonstrations and they have not looked with favor upon the challenges posed by the activists in CORE and SNCC, the shock troops of the civil rights movement."[59] The article continues by explaining, "the clash is principally over the advocacy of the means employed to achieve desired ends."[60] In conclusion the editorial explains, "Black Power, with the implications of violence attributed to it by its critics, may meet with resistance in some quarters but as a working hypothesis, it offers a rationale for action that satisfies the impatient, bitter mood of the slums where despair, anguish, and poverty scar the souls of the people."[61] This editorial illuminates how Black Power arose from the frustration and anger over the limited gains accomplished by the "moderate tactics" of the civil rights movement. Inspired by a variety of new models, Black Power was embraced as the concept by which human rights and Black liberation could be achieved.

It is important to emphasize that the changes occurring in the local movement, as represented by St. Louis CORE following the Jefferson Bank campaign in 1964, reflected a larger trend in CORE affiliates throughout the

country. Nationwide CORE chapters experienced similar internal turmoil, debate, and conflict over the continued utility of nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration. The peak years of activity during the early 1960s brought new people into the movement, new people who brought additional strategies and goals to the movement. Internal conflict over tactics and goals was compounded by the national organization's financial difficulties. By August, 1965 CORE's national office owed roughly $295,000. This debt was largely the result of legal fees paid during the 1961 Freedom Rides, legal fees incurred from the numerous local campaigns that almost always resulted in mass arrests, and the increased number of paid field staff.[62] The success of local campaigns through the mid 1960s encouraged CORE's national leadership to increase the number of paid field staff throughout the country. However, the increase in staff came at a time when donations to CORE dwindled. Meier explains that the increased use of "obstructive direct action tactics" concerned and alienated many CORE donors. St. Louis CORE employed such tactics during the Jefferson Bank campaign when protestors entered the bank blocking the bank's entrance ways and access to the tellers. Critics argued that such tactics did little more than undermine the possibility for negotiation and compromise, and inconvenienced and aggravated the larger public. Critics miss the point that drawing the larger public's attention to racial oppression was a primary goal of these tactics. Meier also attributes the decline of donations to the outbreak of riots and CORE's growing criticism of U.S. involvement in Vietnam.[63]

By CORE's 1965 National Convention it became clear that the ideological debate and financial crisis were taking their toll on the organization. One report concluded, "field staff needs remained critical, chapter activity continued to falter, and communications between the affiliates and the national office further deteriorated."[64] Although official numbers presented at the 1965 convention revealed an increase in the number of affiliates, from 114 in the summer of 1964 to 144 by 1965, several of those chapters were in fact dormant with no active members.[65] In particular, in 1965 only ten chapters submitted reports to the national office on activities and current officer and address lists.[66] Moreover, as August Meier notes, throughout the nation "field secretaries during late 1964 and early 1965 found countless signs of demoralization."[67] Even in St. Louis visible signs of this demoralization became apparent by 1965. For example, in December 1964 the *St. Louis Argus* ran the headline, "What happened to CORE?" The article went on to report that once one of the most powerful CORE affiliates, St. Louis had now "crept into obscurity."[68]

Black Power was not a new concept that merely arose in the mid 1960s from previous successes or failures. Influenced and inspired by new models such as Malcolm X, Robert Williams, and anti-colonial movements, CORE and the St. Louis movement embraced Black Power as the concept by which Black liberation and human rights could be achieved in St. Louis. The title of CORE's 1965 National Action Council program, "New Directions," illustrates this point that the movement did not end in 1964 or 1965 but had evolved, taking a new directional step as influenced by international, national, and local circumstances.

Chapter Four
Black Power: CORE and Coalitions in the St. Louis Region

Seemingly pitched into a state of disarray, conflict, and debt by the mid 1960s, CORE and the local Black liberation movement embraced Black Power, drawing inspiration from a variety of new sources of energy, and direction. Rod Bush explains, "the call for Black Power was based precisely on Black people's awareness that the civil rights movement did not address the key issues that would result in genuine empowerment. What was needed was not more 'civil rights,' but human rights. The problem facing the African American people was not a 'Negro' problem or an American problem, but a human problem that could not be solved merely by the attainment of civil rights; it required a long range strategy for independence and self determination."[1] CORE's embrace of Black Power primarily took the form of promoting the development and growth of African American institutions and business enterprises, or Black Capitalism, as the necessary avenue to Black liberation. As Black Power was endorsed by the national organization, local affiliates such as St. Louis similarly promoted Black Power but infused the concept with meaning that addressed unique local circumstances. In addition to endorsing Black Capitalism, St. Louis CORE cooperated with other organizations throughout the wider region.

As the previous chapter explained, following the success of the Jefferson Bank campaign, Black Power became increasingly appealing among African Americans in St. Louis who came to question nonviolence and interracial cooperation as tactics to achieve human rights. Although the *St. Louis Argus* was reporting the "demoralization" and disappearance of St. Louis CORE by 1965, a more accurate report would have recognized that CORE had not disappeared, but rather underwent fundamental structural and symbolic changes associated with the group's promotion

of Black Power.[2] Rather than disappearing into obscurity, St. Louis CORE was often pushed from the front pages of local newspapers to make room for coverage of new Black liberation groups that developed in St. Louis in the late 1960s. The following examines CORE during the post-Jefferson Bank years, the years during which the national organization and local affiliate embraced Black Power and constructed programs for the achievement of human rights. The additional organizations that developed in the late 1960s is the topic of the following chapter.

In 1965 the National Action Council of CORE developed a program called New Directions. This new program was designed to create African American cooperatives, promote small businesses, advance a renewed cultural identity through African American scholarship and culture, and develop political power among working class African Americans.[3] August Meier points out, "in accordance with the thrust of CORE's New Directions, much of this activity was geared specifically to improving the quality of life in the ghetto rather than toward achieving integration, and often direct action was carried out as part of a deliberate effort to reach and organize the Black poor."[4] New Directions signaled CORE's evolution from its traditional tenets, shifting its focus from nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration to emphasize human rights and Black empowerment.

In 1966, with the end of James Farmer's administration and the election of Floyd McKissick as national chairman, CORE increasingly attached itself nationally to Black Power, advocating African American control of community institutions, political empowerment, and business development. As August Meier notes, "in the words of the 1966 CORE convention resolution, Black Power meant 'control of economic, political, and educational institutions and resources from top to bottom, by Black people in their own areas.'"[5] In addition, by 1966 CORE had severed itself from its traditional philosophies of nonviolence and interracial cooperation to become a champion for the African American working class endorsing the right to self defense. Meier explains, "McKissick himself described nonviolence as 'a dying philosophy' that had 'outlived its usefulness.'"[6] For example, CORE approved of rioting as a viable tactic for African Americans, "as the natural explosion of the oppressed against intolerable conditions."[7] In the summer of 1968, McKissick's administration ended and Roy Innis was elected CORE's National Director.

The *St. Louis Argus* reported on CORE's 1968 elections. On its front page the *Argus* published a photograph of the newly elected officers, accompanied by the caption, "all but one are members of the Black Nationalists."[8] The new officers included Kenneth Simmons, Board Member; Elijah Turner, Treasurer; Wilfred Ussery, National Chairman; Roy Innis, National

Director; Clyde Duberry, Western Regional Chairman. The *Argus* went on to report, "while the Black Nationalists insist that their actions do not spell out a take over of the Congress, they have adopted a brand new constitution that bars white people as members and a brand new philosophy that calls for complete Black participation in decisions that affect Black people in all facets of American life . . . we are with all Black militants, they concluded."[9] The *St. Louis Post Dispatch* also detailed CORE's elections and promotion of Black Power. The *Post* reported Innis as stating, "separatism is a necessary and pragmatic way of organizing two separate and distinct races of people . . . we are not talking segregation or apartheid. Those are white controlled systems. Separatism is clearly different. We would control our own destiny."[10]

The election of Roy Innis as National Director marked the reorientation of CORE away from its traditional philosophies of nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration, to a Black Power agenda of political and economic empowerment, African American control of community institutions, and the right to self defense. Political scientist Dean Robinson explains, "it was Roy Innis's ascension as leader of CORE that signaled the moment of full ideological change to Black Nationalism . . . Innis delineated an 'economic theory of nationhood' that explained CORE's subsequent efforts to link the takeover of Blacks in economic, political, and social institutions for the purpose of fostering the economic development of Black communities. For instance, Innis suggested that once Black people controlled the schools in their communities, Black companies could be established to provide school supplies."[11] Moreover, according to the *Post Dispatch*, CORE promoted substantial, but nonspecific, legislative reforms "that would recognize distinct needs of Negroes for the establishment of separate political units in predominantly Negro areas such as Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant in New York, and the ghetto of St. Louis. They [CORE] want to see measures that would enable those ghettoes to control the institutions there, such as hospitals and business firms."[12]

From September 16 to September 21, 1968, CORE held a convention at the St. James AME Church in St. Louis and established this new agenda in a formal constitution.[13] The theme of the conference was "Black Nationalism: CORE's Philosophy for Survival" and was attended by roughly 150 people.[14] CORE leaders asserted that the new constitution represented the organization's evolution from a civil rights group to a human rights group promoting Black self-determination. Innis stated that the new constitution reflected "the conversion of a document of the civil rights era to a document that suits an era of Black Nationalism."[15] Innis also explained that CORE's transition to Black Power resulted from the bankruptcy of "civil rights era"

tactics and goals that had previously accomplished only moderate and limited success. For instance, Innis stated, "the old civil rights movement is dead . . . It dealt with only a small percentage of people. We are talking about a family of institutions designed to serve all Black people . . . CORE is the only organization with a clear program of Black Nationalism . . . we are trying to get America off this treadmill where violent revolution is inevitable. We believe we have the alternative to chaos."[16] According to Innis, Black Power provided a comprehensive strategy to achieve where the "civil rights movement" had failed.

In St. Louis, CORE had begun courting the concept of Black Power since the end of its Jefferson Bank Campaign in spring 1964. Yet it was not until June 1967 that the local CORE affiliate's evolution to Black Power attracted the attention of the media and larger public. At a press conference on June 20, 1967, CORE National Field Directors Danny Gant and Edmond Boston announced that St. Louis was selected to participate in CORE's new national program called "Black Power, a Blueprint to Success and Survival."[17] Gant and Boston explained that St. Louis had been chosen "because of the complacent attitude of its citizens, the alarming apathy among Negro voters, and the appalling lack of political initiative shown by the present elected officials representing the Negro areas."[18] In addition, Gant and Boston recognized the efforts of other local civil rights groups such as the NAACP and Urban League, praising their efforts while explaining that CORE's new program was designed to create a united front to include all civil rights groups in St. Louis. The *Argus* reported, "both field directors pointed out that the local NAACP, Urban League and other civil rights groups are all working in the right direction and that the program is broad enough to employ the resources and contributions of all civil rights agencies . . . Some might not be as militant as others, however, there is a place and need for them in the approach to the ultimate goals."[19]

The new program, "Black Power, a Blueprint to Success and Survival," emphasized African American control of local community institutions. According to Gant and Boston, Black Power advanced African American autonomy and self determination in local communities. Specifically, Gant and Boston stated, "the new role of the civil rights movement is 100 percent, or as close to it as possible, community organization.'"[20] Illustrating this point, they added, as part of the new Black Power program, the Community Organization Program was designed to put African Americans in control of "the political power structure of their respective areas."[21] They continued by stating, "the purpose of the Community Organization Program is to teach ghetto people how to become the power structure of their wards and control their own destinies."[22] In other words, Gant and

Boston articulated the reorientation of the organization to local control of community institutions, autonomy, and self determination.

Black Power aimed to achieve human rights, self determination, and Black pride, and improve the lives of all African Americans, particularly those unaffected by previous civil rights reforms. Gant and Boston asserted, "the specific goals are the abolition of poverty, to develop ways and means of eliminating the ghettos, lifting our welfare services in order that they might meet the needs of the recipients, and to give the Negro some identity, to dignify his self determination and image."[23] Police relations and police brutality were also included in this broad community-oriented program. Gant and Boston noted, "there is an urgent need for a better understanding between the peoples of the community and officers enforcing the law. The people need to develop more respect for law enforcement agencies and individuals charged with enforcing the law, and by the same token law enforcement officers need to be educated to proper methods of dealing with explosive problems, situations, and individuals."[24] Moreover, Gant criticized local police for "being too lenient" on police officers guilty of excessive force, harassment, and brutality.[25]

CORE's new program, "Black Power, a Blueprint to Success and Survival," was specifically designed to achieve where other programs and organizations had failed. Gant and Boston recognized the efforts of the NAACP and Urban League in St. Louis yet similarly recognized the limits of their individual efforts. Likewise, Gant and Boston recognized the federal government's War on Poverty yet equally recognized its limits. Gant and Boston denounced poverty programs as a "flop," doubting the federal government's ability to fight its War on Poverty in general and the government's concern and commitment to African Americans in particular. Clarence Hodges, Chairman of CORE in 1969, told the *St. Louis Argus*, "CORE is seeking relief for a typical destitute family that has been denied help by those agencies established by public monies or charitable funds to provide such help."[26] Hodges then referred specifically to an anonymous single parent family with five children and concluded, "there are hundreds of cases like this in St. Louis, and CORE has exhausted its patience urging, threatening, and negotiating with agencies, politicians, and employers that are not serving the interests of the people."[27] Hodges also asserted, "rents strikes, campus uprisings, and vandalism are but a taste of the problems in store if our institutions and agencies remain insensitive to the needs of those stranded in poverty with no hope of employment, adequate housing, health care, food, and clothing."[28]

As will be discussed in forthcoming chapters, Gant and Boston's criticism of government poverty programs was coupled with an assertion that

private interests could fight a more successful war on poverty. Gant and Boston expressed the need for African Americans in St. Louis to form independent political parties to replace failing elected officials.[29] Gant and Boston concluded, "the present group of elected democratic office holders have neither the finesse nor the independence to lead the new thinking Negro in his struggle for complete freedom, social equality, equal employment opportunities, and better economic status."[30] It is important to bear in mind that Gant and Boston's remarks articulated CORE's new approach to Black liberation which reflected the larger concept of Black Power, including African American control of community institutions, political and economic empowerment, and the right to self determination and autonomy.

CORE's new program was largely reform oriented. For example, the *St. Louis Argus* commented, "CORE's new policy of bringing their problems to the conference table instead of attempting to settle them in the streets will merit the support and respect of every individual in the community concerned with the problem of raising the standards of those locked in the ghetto."[31] Echoing Gunnar Myrdal's thesis, CORE's efforts aimed to make the United States live up to its fundamental commitments by including African Americans in the democratic system and "American Dream." In this sense, CORE promoted cooperation between the federal, state and municipal governments, private agencies including business interests as well as civil rights groups, and local people.

CORE's evolution, as articulated by Gant and Boston, met with support from the community as is illustrated in an editorial found in the *St. Louis Argus*. This editorial summarized the state of St. Louis CORE following the Jefferson Bank campaign and welcomed the group's reorientation to Black Power. The editorial explained, "the recent announcement of the reactivation of the local chapter of CORE is a welcomed compliment to the civil rights contingent active in the St. Louis area. CORE's image suffered a tremendous drop in popularity shortly after the Jefferson Bank demonstrators were jailed for such a long time . . . The leadership of the organization didn't have the imagination and initiative to direct a bold dynamic plan for the future here following the success in the dedicated purposes of the demonstrations at Jefferson Bank."[32] Moreover, the editorial revealed CORE's redirection to Black Capitalism and the group's new strategy of working with private interests. The *Argus* stated, "at this time, the pulse of the community is different. There is a general atmosphere of all elements of the business and industrial community wanting to aid in eliminating this vast evil institution plaguing the growth and harmony of St. Louis."[33]

Central to CORE's evolution was the argument that job training, education, and employment were the primary needs of African Americans and thus became the primary focus of CORE's new direction. As unemployment was considered a primary cause of violence, appealing to private interest in preserving "law and order," CORE won the support of private and government interest for job training, employment, and education programs.

With the cooperation of local interests, St. Louis CORE attacked poverty through various initiatives aimed to provide financial aid, education, job training, and employment. For example, Help Me to Help Myself was a local program created as part of CORE's larger National Action Plan of 1968. Many prominent local activists and leaders served on Help Me to Help Myself committees. For example, Kenneth Brantley was the Program Director, Donald Gamond—Employment; Darnell Carawford—Political Action; Modistine Phillips—Finance; Ivory Perry—Housing; Kermit Guy—Police Relations; Frederick Bond—Education; James Rollins—Community Action; Arlene Yeargin—Health and Welfare; and Joe Pree—Program Analyst.[34] Help Me to Help Myself aimed to raise $15,000 to aid unemployed young people in St. Louis.[35] In particular, the program was designed to find employment for high school "dropouts," "ex-convicts and all underprivileged citizens."[36] Through the program, special training classes were created "for one year to teach people to perform labor and semi-labor skills."[37] After receiving job training, individuals were to be placed in jobs that included interior or exterior home decorations, masonry, gardening, and landscaping.[38] This program also provided transportation to and from work. CORE established another job training program on May 22, 1969 when it opened the Automotive Service and Training Center. At the Center, individuals participated in a nine-week training session, during which they were trained in management, sales, car maintenance, repair, and service.

While employment, job training, and African American business development received much attention, additional human rights issues received equal attention from the local affiliate. For example, police brutality and relations between the African American community and the police department were among the central issues addressed by St. Louis CORE in the years following the Jefferson Bank campaign. St. Louis CORE took a very active role in investigating and overseeing police actions and reporting incidents of police brutality in the media, and made recommendations to the municipal government to improve police procedure and improve relations between the police and African American community.

For instance, on February 16, 1968 the *St. Louis Argus* published an incident of police brutality reported by CORE's Chairman Solomon Rooks and Kermit Guy, Chairman of the Police Relations Committee. Rooks and

Guy reported that on February 3, 1968, at approximately 12:30 a.m., as they were driving in the 1700 block of Union they noticed roughly a dozen police officers interacting with "a group of young Negro men."[39] Rooks and Guy went to "to investigate the matter."[40] According to the report, the two CORE members were recognized by one of the officers, Sergeant Davis. As they spoke with Sergeant Davis they noticed that officer Joseph Schorman began beating one of the young men, Mr. Donald Green. When Rooks and Guy protested, they were threatened by an African American officer who, according to Rooks and Guy's report, yelled, "you can get your head cracked."[41] As Donald Green was taken into custody, Rooks and Guy noticed officer Schorman was staggering and smelled of alcohol. When the police arrived at the police station, Rooks and Guy went to the officer on duty, Major Joseph Craft, to file a complaint against officer Schorman. Schorman was then instructed by Major Craft to report to the Central Headquarters for a blood alcohol level test. As reported by Rooks and Guy, Schorman refused to report to the headquarters. Schorman, threatened by Major Craft with an immediate suspension, consented to the test, yet when he arrived at the central headquarters he once again refused. Schorman was then suspended.[42]

On February 23, 1968 the *St. Louis Argus* published an open letter by CORE to the St. Louis City President of the Board of Police Commissioners.[43] This letter was also written by Kermit Guy, CORE Police Relations Chairman and Solomon Rooks, CORE Chairman. This letter expressed the concerns of CORE and the larger African American community with the St. Louis police department and made recommendations to improve police and community relations. It is interesting to note that the tone of the letter is one of peace and understanding, and expressed CORE's understanding that these incidents of police brutality and misconduct were isolated, "unusual cases" involving "one or more bad eggs on the police force or in the community" and did not represent standard operating procedure of the entire St. Louis Police Department.[44]

While suggesting CORE's reluctance to indict the entire police department, recognizing that such incidents involved only a handful of rogue officers, the letter proceeded to "respectfully request an immediate answer" to several concerns of the community.[45] These concerns were also submitted to the St. Louis Human Relations Council. Among the many concerns was "the training related to techniques for dealing with the public, crime prevention. How much force is to be used? By whom? Towards whom? Under what conditions?"[46] Other concerns with police procedure included the "apprehension of suspects. How much force? By whom? Toward whom? Under what conditions? Interrogation of suspects. Confinement of

suspects, injured, otherwise ill, on the basis of solid probable evidence."[47] Finally, CORE raised issues of officer training and evaluation, questioning "who evaluates the training program? Who evaluates trainers? Who evaluates trainees? Controls on practices and techniques of daily work? Who evaluates the program for daily practices and techniques? Who evaluates the individual officers in their practices and techniques? Who evaluates the prime evaluators?"[48]

Moreover, CORE met with representatives from the St. Louis Police Board in March 1968 to make recommendations for improving relations between the police and African American community. Representatives from CORE who met with the St. Louis Police Board included Solomon Rooks, Chairman; Kermit Guy, Police Relations; Donald Gammon, Thomas Love, Modestine Phillips, Vivian Hanner, Mary Kimbrough, Clarence Hodges, J.B. Banks, and Dr. Frederick Bond. At this meeting CORE representatives discussed hiring additional African American police officers, the deployment of African American officers to patrol white neighborhoods, police brutality, concern that officers were members of racist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and John Birch Society, the employment of African Americans in administrative and clerical or support staff positions, police attitudes toward African Americans, the promotion of African American officers to lieutenant and captain, and the partnering of African American and white officers in African American neighborhoods. CORE representatives also discussed racial violence and the potential for large-scale racial violence in St. Louis, and demanded that the police not publicly discuss the threat of race riots in St. Louis in the press.[49]

CORE also defended victims of legal injustice and wrongful imprisonment, individuals who came to be regarded as political prisoners. For example, an editorial written by Callis N. Brown, St. Louis CORE Director of Community Relations, states, "the Black Man in America is, too, a political prisoner. He too has committed an act deemed criminal in light of current political expediency. His act? His birth. It has been the political expedient for 400 years to castigate, emasculate, and finally to eliminate the Black Man from American society."[50] Arguing that it is impossible for African Americans to receive fair treatment and equal justice from law enforcement and the legal system because of institutional racism, Black Power advocates, including St. Louis CORE, asserted its fight against institutional racism in the legal system and offered its support to prisoners of the racist legal system whose only "crime" was being Black. Brown's editorial asserted, "CORE, as a Black organization representing Black people, has responded to the call of Black Brothers in time of crisis. We call upon all Black people, whatever our minor differences may be, to rally around

these brothers [political prisoners]. Their plight is our plight, their fight our fight."[51]

Discussions of police/community relations and opposition to police brutality have predominantly focused on the Black Panthers. For example, the Panther Patrols have been explained as a form of "organized violence . . . emphasizing their own 'disciplined adherence to existing law.' Invoking the United States Constitution, employing a logic of policing and the law against the police and the law, the Panthers thus posed a stunning challenge to the legitimacy of state power in Black communities."[52] As will be discussed in the following chapter, the Panther Patrols inspired the Black Liberators in St. Louis to engage in similar community protection activities. While local CORE members did not actually patrol the streets like the Panthers and Liberators, CORE did similarly investigate police activity in African American neighborhoods, report incidents of brutality and misconduct in the press, and work to improve police/community relations.

Another issue that came to the attention of CORE following the Jefferson Bank campaign was public transportation. In the winter of 1966, the Bi-State Transit System performed a private study of service car use in St. Louis. Bi-State concluded that they were losing $700,000 and 3,465,000 passengers per year to the service cars.[53] Rather than compete with the service, Bi-State purchased Consolidated Service Car Company for $625,000 with the intent of discontinuing the car service.[54] CORE became concerned with these developments because the majority of service car patrons were African Americans. Service car fare was less expensive than Bi-State bus fare and buses did not go into all African American neighborhoods as service cars did. In opposition to Bi-State's plan to terminate the car service, CORE began a boycott of Bi-State buses.

To facilitate the boycott of Bi-State buses, CORE established "Freedom Cars" to provide transportation for people who refused to use the buses. Freedom Cars provided free transportation in the Page, Wellston, and Hodiamont area. This area was included in the bus route and had been previously served by the service cars. According to the *Argus*, the boycott was widely supported by African Americans who were optimistic that the boycott would result in a favorable outcome.[55] Donations were provided by local churches, businesses, individuals, and even the local Republican Party to keep the Freedom Cars up and running.[55] Individuals could "hail" a Freedom Car as one would normally hail a cab, and "spotters" were also employed at the CORE headquarters to receive phone calls and dispatch cars to specific locations.[57]

When the boycott began Bi-State officials were not concerned and believed it would quickly "fizzle out."[58] However, within weeks Bi-State

reported to the *Argus* that the boycott was indeed affecting their profits. Specifically, Bi-State stated that they stood to lose about $30,000 a month as a result of the boycott.[59] Reaction to CORE's boycott was directed at the Freedom Cars. Taxi drivers were particularly upset trying to compete for fares with the Freedom Cars. In the second week of January, CORE held a strategy meeting to discuss the boycott. Two representatives from the taxi services attended the meeting. It is important to note that initially eighty Freedom Cars provided services to match the eighty service cars no longer in operation. However, as the boycott continued, additional Freedom Cars were put into use. Representatives from the taxi drivers demanded that CORE return to using only eighty cars and reduce their operating area to exclude the busy area of Aubert and Page. CORE agreed to reduce the number of Freedom Cars back to eighty but refused to limit the cars' operating area. In response, one of the taxi service representatives, according to CORE Chairman Bill Bailey, "said something about hoping this thing could be settled peacefully" and suggested that bricks and bombs could possibly be used against the Freedom Cars.[60] In addition, Solomon Rooks reported to the *Argus* that he received a bomb threat at his restaurant in the 4900 block of Page. As reported in the *Argus*, a waitress received a telephone call in which she was informed of a bomb that recently went off on Natural Bridge and advised to "tell Rooks it might be him next."[61]

In response to this reaction, in late January CORE filed a petition with the city for a permit to operate a car service. Attorneys Charles Oldham and Robert Curtis filed the petition which was subsequently rejected.[62] After negotiating several conditions with Bi-State, at midnight, March 3, 1966, CORE agreed to end its boycott.[63] CORE demanded Bi-State resume service cars and hire back "all former Consolidated drivers under the age of 65 who can pass the required physical examination."[64] In addition, CORE and Bi-State agreed to allow Consolidated Service Car Company to purchase the service cars from Bi-State. Bi-State also agreed to provide severance pay to all former Consolidated drivers not rehired.[65]

In its struggle for Black liberation in St. Louis, CORE cooperated with various organizations in the community to create a united front among African Americans in the region. Komozi Woodard explains that individual local struggles "began to look inward and emphasized a common interest that Black people felt, whether they were moderates or militants. This caused an important realignment of political forces in the freedom movement, making possible united fronts between Black radicals and moderates."[66] It is important to note that the formation of coalitions has always been a key strategy for local movements to maximize their numbers, strengths, and resources. Including numerous organizations in sit-ins, jail-ins, marches, and other

acts of direct action and civil disobedience lessened the damage to the over-all movement when individuals were removed or "neutralized" through arrest, imprisonment, exile, and death.[67] For example, Solomon Rooks of CORE stated, "we cannot accomplish very much on the positive side of the accountability ledger constantly being arrested, experiencing long, delayed courtroom episodes, paying excessive bail bond fees, and fighting law and order . . . We must start fighting with our brains, initiative, and creative ability."[68]

When one examines cooperation among local Black liberation groups to form a broad-based united front, it is also important to consider the significance placed on this cooperation by the larger public, including law enforcement and the government. For the most part, individuals or individual organizations on their own presented one kind of threat to local power structures, while the cooperation of several organizations across a broad front offered a different kind of threat. Therefore, law enforcement agencies and the government took efforts to prevent the formation of coalitions and cooperation among Black liberation groups. For example, propaganda was manufactured to exploit existing friction or create discord and conflict between individuals and groups. Often this misinformation and propaganda was disseminated through mainstream newspapers and other public formats to maximize exposure. As a result it is often difficult to differentiate misinformation and artificially created hostility from genuine conflict. Subsequently, cooperation between Black liberation organizations has often been downplayed, presented as an unusual occurrence or momentary period of clarity and peace during which time these various groups, depicted as naturally at odds with one another, were miraculously able to set aside their differences in order to temporarily cooperate. While reaction and repression of coalition formation will be discussed in greater detail in proceeding chapters, it is important to emphasize that cooperation among organizations was in fact the norm and occurred frequently.

Throughout the late 1960s, CORE cooperated with numerous groups in the St. Louis area. Cooperation among these groups was emphasized as one of the key strategies that would successfully accomplish the local movement's goals. For example, the *St. Louis Argus* reported, "the recent announcement by several of our local Black Power organizations presenting a new comprehensive approach to the problems of the ghetto needs, informs the public that their leadership has decided to start attacking the problems on a frontal basis with the combined efforts and instrumentalities of the community, rather than the streets, jail terms, and unnecessary civil disorder." This cooperation was met with enthusiastic support as articulated by Frank W. Mitchell, Sr., publisher of the *St. Louis Argus*, who

praised this cooperation as "a welcome move and wise decision upon the part of their leaders."[69] Mitchell later commented, "CORE, ACTION, The Mid-City Congress, Black Liberators, Zulu's 1200 have a great responsibility in creating the type of racial climate St. Louis will experience in the coming years . . . Therefore, since the city wasn't destroyed [at] the height of the national Black Power thrust, there is no reason justifiable as to why the combined efforts of all cannot be organized into one gigantic resource to develop the social, welfare, housing, and economic life of the city . . . where opportunities are abundant for all."[70]

On September 15, 1965, CORE joined local civil rights leaders Ivory Perry and Macler Shepard, to protest police brutality after local police shot three unarmed African American suspects in six days. The coalition demanded an investigation of the incidents and charges filed against the officers involved. In addition, the coalition demanded the formation of a civilian review board to oversee the police and the hiring of additional African American officers.[71] All officers involved in the shootings were found innocent of any "wrongdoing" and the police board of commissioners as well as the chief of police rejected the demands for a civilian review board and the hiring of more African American officers.[72]

Cooperation among local organizations also produced the Black United Front, a coalition organization formed in 1968 that included St. Louis CORE, the Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes (ACTION), the Jeff-Vander-Lou Community Action Group, West End Community Conference, the Ministerial Alliance, the New Voice, and representatives from the Pruitt-Igoe Apartments.[73] The group was led by Reverend Oliver Gibson, pastor at the Parrich Temple and representative of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Ministerial Alliance.

Upon its formation, the Black United Front sent a letter to St. Louis Mayor Alfonso J. Cervantes outlining its goals and suggesting strategies to achieve "better racial accord here and improving the plight of St. Louis's Negro citizens."[74] Specifically, the BUF demanded from Mayor Alfonso Cervantes "more jobs, improved and revamping the Human Development Corporation."[75] Put simply, BUF wanted the municipal government to address poverty in general and the needs of working class African Americans in particular, in the city of St. Louis.

The Mayor responded to the BUF's demands by asserting that it was not the municipal government's responsibility to fight poverty. Cervantes argued that while the municipal government made money available to start African American businesses, poverty was the result of African Americans' "poor work habits" and lack of "energy" in requesting this money. The *St. Louis Argus* reported that Cervantes, "cited several instances where

Negroes could do quite a bit on their own to improve their conditions. He advised Negroes to be more energetic about going into their own businesses . . . He talked about the shiftlessness of some of the so-called hard core unemployed; their poor work habits and a lack of proper incentives plus their constantly expecting handouts."[76] In addition, Cervantes suggested that African Americans "adopt the new three R's—respect, restraint, and responsibility."[77] This reaction from the Mayor generated a new set of demands by the Black United Front.

As the *Argus* points out, the Black United Front was "disturbed over the Mayor's response and his chiding."[78] Although a Republican, the Mayor's reaction brought rough comparisons to Southern Democratic segregationist politicians such as George Wallace who stood as leading opponents to civil rights.[79] The BUF responded to Cervantes's "three R's" comment by suggesting that the administration embrace the three R's of "recognition, repentance, and reward." As defined by the BUF, these three R's "sought recognition of white racism as the root of the race problem, repentance so that Negroes can forgive and forget, and reward for 100 years of Negro patience."[80] In response to his remarks, the BUF submitted a new list of demands mandating the government play a greater role in attacking poverty in St. Louis. This new letter, sent to the Mayor's office Wednesday, May 15, 1968, was "considered to be much stronger than their first" and included direct "point by point" rebuttals to the Mayor's response to the BUF's previous letter.[81] Specifically, the new letter demanded a new staff be appointed to the Human Development Corporation because of the failure of the present staff to "do the job."

The Human Development Corporation was a "War on Poverty" program that employed local liaisons in various communities to affect conditions that contributed to poverty. According to its Articles of Incorporation, the HDC was designed "to mobilize and utilize public and private resources in the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County in a comprehensive community action program designed to reduce, minimize, and eliminate the causes and effects of poverty and juvenile delinquency and youth crime . . . to guide, assist, promote, and coordinate the development of programs and activities which are part of the comprehensive community action program and to evaluate their effectiveness."[82]

As William Locke points out in his study of the HDC, *A History and Analysis of the Origin and Development of the Human Development Corporation of Metropolitan St. Louis, Missouri, 1962–1970*, from its inception, the agency's success was hampered by the late hiring of its director, conflict with other War on Poverty programs, limited power, and small under-funded staff.[83] The Black United Front pointed out that only thirty

of seventy-five positions in the HDC were occupied by African Americans since its inception in 1965.[84] Moreover, the BUF attacked the HDC "for what was proported to be the high salaries paid to top administrators." The HDC's General Manager, Samuel Bernstein, countered this criticism, asserting that the HDC salaries "are in line with Health and Welfare Council and United Fund and other similar agencies."[85]

The Black United Front also criticized the Mayor's summer youth program designed to spend $4,500 on each participant. According to the BUF, it was counterproductive for the city to spend $4,500 on each child when, according to the BUF, "the average income of Black men in the ghetto is $3,400 a year."[86] In addition, the BUF also demanded that the Mayor appoint African Americans to the Metropolitan Business Development Commission to encourage and assist in the development of African American businesses. This commission was created by Cervantes for community business leaders to promote economic development in the city.

Another mandate included in the BUF's letter to the Mayor was the hiring of additional African American police officers and African American participation on the Police Department recruit screening board. Moreover, the BUF requested the municipal government hold "absentee landlords" accountable for failure to improve housing conditions, and asked the administration to provide funds for the construction of low income housing. As this letter illustrates, the BUF targeted human rights issues such as housing, security and self defense, poverty and employment which became the primary thrust of the local movement's Black Power orientation.

The Black Economic Union in East St. Louis was another coalition of organizations. The Black Economic Union emerged in the St. Louis area in April 1968, within an uneasy atmosphere. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, East St. Louis was home to an active local movement. Following the 1954 *Brown* decision, East St. Louis schools remained segregated. However, the African American community led by high school teacher Homer G. Randolph, picketed East St. Louis schools demanding immediate desegregation. In addition, in 1963 Randolph organized a series of protests in downtown East St. Louis against banks and stores which discriminated against African Americans. In 1965 and 1966, the East St. Louis branch of the NAACP fought for equal employment opportunities on government projects.

The mayoral election of 1967 directly contributed to the embrace of Black Power among African Americans in East St. Louis, and was the precipitating incident responsible for the formation of the Black Economic Union. During the primary election, Elmo J. Bush, a prominent activist and teacher, ran against the white incumbent of sixteen years and leader

of the East St. Louis political machine, Alvin G. Fields. When the votes were calculated it was discovered that Fields had included the names of dead people on the voting results. Despite these improprieties, Fields won the primary and was ultimately reelected. Frustration and anger over this incident contributed to the formation of the Black Economic Union the following spring.[87]

The Black Economic Union was an umbrella organization that included several groups in the St. Louis region. These groups included Black Culture Inc., IMPACT, and the War Lords. Representatives from St. Louis, Carbondale and Cairo, Illinois, and Memphis, Tennessee also supported the Black Economic Union.[88] Reflecting the larger concept of Black Power, the Black Economic Union emphasized African American control of community institutions and endorsed the "takeover by Negro ghetto residents of white owned businesses and institutions"[89] In general, the BEU aimed "to generate Black economic independence by the creation of cooperation of all kinds" and to "control those institutions that have the greatest impact on the lives of the ghetto residents, i.e. schools, city government, War on Poverty agency."[90]

Like many revolutionary organizations, the structure and membership of the Black Economic Union remained hidden to the larger community. For example, the East St. Louis press reported, "just what the Black Economic Union is, what kind of strength it has, and who directs it are questions known only to its leaders."[91] The BEU was primarily comprised of the lumpen-proletariat, young, poor, unemployed individuals with little to no education and possibly involved in criminal activities. Specifically, the East St. Louis press reported that the BEU, "counts the young, essentially autonomous gangs and groups of Negroes in the various cities as members of the Union."[92] Beyond specific membership numbers and organizational structure, it was suggested that the BEU had two representatives or "board members in each of the cities in the organization."[93] Structurally the BEU was "a rather loose confederation of equal groups without central authority."[94] This loose structure was convenient in allowing for the creation of independent cells that could act and function independent of each other without central leadership. This organizational structure minimized damage to the larger group if its leaders were "removed" from power.

While the BEU was designed to operate without central leadership, Charles Koen served as the group's spokesmen. Koen was from Cairo, Illinois where, at age 16, he was elected chairman of the Cairo Nonviolent Freedom Committee. Koen attended McKendree College in Lebanon, Illinois where he was a member of the basketball team.[95] Throughout the mid and late 1960s Koen was extremely active in the Black liberation struggle in

East St. Louis and St. Louis, and was referred to by East St. Louis's *Metro East Journal* as a "general apostle of the Black Revolution." As spokesman for the Black Economic Union, Koen distanced the organization from traditional civil rights groups, defining the BEU's philosophy in line with the larger concept of Black Power by endorsing revolution, African American self determination, community control, and violence as a viable tactic for liberation and empowerment. For instance, Koen asserted that violence would be employed to remove whites from East St. Louis and would continue until whites paid the BEU to stop this violence. Specifically, Koen stated that the BEU "plans to make use of the kind of destructive guerrilla warfare the young militants are adept at. This systematic use of terrorism is calculated to hasten the white exodus."[96] According to Koen, until whites paid the group an unspecified sum of money, violence against whites in East St. Louis would occur. In turn, the money whites paid to stop the violence would then be used by the BEU to help establish Black cooperatives.[97]

Comprised of young, poor, unemployed individuals with little to no education and possibly involved in criminal activity, Black Power-oriented groups such as the BEU found support among "youth gangs" including the Imperial War Lords. The Imperial War Lords were introduced to the BEU through Keith Davis, a white minister for the First Lutheran Church in East St. Louis. Davis helped the War Lords become involved in community education and job training programs. In June, 1968 the *Globe Democrat* reported that the First Lutheran Church had been the target of arson and faced $8,000 of damage. The *Globe Democrat* reported that Keith Davis "is closely associated with a group of militant Negroes calling themselves the Warlords," and suggested that the church had been attacked because of Davis's work with the group.[98] The *Globe* added, "Reverend Davis said his life has been threatened several times in recent months by persons protesting his civil rights work. He said a bomb recently was found on the church steps but did not explode, and that shots have been fired into the church several times at night."[99]

Davis was also slated to be the first keynote speaker at the East St. Louis Riverfront Church Center's series on urban crisis programs. However, Davis was unable to attend and Leon Page spoke in Davis's place. According to the *Globe Democrat*, Page worked with the Central City Organization, Black Economic Union as well as the Imperial Warlords, and Black Egyptians.[100] Page spoke of the revolutionary potential of "gangs" and the contribution they could make to the Black liberation struggle. For instance, Page noted, "Negro street gangs, which in the past have fought each other, now see 'the system' as the enemy."[101] Page continued by stating, "street gangs today are concerned collectively with the problems of the

Black man."[102] Page went on to assert, "I'm out to make democracy work because I believe in it. You haven't taken the responsibility to make it work, so I must."[103]

A significant effort to organize and maximize the potential of gangs was made in May, 1968 when representatives from sixty gangs from around the country met for four days at Southern Illinois University.[104] This was the first nationwide meeting of its kind. Gangs met under the auspices of the Youth Organizations United to look for a productive alternative to violence and rioting. The self-described goal of the group was to create "an alternative to revolution."[105] However, the Youth Organizations United remained strategically flexible stating, "we do not want to be classified as nonviolent, or as rock throwers or peace marchers. We will do what is necessary to get the job done."[106] The Youth Organizations United promoted Black economic and political empowerment and community control. Spokesmen for the YOU asserted that the goal of the group was to "dignify the ghettoes which we must call home, by concentrating on housing, education, law, culture, and communication among American minority youth groups."[107] Thirty-six-year old Warren Gilmore of Chicago's Conservative Vice Lords, was elected president of the Youth Organizations United. Recognizing the potential for this conference in directing gang activities to peaceful channels as opposed to "revolution," the Department of Labor provided a grant of $33,000 for travel expenses to individuals to attend the convention.[108] Local representatives from the St. Louis metropolitan area who attended the conference included the War Lords, the Black Egyptians, CORE, IMPACT, and the Northwest Neighborhood Center.

The Imperial War Lords and Black Economic Union were influenced and inspired by the Experiment in Higher Education at Southern Illinois University's East St. Louis branch. Started in 1965 by Dr. Hyman Frankel, the Experiment in Higher Education was funded through the Office of Economic Opportunity as a program designed to provide "at risk" high school aged individuals two years of college.[109] Interestingly enough, the Blackstone Rangers, a Chicago-based gang, similarly received a one million dollar grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity to establish job training programs.[110] This grant was later revoked.[111]

One of the programs provided by the Experiment in Higher Education was "Upward Bound," created in 1968 with a $90,343 grant from the OEO. This program provided financial assistance to fifty students from various high schools in East St. Louis to attend classes at Southern Illinois University.[112] In 1970 Upward Bound enrolled an additional 115 students at Webster College and seventy at Washington University.[113] Students lived on campus for a seven-week summer session and attended Saturday classes

during the academic year.[114] Students were "referred to the program by high school teachers and counselors or others not only on the basis of grades and test scores, but by observation and instinctive judgment."[115]

The Experiment in Higher Education specifically recruited individuals who were "scholastically" apathetic, "turned off by traditional teaching methods," and found traditional curriculum irrelevant.[116] Moreover, the Experiment in Higher Education sought individuals without the necessary financial means "to attend college without financial assistance" and aimed to provide education opportunities "to make the employed more effective and cause the unemployed to become self supporting."[117] The Experiment in Higher Education suggested "a complete revision of the so-called 'accepted' college curriculum. Course content would be focused on knowledge and information which would help the student to understand his environment. The community, then, becomes the 'classroom.'"[118] Furthermore, classes would employ a variety of multidisciplinary and creative teaching strategies. For example, "the freshmen class schedule consists of daily lectures and small group seminars which give the student the opportunity to relate course content to his own experiences."[119] In addition, "language workshops treat the areas of oral and written communication with a maximum of innovative teaching methods. Emphasis is on the appreciation of all forms of writing, with special concern for Afro-American literature. Creative writing is enthusiastically encouraged. Standard educational materials are never 'geared down.' On the contrary, these materials are re-examined and reorganized in view of their relevance and importance to the modern world."[120]

The Experiment in Higher Education also redefined the role of the educator. Specifically, the program created the role of the "Teacher-Counselor" who would facilitate traditional learning but would also educate based on their own life experiences. The program explained, "because of his familiarity with the Black community and his proven ability to negotiate systems outside of that community, the teacher-counselor is qualified to deal with the problems confronting youth from low income areas."[121] In this sense, the students would be educated on a variety of levels, socially and culturally as well as academically. According to the Experiment, "the teacher-counselor functions as an instructor, a seminar leader, a professional tutor, a student counselor of both academic and non-academic problems, and as liaison between students and staff, and is responsible, therefore, for assisting the student in his comprehension and assimilation of the total curriculum."[122] The Experiment in Higher Education saw immediate success with seventy nine percent of participants retained in the program after its first year.[123] Through its comprehensive

education programs, the Experiment in Higher Education was said to have helped train the "intellectual leaders of the revolution in East St. Louis."[124]

Participants in the Experiment in Higher Education received the opportunity to put their new knowledge to work in the summer of 1967 through Project IMPACT. Created by former mayoral candidate, activist, and teacher, Elmo Bush, Project IMPACT (Innovative Methods of Progressive Action for Community Tranquility) was designed to "provide a recreational and cultural center for the city's rootless young" and was initially funded through a grant from the St. Clair County Economic Opportunity Commission as well as donations.[125] Project IMPACT was headquartered at 1207 Missouri Avenue.[126] Reverend O.W. Goldstein and Reverend Keith Davis also worked with Project IMPACT and subsequently introduced the Imperial War Lords to the program. Through Project IMPACT, these young people received an education and developed a sense of "Black awareness" which encouraged their activism.

In June 1968, Project IMPACT received a $28,780 grant from the United States Department of Labor.[127] This money helped IMPACT continue to provide recreation programs, job counseling, and "other services to youths."[128] One of these services was Project Upgrade, a $200,000 work training and city beautification program "designed for unemployed persons 19 years old and over."[129]

While dedicated to community uplift, Project IMPACT's inclusion of "gangs" and its promotion of Black empowerment drew criticism from the media and white public. For example, the *Globe Democrat* called Project IMPACT "controversial" because of the program's association with "gangs."[130] Moreover, the media commented that IMPACT had gained the reputation as "having become a headquarters for Negro militants."[131] Controversy surrounding the program reached a crescendo in August 1968, when the head of Project IMPACT, Lucious Jones, along with four other program participants were investigated for sexually assaulting a sixteen-year-old girl at Project IMPACT's offices.[132] According to her report, the victim was assaulted and then threatened that if she told anyone of the incident, the War Lords would "get" her.[133] A subsequent police investigation, public outcry, and lingering controversy contributed to the demise of Project IMPACT and the Black Economic Union.

Inspired by new models for liberation that became more pronounced in the 1960s, CORE reevaluated its commitment to its traditional strategies and goals to eventually embrace Black Power. While the group had previous success in the realm of public accommodations and hiring discrimination, issues such as housing, police brutality, public transportation, employment, education, and poverty were largely unaffected by the group's previous

work. Thus, Black Power became the vehicle by which these goals could be achieved. Promoting African American control of community institutions, political and economic development and empowerment, the right to self determination and autonomy, and self defense, CORE continued its struggle for African American liberation in the St. Louis area following its relatively successful campaign against the Jefferson Bank. Often this struggle enlisted the aid of other local organizations similarly dedicated to African American liberation. These additional local organizations that fought alongside CORE are the topic of the following chapter.

Chapter Five

Black Power: The Black Liberators, Black Nationalists, DuBois Club, Jeff Vander Lou Community Action Group, Nation of Islam, Mid-City Congress, Zulu 1200s

While CORE resided in the headlines of the city's leading newspapers throughout its battle against hiring discrimination in the local banking industry, by 1965 CORE shared the headlines with additional organizations. The resilience of inequalities in housing, healthcare, employment, and education, coupled with enduring police brutality and poverty despite long-standing opposition to segregation and racial oppression, led many in the African American community to criticize and ultimately abandon their commitment to nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration. While the media focused its attention on the rejection of these primary tenants of the civil rights movement, reporting on the ousting of whites, violence, and separation, local organizations endorsed Black Power as a legitimate concept to destroy these enduring inequalities and racial oppression. While the previous chapter discussed the evolution of CORE by 1964 and the local affiliate's cooperation with other local organizations, the following examines these additional organizations in greater detail.

This chapter focuses on local organizations that engaged in what has come to be known as "direct action." Adam Fairclough notes, "direct action means direct action as opposed to legal or court challenges which were often indirect, slow moving, required special knowledge of the legal system and even if representing the masses, only a small handful of people were directly involved on a daily basis with the case."[1] Floyd McKissick

also explains direct action in stating, "a man or a race caught in a pot of glue uses desperate efforts to escape. He does not listen patiently to those who expound his First Amendment rights and his right to vote, explaining that they provide the escape route. For those rights in practical operation have proved futile in the past and often promise only to imprison a minority in a useless constitutional ceremony."[2] This chapter examines local organizations that fought racial oppression through direct action.

The *St. Louis Post Dispatch* distinguished between groups such as CORE and the Black Liberators who embraced Black Power, and the NAACP and Urban League that remained committed to the traditional tactics and strategies of nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration. The *Post Dispatch* stated, "in the opinion of the angry Black men who now command the civil rights movement, the NAACP's negotiations and stage court room test cases no longer are appropriate."[3] In addition, the NAACP was often critical of direct action and opposed Black Power. For instance, the local NAACP criticized CORE's direct action tactics during its protests against the Jefferson Bank. As these remarks illustrate, the *Post Dispatch* drew a distinction between direct action groups such as CORE, the Black Liberators and Zulu 1200s, and the NAACP and Urban League. Moreover, the *Post Dispatch* also described the Black Liberators and Zulus, stating, "both the Zulus and the Liberators are structured as military units and attract the type of young alienated Negro men, many with police records, who are prone to stronger steps than most members of ACTION and CORE."[4] In other words, the organizations discussed in this chapter differed from the NAACP and Urban League not only in their strategies and goals, but also differed structurally and organizationally from CORE. These differences will be elaborated upon throughout this chapter.

It is also important to reveal the larger network of activism that linked these organizations and their members to one another. For example, before becoming Prime Minister of the Black Liberators Charles Koen served as Chairman of the Cairo, Illinois, Nonviolent Freedom Committee and Black Economic Union. James Peake was the field secretary for the St. Louis NAACP and worked with CORE and SDS in the St. Louis area before becoming the head of the St. Louis DuBois Club. Similarly, Eugene Tournour was the Midwest Field Secretary for CORE before joining the DuBois Club. In addition, many programs, activities, protests, boycotts, speakers, and rallies were co-supported by various local and national organizations. The larger national support these local actions received reveals the relationship between the local movement in St. Louis and larger national and transnational Black liberation movements. However,

as forthcoming chapters explain, cooperation among local and national organizations brought intense and dramatic repression.

In the summer of 1968 the Black Liberators opened their headquarters at 2810 Easton in downtown St. Louis. Mirroring the Black Panther Party with their military style uniforms and titles, and holding "drills" every Thursday night outside of the headquarters, the Black Liberators were a significant new force in the local Black liberation movement. Yet beyond their militant image the Liberators adopted a ten point program for Black liberation in the St. Louis community. Specifically, the Black Liberators stated its "beliefs" as follows: "1.We want land for all Black people. 2. We want every Black person to be free to live without being discriminated against for being Black. 3. We want an end to Negro and white policemen killing our people in the streets. 4. We want an end to policemen patrolling Black communities. 5. We want the opportunity as Black people to protect our own communities. 6. We want an end to the bond system that the United States has established which keeps Black people imprisoned because we do not have bond money. 7. We believe in respecting and protecting our Black women. 8. We believe in working side by side with our Black women, and giving them total care. 9. We want Black people on ADC, OAA, and all types of government programs to receive enough money to live decently. 10. We want good jobs, excellent education, and decent housing for Black people."[5]

The Liberators further stated, "we, the Black [Liberators], have pledged our lives in behalf of the Black communities: to fight toward making all our beliefs a reality. We live for the total liberation of all Black people."[6] These "beliefs" were followed by five "objectives." These "objectives" included, "1. To establish a Black political party which would enable more Black power. 2. To establish an economic base for Black people. 3. To prevent Black people from being exploited by racism. 4. To establish a Black guard which will protect the Black community from racist cops. 5. To improve the total economic, social, and political environment by using any available means."[7] The objectives concluded, "we stand firmly against Black people being subject to racist cops and exploited by racism in the world. The Black [Liberators] will pursue any available challenge to protect our people against racism and exploitation."[8]

The "beliefs" and "objectives" of the Black Liberators was a clear articulation of some of the fundamental concepts of Black Power. Such concepts included control of the African American community, public safety and the right to self defense, self determination, and political and economic power through ownership of land and the mobilization of

African American voters. The Liberator's program was designed to address human rights issues left unaddressed by local civil rights reforms.

With the promotion of these beliefs and goals and the adoption of a revolutionary agenda, the Liberators established themselves as a unique organization that differed greatly from the established civil rights groups in St. Louis. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that the conditions responsible for the creation of the Liberators were the same conditions responsible for the creation of similar organizations that embraced the concept of Black Power throughout the country. For example, the Liberators noted that conditions responsible for the organization's creation included, "poverty, discrimination, and lack of opportunity that existed and are still present in the Black ghetto."[9] In addition, the Liberators asserted that their formation resulted from "a desire to work toward improving the economic status of Black ghetto residents, a desire to protect Black persons from being mistreated by the police, and an interest in developing and enhancing Black identity, awareness, and self respect."[10] Thus, while the Liberator's existence was relatively unique in St. Louis, the Liberators arose from conditions that gave rise to similar organizations throughout the country and world.

This point becomes more apparent when we compare the Liberators ten beliefs and five objectives with the Ten Point Program of the Black Panther Party. For example, the Ten Point Program entitled, "What We Want, What We Believe" similarly demanded for African Americans self determination, employment, housing, education, land, an end to police brutality, a fair, impartial, and just legal system, political power, and economic power.[11] Similarities between the goals and objectives of the two organizations illustrates the point that although the Liberators were a relatively unique organization in St. Louis, they were similar to other organizations and were thus part of a much larger movement.

Demographically, members of the Black Liberators came primarily from St. Louis's lumpen-proletariat, young African Americans, around the age of seventeen, from "a lower class background," many of whom had little education, were unemployed and perhaps even had minor police records.[12] In addition, for most of the Liberators, "membership in the organization represented his first involvement in an activist cause on behalf of Black people. The leaders of the [Liberators] tended to be somewhat older, with a history of previous involvement in civil rights organizations."[13] The group's Prime Minister was twenty-three-year-old Charles Koen, originally from Cairo, Illinois where, at age sixteen, he was elected chairman of the Cairo Nonviolent Freedom Committee. As previously noted, Koen had attended McKendree College in Lebanon, Illinois where he was a member

of the basketball team.[14] Throughout the mid and late 1960s, Koen was extremely active in Black Power groups in East St. Louis and St. Louis, and was referred to by East St. Louis's *Metro East Journal* as a "general apostle of the Black Revolution."[15]

Similar to the Black Panthers, part of the Liberator program included protection of the community from crime, violence and police brutality and soon after their emergence members began patrolling the neighborhood. In August 1968, the Black Liberators held a meeting with the Franklin Avenue Businessmen's Association, the majority of whom were white, at which the Liberators offered to "guard" their stores in return for funding. According to the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, the Black Liberator's Prime Minister, Charles Koen, told the Association that the Liberators would "keep things 'cool' in the area if the businessmen" were cooperative.[16] Koen's proposal that the Liberators serve as night-watchmen was part of his larger plan for total African American control of the community. For example, he argued that white police officers patrolling the neighborhood should be replaced by Liberators.[17]

The Black Liberators took their role in the community seriously and they expected to be taken seriously. Likening themselves to other oppressed and colonized peoples throughout the world, the Liberators, like the Black Panthers, sought to protect themselves and their African American communities from law enforcement officials and others who perpetuated racial oppression. For example, Kenneth O'Reilly states, "Black Panther Party rhetoric was anything but crazy to the FBI or the Panthers themselves. For many of the young men and women who joined the party, all social ills could be traced back to the police who patrolled the ghettoes and the larger law enforcement establishment. 'Off the Pig!' became the Black Panther slogan, and it suggested to some, Hoover included, that the party had assumed the right to liberate Black people from a police army of occupation by murdering anyone who wore a badge. The Panthers saw the image of the lawman who enforced Jim Crow with nightsticks and arrangements with the Ku Klux Klan on the face of every cop and G-man in the ghettoes of the North."[18] Placed in this larger context of protection from reactionary and oppositional forces, the role of the Liberators, like that of the Panthers, as providers and protectors of their community was central to their existence.

During the 1968 elections the Liberators canvassed African American neighborhoods with literature that criticized Governor Warren E. Hearnes and St. Louis Mayor Alfonso Cervantes, advising African Americans not to vote for the two incumbents. This literature argued that Hearnes should be opposed because, according to Koen, he "opposed increases in aid to welfare recipients" and because of his actions during the riots in Kansas City

following the assassination of Martin Luther King. In addition, the Liberators opposed Hearnes and Cervantes because of their refusal to act against police brutality against the Liberators in September 1968.

One pamphlet circulated by the Liberators' Committee for Representative Government was entitled "Negroes, don't be no fool."[19] At the bottom, the circular read, "stop Gov. Hearnes and the honkey cops from killing our women and children! Vote against Hearnes on November 5, 1968."[20] Pictured on the pamphlet were two African American men carrying signs that read "stop the police brutality" and "police brutality" standing in front of a desk. Standing behind the desk was a devil-like Uncle Sam figure, complete with fangs, tail, patriotic top-hat, with coat-tails that read "Gov. Hearnes." This demonic Hearnes figure was standing upon another African American man upon which the words "St. Louis Negroes" were written. Finally, the caption to this picture quoted Hearnes saying, "you boys know where I stand on that subject."[21] The creator of this flier was Gerald 2X.[22] Canvassing the African American neighborhood with these fliers illustrates the larger point that there was more to the Black Liberator agenda than military drills and uniforms. This example of political campaigning, coupled with their neighborhood patrols, illustrates the larger political, economic, social and cultural agenda promoted by the Black Liberators in St. Louis.

The Black Liberators also defined themselves as part of a much larger national and international struggle for Black liberation by associating with national and international freedom fighters. For example, at their head-quarters, the Liberators educated their members in various revolutionary ideologies by offering reading materials by Franz Fanon, Karl Marx, Mao Tse-Tung, Malcolm X, and Che Guevara. In addition, individuals such as Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and James Foreman were invited by the Liberators to speak at rallies and meetings in St. Louis. In doing so, the Liberators linked their local efforts in St. Louis to a larger national and international movement.

A more formal association between the Liberators and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was established on November 8, 1968 when H. Rap Brown's successor Philip L. Hutchings came to St. Louis. At a rally at the Riviera Night Club in St. Louis, Hutchings introduced Charles Koen, Prime Minister of the Liberators, as the new Midwest Deputy Chairman of SNCC and introduced himself as the General Field Marshal of the Black Liberators. H. Rap Brown, former head of SNCC, was named General of Human Justice of the Liberators, and James Foreman, another former SNCC leader, was named the Liberator's General for Foreign Affairs.[23] According to the *St. Louis*

Post Dispatch, "Hutchings said the alliance would work against racism, capitalism, imperialism, and opportunism."[24] The *Post* went on to quote Hutchings as stating that the Liberators and SNCC should "build a national organization that can make revolution possible."[25]

It is important to emphasize that the conditions that gave rise to the Black Liberators in St. Louis gave rise to similar organizations throughout the country and world. For example, Helmreich asserts, "to look at the [Liberators] as an isolated phenomenon is to misunderstand them, for they were part of a national struggle for Black liberation and identity. When viewed in this light, we realize that if the members of the organization continued to work toward improving the lives of their people the organization did not really break up. The name may have changed; even the locale may have been altered. Yet as long as the goals remained constant, these differences are of little consequence."[26] The Liberator's program for Black liberation in St. Louis, Missouri differed little from programs for liberation put forth by similar movements by oppressed people throughout the world. Yet, it is because of these similarities that the Black Liberators should be included in larger discussions of the Black Power movement.

The Black Nationalists was another organization that developed out of these conditions and it offered a similar program for Black liberation in the St. Louis area. The Black Nationalists established themselves in 1969 at 5585 Pershing in the West End.[27] The Black Nationalists were led by Brother Shahib who served as Chairman, Theodore 2X, Vice Chairman, Brother Jose Renteria, Minister of Defense, and Mr. Coleman, Minister of Intelligence.[28] In early 1970 the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* presented an "in depth" report on the Black Nationalists. This article illustrates the larger public's fixation on the rhetoric and imagery of Black Power rather than actual concepts and programs.[29]

The *Post Dispatch* offered a detailed description of the Nationalists' headquarters. The article states that the headquarters served as "an important gathering place for between 200 and 500 young Black persons, many of them residents of the West End."[30] However, the article goes on to call these individuals "delinquents."[31] The Nationalists had strict rules for its members and those using their facilities. Specifically, the rules stated, "no narcotics or alcoholic beverages allowed on duty . . . no member can fire a gun except in defending his or her self . . . No member can be high while attending a meeting or doing anything concerning the Nationalist Party . . . Members must read at least twelve hours a week . . . Dope shooters or pushers will be expelled from the Nationalist party . . . Violators will be dealt with."[32]

It was also noted that the Black Nationalists placed an emphasis on astrology as a means "of taking people who have never been out of St. Louis and making them aware of the big universe."[33] In addition, like the Black Liberators and Black Panthers, the Black Nationalists provided unarmed patrols of the West End community, organized by Brother Jose Renteria, Minister of Defense. The patrol area was from the east city limit to Union Blvd. and from Easton Ave. South to Pershing Ave.[34]

Yet the *Post Dispatch* contributed to the biased and prejudiced picture of Black Power by primarily focusing on the image and rhetoric of the organization. For example, this glimpse "inside the Black Militants' headquarters" focused predominantly on the group's young male members and pictured these members posing next to posters of Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali.[35] In addition, the article states, "the center's main hallway is rich with signs, posters, homilies, and pictures of Huey Newton, H. Rap Brown, Muhammad Ali."[36] Focusing on the rhetoric and images rather than the actual message and accomplishments, employing its own biased vision of the movement, the media has contributed to the image of Black Liberation as a predominantly masculine movement which has perpetuated the marginalization of women in the movement.

Interestingly, the guide through the Nationalists' headquarters was a young women member. Although the article includes pictures of the young male revolutionaries in various poses next to posters of Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali, the only picture of a woman Nationalist shows her in the group's kitchen wearing what looks to be a dress, sandals, and head wrap. The caption to the picture reads, "Saturday morning cleanup in the kitchen."[37] It should be noted that two men are present in the picture, both attired in all black clothing, one with a sheet of paper in his hand and the other with his empty hands at his sides. Of course it is impossible to know exactly what these individuals were all doing in this kitchen and it is important not to speculate or infer too much from this grainy image. Nonetheless, this image contributes to the gender construction of this organization by presenting these men as revolutionaries along side other strong male revolutionaries in Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali. While two men are presented in the picture of kitchen cleanup alongside a woman, women are not similarly pictured in any other format, serving any other role outside of the kitchen, as the men are.

This article depicts the Black Nationalists as hard, strong, faceless, nameless, reserved, poised, distanced from the larger community, and in control. Members are presented in this article merely as fists, eyes, and voices. For example, the article states, "it is not easy to get inside the center, at least not in the morning, even with a guide who knows the party leaders

and is sympathetic with their work. The guide hammers her knuckles against the green front door. Nobody answers, and she hammers harder. Finally an eye appears at a hole in the door, a voice communicates briefly with the guide, and the eye goes away. Then another eye, more talk, and another disappearance."[38]

While the white media presented the Black Nationalists and the larger concept of Black Power in a biased and irresponsible manner contributing to the larger public's fear and reaction, Black Power groups including the Liberators and Nationalists similarly cultivated specific images in order to speak in the same language as those they were trying to reach, and because members were a product of the very same conditions. For example a *Post Dispatch* journalist asked a member of the Nationalists, "why not take off the leather jackets, tone down the talk, and change the name to something like the Pershing Avenue Improvement Association? Why not change the image?"[39] The article explains that the brother smiled and replied, "that would be a fine idea . . . if our purpose was to reach the big people downtown. But that isn't what we're here for. We want to reach our people. Society has played with our destinies for 300 years and screwed up the deal. Now we want to handle our own destinies and build a self-supporting community. If somebody from outside would like to help without trying to control us that would be fine."[40] This response demonstrates how Black Power was a vehicle to reconnect the movement to the masses. Put simply, members of these organizations came from what Marx called the lumpen-proletariat and thus spoke the language of the masses because they were the masses.

The *Post Dispatch* also depicted the building itself as dark, impenetrable, and remote. For example, the description of the administrative offices reinforces the marginalization of the organization and its members from the larger community, stating, "it is sparely furnished with two desks, and on a wall is an incongruous reminder of the world outside, a certificate of incorporation issued to the Nationalists last year and signed by Missouri Secretary of State James Kirkpatrick."[41] The article explains, "opposite the office is a room painted completely black. Colorful squares have been painted on the floor, and the windows are blocked off with bamboo decorations. The only light is a fluorescent bulb painted red. When it is off the room is absolutely dark. When it is on, the effect is almost psychedelic." According to Mr. Coleman, Minister of Intelligence, this was the "record room" where "brothers can come in here to be by themselves and listen to the voice of Malcolm X."[42]

The colorful bias of this article was not lost on Eda Houwink who, on March 24, 1970, wrote a letter to the Managing Editor of the *Post*

Dispatch, Evarts A. Graham, Jr., challenging the paper for printing such a prejudiced article. She began her letter by inquiring if the paper had "a Black reporter or a white reporter who has learned to think Black and who can report these activities fairly and accurately?"[43] She went on to add, "the article as written showed white anxieties and projections and this is a part of the Negro-white problem."[44] Graham replied to Houwink's letter stating, "we do have Black reporters, and white reporters who can 'think Black.' I do not understand what relevance that question has, however. I do not agree that the article as published displayed very many white anxieties or projections. It may have contained some middle class anxieties and projections, but these are shared by Black middle class St. Lousians, of whom there are many, as well as white. As a resident of the neighborhood, you are undoubtedly aware of the intense fear the establishment of the Black Culture Center caused. I am sure you also know that the police accuse it of being the focus of organized Black crime of many kinds, from purse stealing to arson. As you must be aware from reading the article, we share your appraisal of it as an organization which is doing the best it can to achieve positive results. Since the focus of racism is in the white community, it is essential that whites understand Black problems and what Blacks are trying to do about them. Until that process has been accomplished, there will never be any favorable white reaction to overcome the barriers. The main function of the Black Culture Center piece was to try to describe what is going on there for the benefit of our white readers, always with the hopes that there might be a little spin off of interesting a few Blacks who might not have known about its existence. But primarily we were writing for Central West End, Webster Groves, and St. Louis Hills residents. This process requires a white interpretation to be credible, not more Black rhetoric."[45]

Houwink responded to this letter on March 30, 1970. In her response Houwink points out that "the Center was not begun by the Nationalists. All of the programs as the article described them were begun by their predecessors."[46] She goes on to write, "you may know Jesse Todd whom I can only describe as a loving militant. It was he who set up the black beret foot patrols who canvassed Delmar and surrounding areas all night to catch the delinquent and to convince him that there are better ways. I believe KMOX paid the rent for one year when Todd was in charge."[47] Houwink then addressed specific examples of "white anxieties or projections" found in the article. She notes, "the opening paragraph of the article says that the Center is 'an embattled fortress.' With a back drop laid down by the mass media generally this is incendiary, it arouses memories of Panthers and the Chicago police shoot out and all the other dark images that can only provoke anxiety. The 'fortress' of the opening sentences is nowhere

verified by the rest of the article."[48] She continues by writing, "I felt it was unfortunate that the writer used such phrases as 'filthy and filled with debris,' 'littered with trash,' and 'houses that look as though they've been bombed and a playground that looks like the broken bottle graveyard.' I know that what he saw looked like this to him but if you think Black you know that the Negroes don't like it any better than we do and that their bad housekeeping in their houses and neighborhoods is the result of deep poverty and lack of elbow room in which to learn."[49] She then suggests, "I would rather have seen the article written from the point of view of the wonder that a group that has been so hurt psychosocially could still come up with a dream, that a socially emasculated man [Jesse Todd] can still go on trying. The Blacks have become supersensitive about the white society which controls all the institutions of the cultural space we all occupy. If the white society can be helped to understand this I think we shall have taken a long first step. The implicit nonverbal communication behind the words of the article was unconsciously negative and the Black readers are aware of this. Playing up the 'trash' tends to make fun of Blacks in the old Amos and Andy manner. I have had my purse snatched and it may happen again but this has become a risk in contemporary society. So is showering in a slippery tub. We have to learn to lead with our knowledgeable maturity and not our free floating anxieties."[50] Graham replied to this letter simply with, "thank you for your comments on my letter. Your point of view makes a good deal of sense, and we will certainly keep it in mind in the future."[51]

Houwink was also in contact with Jesse Todd, Director of Crime Prevention Patrol, and "teacher of political education, karate, dancing, and social graces" for the Black Nationalists.[52] Houwink's support for the local Black liberation struggle in general and her support for the Black Nationalists in particular is illustrated in the fact that she attacked the *Post Dispatch*'s portrayal of them. In addition, although it is unclear to what extent Houwink financially supported the Nationalists, she did receive a fund-raising letter from Jesse Todd.[53] Referring to the Nationalists as the Defenders, Todd's letter stated, "The American Negro is as much, even more, in need of your generosity as the state of Israel. We are Americans and our poverty is an American by-product. Will you help us? We cannot do it alone until we are farther along toward self support. The Black Defenders is an organization of young African Americans who want to tackle this problem and resolve it. Our headquarters are at 5585 Pershing Ave., St. Louis. We are working now on almost no funds on an enormous problem. We want to help ourselves but we cannot raise funds fast enough from the people who need our help. The problem is insistent; the Afro-

American is ready for a healthy outlet and a constructive use of himself, but we need money. Will you help us?"[54]

Also included with the fund-raising letter was a list of the organization's goals. Their goals included the right to "prove" themselves as men, a demand for "living space" in which to develop as individuals, accomplish their goals, and exercise their citizenship rights, autonomy and self determination, "human dignity," and financial support to accomplish these goals. Todd asserted that funding for their program would come directly from whites who had denied African Americans the right to self determination and economic opportunity. Specifically, Todd states, funding "will have to come from the white community as we have never been given the well paying jobs; we have been the last hired and the first fired. We have not been able to save and invest and grow rich."[55]

In their document, "The Black Defenders Talk to the Community," the organization reported, "we, the Black Defenders, have made a survey of the community. We have come to realize that drug addiction, burglary, and inadequate protection for our women are problems of immediate concern to residents of our community."[56] The paper went on to assert that in response to the failure of law enforcement to protect the community from these dangers, the Defenders, working in conjunction with the community, must "begin to put an end to these problems which cause fear and unrest in our area."[57] Thus, in response to inadequate law enforcement protection, the Defenders, like the Black Liberators and Black Panthers, formed a community patrol. Recognizing that unemployment contributed to crime and violence in the community, this paper also reported that the Black Defenders had created "a shoe shine parlor in the Delmar-Hamilton District in order to provide employment for the idle."[58]

The goals of the Black Nationalists mirrored those of the Black Liberators and reflected the larger concept of Black Power. Like the Liberators, the Nationalists demanded self determination, community control and autonomy, political and economic power, Black pride, self defense, and security. In addition, while the Nationalists and Liberators emphasized community safety, their specific emphasis on the protection of women reveals a paternalistic vision of their role in the community.

Eda Houwink articulated the Black Defenders' larger program for community improvement and Black self determination in stating, "the Black Defenders offer a positive program. It is an organization set up with the general goals of alleviating crime, improving the community through participation by Afro-Americans, providing enhancing environment to displace the present alienating environment, establishing self-help programs and industries which will be Black owned and operated and which will

feedback to the people in pride, dignity, and a sense of accomplishment. The goal is to change I can't to I can. To achieve this there is a need for higher education of Black youth, genuine employment opportunities, and a chance to build within each individual a sense of pride and dignity which is the right of any individual."[59]

Furthermore, Houwink pointed to the Defender's program for economic self determination and institution development. She noted, "the Black Defenders have recently opened a shoe shine shop and a recreation center at 5585 Pershing. They hope to add, when funds permit, facilities for boxing, music, tv, tape recording, a pool table, a library, art classes, Black history and Black culture classes, and a restaurant open to all."[60] Pointing to the larger psychological impact these programs have on local residents, Houwink asserted that these programs served as an essential "release" for "emotions and tensions" as well as providing important education services.[61] She added that the Defenders' program would provide a "healthful alternative" to prevent crime and violence.[62]

Moreover, according to Houwink, the Defenders offered a viable alternative program for community development and vitality, challenging the traditional structures and institutions that trampled on the human rights of African Americans. Houwink asserted, "the philosophical and sociological base underlying their thinking is that the real troublemakers are the social conditions in which Black Americans have been forced to live for too long."[63] Included in this list of "troublemakers" were absentee store owners who made money off those in the community yet took these profits out of the community, and landlords who charged higher rents to African American tenants.[64] In fact, the Defenders picketed a drug store for raising the price of a cough medicine from $1.50 to $4.00 after the medicine became a popular drug on which consumers could get inebriated.[65] The Defender's attacked those institutions that continued to oppress and exploit African Americans, calling for the creation of new institutions that were capable of protecting African American rights and encouraging economic, political, and cultural empowerment. For example, the Defenders criticized local churches for neglecting "man's physical, psychological, economic, social, and political needs."[66] The Defenders also criticized the white press for "distortion resulting from news selection, partial reporting, and omissions." Subsequently, the Defenders aimed to create their own newspaper, *Freedom Press*, in order to "tell it as it is."[67]

Although the Defenders sought to reform the so-called "system" to extend to African Americans the freedoms and liberties guaranteed in the Constitution, the Defenders still offered a revolutionary agenda that sought to tear down traditional institutions that perpetuated the conditions that

kept African Americans oppressed and exploited. The Defenders intended to replace these institutions with new ones that promoted and protected African American self determination, economic, political and cultural empowerment, and security. Houwink notes, "they are asking that the U.S. Constitution indeed 'promote the general welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity.' They ask that the Constitution be for all the people and not just the white people. Since Afro-Americans have been deprived of 'life, liberty, and property, without due process of law' they are now asking that the full benefits of the law of the land be made available to them as citizens."[68] While demanding the extension of U.S. laws and "values" to African Americans, the Defenders attacked traditional institutions, condemning these institutions for perpetuating racism, oppression, and exploitation. Thus, the Defenders looked to create new institutions to protect and promote the interests and human rights of African Americans.

The Defenders' efforts to build new institutions in the African American community culminated in the creation of the Community Variety Store in late October, 1969 in the area of Union, Sarah, Enright, and McPherson. Jesse Todd requested funding for the Community Variety Store from the Human Development Corporation.[69] In the request to the HDC, written October 26, 1969, Todd wrote that it was the goal of the store to "offer useful employment and learning to young men as preparation for adult living, to meet the need of the central west area in St. Louis for a general store, to demonstrate the validity of an ongoing economic venture managed and operated by Afro-Americans, particularly to the Black community."[70] Along with Todd, supporters of the store included Joseph Johnson, Director of the Council for the Advancement of Young Men and Women; Block Unit 181 (4500–4600 Washington), and several neighborhood churches and residents.[71] Also aiding their endeavor was the Black Business Men's Association and Black People's Council. The projected budget was $101,720 and included a $9,000 salary for each of the two co-directors; $65,520 in annual salary for the employees; $4,500 in books; $4000 for records; $1,000 for snack bar; $3,300 for a boutique to include clothing, cosmetics and additional beauty supplies; $1,400 for materials for the production of "African" clothing including sewing machines, sewing materials and cloth; $1,600 for office equipment; and $2,400 for building equipment and remodeling. It was noted that funding estimates did not consider air-conditioning, heating, rent, gas, or postal service.[72]

The Community Variety Store reflected Black Power's emphasis on establishing independent African American institutions within the African American community. Todd articulated this role the Variety Store would

play in the community in stating, "the hope is that the hostile, defeatist image which the young Afro-American is apt to have of himself, will be converted from a destructive outlet into a positive, non-alienated, healthy identity capable of making a contribution to the life of the community."[73] Moreover, the store aimed to encourage and develop practical skills in the African American community. Todd notes, "to survive as an adult a teenager has to learn the tools of survival. To be young, volatile, and Black is an asset if a young man can learn to utilize what he has; it is a liability if it is allowed to go to waste. This program addresses itself to the challenge of equipping young men with employment skills which can be exchanged in the wider community for a living wage."[74]

The store expected to employ "twenty young men (ages 16–21), two seamstresses, and two co-directors to teach and supervise the store." Half of the men would work 15 hours a week after school while the other half would work 40 hours a week at $2 per hour. The two seamstresses would work 40 hours a week at $2 per hour "to sew the African dress to be offered for sale."[75] In addition, Todd pointed out, "efforts will be made to find jobs in the community for the men as soon as they are ready for independent responsible employment."[76] After individuals were employed in the larger community, "new recruits" would replace them at the Variety Store.[77] Moreover, employees of the Variety Store would be educated in "salesmanship, accounting and bookkeeping, working a cash register, purchasing and storage of supplies and merchandise, stock taking, display, store management and operation, ethics and decorum and dress for the employed worker, the meaning of being supervised and of supervising, participating in community activities in the area, customer relationships, and setting an example in the community through their own pride, dignity, and self respect and respect of others."[78]

The Community Variety Store demonstrates the larger role of institutions within the African American community. The Variety Store aimed to play a larger social, cultural, political, and economic role in the community. This local business, like other local businesses in the African American community, served more than a retail function. For example, as stated in Todd's proposal, the store was also "to demonstrate the meaning of a self-help program and thus to counteract the somewhat general feeling that employment skills and job opportunities are beyond the reach of Black youth and of school dropouts."[79] It was also asserted that the store aimed to teach individuals how to "function responsibly in a democracy" as well as how to create a personal budget, how to manage money, and the value of money.[80] It was also hoped that the store would provide its employees with a sense of dignity by contributing to the larger community. In addition, the store tried

to educate individuals in acceptable social behavior including appropriate behavior at dances and parties, social drinking, "enjoyment of self without overspending and depriving a family of its basic needs," respecting others' opinions, tolerance of differences, and peaceful resolution of differences.[81]

Although Black Power is typically traced to Stokely Carmichael in 1966, the concept of Black Power reaches back farther than 1966. The Black Defenders' Community Variety Store is more reflective of the philosophy of African American self help as promoted by Booker T. Washington. As historian Louis R. Harlan states, Washington "offered Blacks not the empty promises of the demagogue but a solid program of economic and educational progress through struggle."[82] Washington promoted a comprehensive program of "Black solidarity, mutual aid, and institution building."[83] The Community Variety Store aimed to provide the African American community with an independent institution to promote self determination. To teach "trades designed for economic independence" and serving as a "model black community,"[84] the Nationalists' Variety Store mirrored Washington's call for the creation of independent African American institutions in addition to the teaching and development of practical life skills that could then be used outside of the community. As articulated by Todd in his request for HDC funding, the Variety Store was designed specifically with these larger goals in mind.

The Black Liberators and Nationalists co-existed with the DuBois Club in the local Black liberation movement. Formed in 1965 at a national convention in Chicago, the DuBois Club was a Marxist-oriented group aimed to organize Marxist students on college campuses throughout the country. The DuBois Club, like the Young Socialist Alliance, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Students for a Democratic Society, considered itself part of the new political radicalism that developed in the 1960s and aligned itself with the Black liberation struggle by "organizing the ghetto."[85] Specifically, the organization was concerned with issues involving young people, the working class, and African Americans. The group took the name of DuBois because, according to Club members, the organization, like DuBois, was "committed to working for the welfare, progress and security of the American people. With his vision, we are striving for a world of peace and economic and social justice."[86]

The St. Louis chapter of the DuBois Club, founded by James Peake, opened a "clubhouse" at 1910 North Grand Blvd.[87] Peake was a veteran activist in the St. Louis area. He had served as the St. Louis NAACP field secretary until he was fired from that position in October 1963 for "participating without authorization in picketing and disruptive tactics at the Jefferson Bank and Trust."[88] Peake had also participated in

CORE demonstrations in East St. Louis and Chicago and worked with the Washington University chapter of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Peake stated the goal of the St. Louis DuBois Club was to unite all of the "far left" groups in St. Louis into one organization. More specific, Peake aimed to organize these groups "on a militant basis of civil rights activities in the St. Louis area."[89] Peake explained that the "DuBois Clubs of America and St. Louis are made up of young people seeking solutions to the problems facing us. We will continue to fight for more jobs, more rights, more and better education, more democracy and lasting peace, and we will grow and win."[90]

The DuBois Club was also led by Eugene J. Tournour. Like Peake, Tournour was a veteran of the local liberation movement and had served as Midwest Field Secretary for CORE. The *Globe Democrat* reported, "the key non-political figure in recent St. Louis racial demonstrations is a white, 26-year-old, self-styled rebel who found a cause in the civil rights movement after a brief infatuation with socialism."[91] Tournour graduated from St. Louis University High School in 1955 and entered the Catholic Church to become a priest. Almost immediately after he entered seminary he left to study political science at Washington University. Tournour earned a Bachelor of Science degree in political science from Washington University.[92]

In August 1964 the *Globe Democrat* reported that Tournour and other St. Louis CORE members left St. Louis to assume control over Chicago CORE. The *Globe* reported, "Tournour and his team, which includes Winston Lockett, 22, and Carl Ferris, 25, are known within the rights movement as the task force in charge of a northern summer project designed primarily, they say, to recruit unemployed Chicago Negroes into labor platoons to clear vacant lots, destroy garbage heaps and erase signs of slum living."[93] While in Chicago Tournour allegedly attended a "secret weekend strategy meeting in Chicago of the Coordinating Council of the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs of America . . . The Coordinating Council is the national governing body of the clubs, which have been described as a Communist organization for youth."[94] Subsequently, Tournour was fired as CORE's Midwest Field Secretary by CORE National Director James Farmer. According to the *Globe Democrat*, the firing was in response to Tournour's attendance at the DuBois Club meeting.[95] The significance of the purging of alleged or suspected Marxists from mainstream civil rights organizations will be examined in later chapters.

The local DuBois Club, as part of its goal to foster Black awareness in the community, brought Dr. Herbert Aptheker to St. Louis as its keynote speaker for Negro History week in 1965. According to the *Globe Democrat*, roughly forty people attended his lecture in the basement of the Mound

City Medical Center. The *Globe* also referred to Aptheker as "one of the top Communist theoreticians in America."[96] The subject of the lecture was W.E.B. DuBois who, according to Aptheker, as quoted in the *Globe*, "was the leading man of the twentieth century."[97]

The DuBois Club also sponsored a Summer Program in Detroit in the summer of 1966. According to Ronald Landberg, DuBois Club coordinator, the summer program represented many interests of the club. For example, the summer project represented the free speech movement, supported trade unions, and supported peace candidates for the United States Senate.[98] In addition, one of the primary focuses of the summer project was organize peace demonstrations against the Vietnam War. Demonstrations against the war were to be held throughout the world on the anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and August 9.[99] The summer project also aimed to organize a March on Washington on August 28 to protest the Vietnam War and poverty.[100] This march was designed to coincide with the third anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington.[101] The Summer Program illustrates the club's wide focus on a variety of domestic and international issues. Such a large agenda however limited the effectiveness of the DuBois Club in any particular area. The success of the DuBois Club was also limited as it was targeted by government repression during the Cold War.

In 1966 the Jeff Vander Lou Community Action Group was created. The Jeff- Vander- Lou Community Action Group used money borrowed from "an anonymous and sympathetic businessman" to purchase and rehabilitate properties in the African American community.[102] Promoting local control of the community, self help, and autonomy, one member stated, "don't forget, Jeff Vander Lou is the people who live here. We're doing it on our own. Why not? All the human resources are here, the pride, the intelligence, the know-how."[103] JVL officers included Macler Shepard, Chairman; Aritha Spotts, Co-Chairman; Wadell Bowen, President; Rev. Donald Register, Secretary; Jon Fedrick, Treasurer.

The JVL focused on a nine block "target area" in St. Louis's near North Side. In 1966 the JVL received funding for the purchase and rehabilitation of twenty nine houses from the AFL-CIO Pension Fund at 6.75% interest.[104] An additional twenty houses would be purchased and rehabilitated through similar funds at 8.5%. These homes would then be sold for $14,000 per unit.[105] Twelve labor unions agreed to provide construction.[106] In general the program was successful in providing "good low income home ownership for families in the area while rehabilitating old neighborhoods and creating job opportunities for those who work on the improvements."[107] The JVL rose to fill the need for housing and

employment in the St. Louis area, needs that had not been met by previous civil rights reforms.

The Jeff Vander Lou group worked with CORE, ACTION, the West End Community Conferences, the Minsterial Alliance, the New Voice, and representatives from the Pruitt-Igoe Apartments to form the Black United Front in 1968, and worked throughout the late 1960s with the Black Liberators and Zulu 1200s. The Black United Front protested for better jobs and housing during the dedication ceremony of the Gateway Arch in 1966. Furthermore, in December 1968 Jeff Vander Lou, in association with area doctors, began a nonprofit medical clinic in North St. Louis. Funds for the clinic were provided by anonymous donors.[108]

Beyond the Black Panthers, perhaps the foremost representative of Black Nationalism in the 1960s was the Nation of Islam. Political scientist Dean E. Robinson states, "Elijah Muhammad set the stage for Black Nationalism in the post World War Two era. His vision, amplified by Malcolm X in the late 1950s and early 1960s, presaged the Black Power era by capturing the themes that would be most central to Black Nationalism during that period, opposition to integration, self defense, Black capitalism, and racial pride."[109]

In 1958 the Nation of Islam established Temple No. 28 at 1434 North Grand Blvd. in downtown St. Louis. The temple was led by Minister Clyde X. Clyde X was born in 1931 in Canton, Mississippi as Clyde Jones. According to the *Globe Democrat*, Clyde X continued to use his original last name, Jones, for private business activities.[110] Clyde X served in the Army during the Korean War. After the war he lived in Dayton, Ohio then moved to Detroit where he was employed as an air hammer operator at an auto plant.[111] As reported by the *Globe Democrat*, it was in Detroit that Clyde Jones was exposed to the Nation of Islam through "people talking about it in a poolroom."[112] In 1958 he was sent to St. Louis as a minister for the Nation of Islam. After his arrival in St. Louis the local media described him as "a glowering moon-faced giant . . . on the fleshy side of 200 pounds . . . mild mannered, polite, and diplomatic."[113] He was also described as "too emotional," a "rabble rouser," and "a haranguer."[114]

Upon its opening, the local Temple drew many members with approximately fifteen to twenty brothers living above the mosque on the second floor who were reportedly in training for ministerial positions.[115] The temple itself was reported to be large enough to hold several hundred worshipers, while the basement of the building held the administrative offices and recreational facilities "for social and cultural activities of the Nation of Islam in St. Louis."[116] In addition, members in Temple 28, like all members elsewhere, raised money for the local mosque through the sale

of *Muhammad Speaks*. According to Edward Curtis, "while NOI claim that national circulation was hundreds of thousands, circulation in the St. Louis area probably reached into the thousands."[117]

The St. Louis temple also developed local business enterprises. For example, several businesses were opened on Grand Boulevard, including a restaurant, laundry, record store, dress shop, and grocery.[118] The success the NOI had in developing these businesses in this area led many in the community to refer to the area as "Little Egypt."[119] The development of these businesses in St. Louis specifically reflected the Nation's promotion of institution building, but also reflected the larger tenets of Black Power, including self sufficiency, self determination, and autonomous control of institutions in the African American community. In addition, like the Black Nationalists' Community Variety Store, the NOI's promotion of business enterprises reflected Booker T. Washington's ideology of self help and institution building. For example, Robinson states, "like Washington, Muhammad directed Black efforts into entrepreneurial activities and moral 'rehabilitation.'"[120] Robinson goes on to add, "Muhammad, like Garvey, adopted a model of capitalistic self help. His followers did not seek a greater slice of the pie of economic opportunity. They attempted to establish a separate economy."[121] However, as will be discussed, these institutions, as representing viable institutions operating independent of white control, faced reaction and repression from whites who stood to lose money when their monopoly on the African American dollar was challenged by these independent businesses.

By 1961 a division developed within Temple 28 with members splitting off to form their own Temple, led by Dr. Jennings. Members of this new faction included Temple 28's secretary, treasurer, and Fruit of Islam captain.[122] One of the primary motives behind the separation was the fact that members of this new group looked to "modify" the Nation's position on whites. Specifically, this new faction aimed to mollify the Nation's conviction that all whites were "devils."[123] According to the *Globe Democrat*, the split occurred also in reaction to Minister Clyde's mandate "that all members present copies of their marriage certificates."[124] This mandate was established after he learned that some Muslims were living together without being married. Other reports suggested that the division was the result of "dissent against Clyde X's leadership of the Muslim flock here."[125] Some argued that while the Nation preached frugality and meagerness among its members, Clyde X drove a "two tone 1960 Mercury" and lived in an apartment in the integrated West End neighborhood.[126] Furthermore, members of the new faction attacked Clyde X's salary and his alleged profiting from sales of *Muhammad Speaks*. For example, the *Globe Democrat* reported, "based on estimates from membership dues, and

sales of *Muhammad Speaks*, it was estimated that Clyde X earns roughly $80,000 a year of which he gives $24,000 to the national organization in Chicago."[127] It was argued that this alleged prosperity contributed to the split and future violence between the two local factions.

In response to the division, Elijah Muhammad sent the Supreme Commander of the FOI to work out an agreement between the two factions. However, no agreement could be reached and the two temples were officially separated, with Temple 28 maintaining its connection with the Nation of Islam led by Clyde X, while the rival faction, led by Dr. Jennings, renamed itself the Islamic Service Church and located at 1902 Union Blvd.[128]

The 1961 split between Minister Clyde X and Dr. Jennings also resulted in violent conflict. In October 1966 Clyde X, Timothy Hoffman, and John Moore were shot at outside Shabazz restaurant. Clyde was not seriously injured but John Moore died as a result of his wounds. Timothy Hoffman's brother Andrew Hoffman was arrested and charged with the shooting. A year later on January 9, 1967, Clyde X's home was bombed. Clyde X suspected that it was Andrew Hoffman trying to finish the job he had started in October the previous year. At the time of the bombing Hoffman was free on bond for the murder of John Moore and attempted murder of Clyde X. Two days after Clyde X's home was bombed, on Wednesday, January 11, 1967, Andrew Hoffman and his wife were shot to death outside their home, while an associate of Andrew Hoffman, Roy Tyson, was beaten to death. The *Argus* reported the incident as "Black Muslim revenge slayings."[129] St. Louis Police investigated the murders but no one was charged.[130]

Despite this conflict, several prominent NOI representatives visited St. Louis throughout the 1960s. For example, Elijah Muhammad came to St. Louis in August 1962, where he addressed a crowd of roughly 3,500 people at the Kiel Auditorium.[131] Muhammad Ali also visited St. Louis in May, 1968.

On November 15, 1971 Angela Davis spoke to the Nation of Islam in East St. Louis.[132] She stated, "the Black man is the original man," asserted that "Mohammad loves you" and presented the NOI's program for Black liberation.[133] Davis stated that the Nation promoted separation, self determination and nationalism, and argued that "we must build a nation for ourselves."[134] She went on to add, "we have doctors among us, lawyers, professors, scientists, why can't we build a kingdom of our own and separate from this man, we're not trying to integrate with him, we want separation, we want to get out of this neighborhood."[135] Davis asserted that the "white man destroys with birth control. The Black woman is the best woman on the planet earth, the most beautiful woman on the planet earth.

She can produce the best babies. Get that birth control out of here. She was made to produce a nation, that's what a woman's for, that's reproduction."[136] Finally, in defining Black Power, Davis contended, "having money, farmland, factories, education centers, good home, good woman, beautiful children, producing cotton, getting cattle, lambs, sheep, chickens, eggs, wheat, that's Black Power, Brother."[137]

By the mid 1970s St. Louis Minister Clyde X moved to Cleveland, where he changed his name to Imam Clyde Rahaman, and became a leader in Cleveland's African American Muslim community.[138] By 1975, following the death of Elijah Muhammad, Wallace D. Muhammad, one of Elijah's sons, assumed control over the Nation of Islam. As head of the NOI, Wallace Muhammad introduced several changes that included the rejection of the story of Yacub and moved the NOI away from Black Nationalism. [139] Muhammad also withdrew support from the independent Nation of Islam businesses throughout the country and thus, by 1975, St. Louis's "Little Egypt" disappeared.[140] As Wallace Muhammad introduced these changes to the Nation of Islam, many members who were critical of them joined with Louis Farrahkan in 1978 to rebuild the traditional Nation of Islam. Many St. Louisans joined with Farrahkan's faction and even into the late 1990s both segments of the Nation of Islam coexisted in St. Louis.[141]

Another comprehensive plan for Black liberation in St. Louis was offered by the Mid City Congress. MCC focused on the area within Grand and Union, Lindell and Easton. The Mid City Congress was led by Ocie Pastard. Pastard came from Watts to St. Louis in May, 1968 to head MCC. The *Post Dispatch* described Pastard as "Black and militant in a pragmatic way . . . in these days, when all the talk is apocalyptic, Pastard retains a shred or two of optimism."[142] In 1968, Pastard was thirty one years old and had been an activist for about eleven years. He began his activism in Cleveland as Associate Director of the Westminister Neighborhood Association, a community group through the Presbyterian Church. Pastard then went to Watts, where he was head of the Community Alert Patrol, an organization of African Americans who patrolled the police in African American neighborhoods.[143]

Similar to previously discussed groups in the St. Louis area, the Mid City Congress promoted community control and self determination. The MCC was comprised of "a mixture of militants and moderates, professional people from the St. Louis aristocracy and nonprofessionals from the ghetto corner, eager white undergraduates and some bitter Black revolutionaries."[144] Drawing from various segments of the community, the MCC offered a comprehensive community improvement agenda. According to the *St. Louis Argus*, the area in which the MCC operated "includes some of the

most affluent businesses and neighborhoods in the city, while at the same time being the home of a large (about 40,000) Negro population, many of whom are jobless, live in housing far below standards of legality and human decency, and are fast reaching the point of despair."[145] The *Post Dispatch* went on to describe the MCC as "a citizens group . . . where pockets of white affluence are receding with the steady encroachment of poor Blacks . . . it is a citizens group with a definite ideology."[146] Like these previously discussed organizations, MCC was designed with the larger goal of self determination or as the *Post Dispatch* stated, the MCC was designed "not as a neighborhood group, but rather, as a catalyst by which the heretofore powerless could begin to exert a measure of control over their lives."[147]

The MCC promoted "Buy Black" campaigns throughout the St. Louis area, encouraging African Americans to patronize African American businesses. Over 5,000 letters were received by the MCC from local African American businesses asking to be put on their list of businesses to patronize. With their "Buy Black" campaigns, the Mid City Congress hoped to "to get some money into the ghetto and to bring people into the ghetto who normally would not care."[148]

Reflecting Black Power's emphasis on African American self determination and autonomy, the Mid City Congress insisted that institutions and government programs designed to address human rights issues in the African American community be controlled by African Americans. In an editorial in the *Post Dispatch*, MCC explained, "the dangers stemming from the growing frustration of the city's large population of impoverished Negroes must be neutralized, many believe, by large federal grants administered by city appointed agents. This belief overlooks one vital fact. The Negro wants a hand in helping himself and his family. He resents programs which are planned, administered and controlled by persons, often with the best intentions, who cannot and do not understand his situation and who often set up their priorities for solving his problems. His dignity demands that he be able to exert some control over his environment, and not be merely a passive recipient of aid controlled, and often misdirected, by others . . . An impoverished community, if it is organized and vocal, can state far better than 'outsiders' where its problem lie and just as important, the community, by participating in the analysis, developed dignity, self respect and responsibility for its own destiny."[149] As this statement points out, the MCC demanded local control of federal programs designed to address human rights issues in the African American community.

On September 15, 1968, the Mid City Congress issued a "Call To Action," written by Ocie Pastard, and Robert Curtis, civil rights activist and attorney for the Black Liberators. This "Call to Action" represented one of

the clearest articulations of Black Power in St. Louis and presented specific steps to achieve African American liberation. The "Call to Action" was in part a response to ongoing reaction against the St. Louis African American liberation movement, but also included "Steps to Action," a nine-point program for African American liberation in St. Louis. The first step specifically addressed incidents of police harassment against the Black Liberators that occurred in early September 1968.[150] This first point "urged" people in the community to write to the Governor, United States Justice Department, and the State Crime Commission to investigate these incidents. In addition, this point demanded that "all officers involved be fired, and tried for their crimes."[151]

The second point promoted the formation of a "coalition" of human rights groups in Missouri and the formation of a "Black caucus" comprised of "a cross section of Black militants, labor groups, churches, professional groups, and welfare rights organizations."[152] Pastard went on to demand that the St. Louis City Police Department be brought under local control to allow the community "immediate and direct contact with police policy makers."[153] Linked with this third point, the fourth step demanded the police department provide more adequate psychological examination of potential policemen; more training hours for police/community relations, training with "community people," and an investigation into the pay scale of the police department.[154] The fifth step took issue with the St. Louis clergy, arguing that it "must re-evaluate its position and work with the problems of today."[155] Pastard suggested that church members become more involved in relations with the police, the church help financially support "community action programs," and assist with the development of community organizations.[156] Step six promoted voter registration and urged individuals to "not [vote] simply along party lines."[157] The next step stated that "all cases of police brutality be documented and reported to Mid City Congress." The final two steps in the nine point "Steps to Action" advised the creation of a committee to implement this program and to "continue to fight harassment and oppression."[158]

The "Call to Action" received overwhelming support from various segments of the community. Support came from the American Civil Liberties Union; North Side Team Ministry; ACTION; *St. Louis Post Dispatch*; Hadley Township Democratic Club; Clayton Township Democratic Club; Jefferson Township Democrats for Responsible Politics'; Students for a Democratic Society; St. Louis Free Press; Committee for War Resistance; Women Strike for Peace; Clyde Cahill, Manager, Human Development Corporation; Inter-Religious Center for Metropolitan Affairs; Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity; The United Methodist Church; The

United Presbyterian Council on Religion and Race; and the Catholic Archdiocesan Commission on Human Rights.[159]

The "Call to Action" was a significant document because it articulated specific demands and goals of the local Black Power movement. Yet, the issues addressed in the "Call to Action" and the program it promoted was not unique in its focus, nor did it raise unique issues or define unique goals for the local movement. Rather, the Mid City Congress's "Call to Action" is significant because it reflected the same goals and objectives of the larger concept of Black Power. These issues included the formation of a united front to fight racial oppression, community control of community institutions including the police, demand for an increased and more direct role of the church in supporting the struggle, and political power. While the Mid City Congress promoted these goals, other organizations throughout the country offered similar programs. As previously noted, the Black Panthers' Ten Point Program, issued October 1966, similarly demanded self determination, full employment, an end to African American economic exploitation, improved housing, education, an end to police brutality, and demanded land, justice, and peace.[160]

Following the issuance of the "Call to Action" in September 1968, Pastard presented his assessment of local race relations on November 6, 1968 to the National Committee of Negro Churchmen.[161] Pastard's assessment was based on his extensive "tour of twenty one American cities for the Ford Foundation and his work in Watts, Los Angeles, for the Office of Economic Opportunity's Community Action Agency."[162] Pastard had been in Watts during the 1965 riot.[163] He optimistically noted that the city of St. Louis "has the best chance in the land of the partially free to achieve good working relationships between Black and whites."[164] In particular, he attributed good relations to the efforts of various local institutions including "the academic community of universities and college faculty members and some church leaders."[165] According to Pastard, these individuals "created a climate in which the races can work together on pressing problems here."[166] In addition, while assessing race relations in St. Louis, Pastard argued that Mayor Cervantes had done little to positively affect hiring practices in local industries and little to improve local health care or address police brutality. Specifically, Pastard called Cervantes "a champion in talking about jobs for the hard core," adding, "but most of the big industries haven't changed their hiring practices to an appreciable extent. In the hospital and police situations he uses neither his real power nor his moral influence."[167]

To put its "Call To Action" into practice, the Mid City Congress developed an "action arm" called the Zulu 1200s.[168] Clarence "Skip" Guthrie initially headed the Zulus and was later replaced by William Archibald,

a former postal employee. As the Mid City Congress's "action arm" the Zulus shared the offices of the MCC at 4007 Delmar Blvd. According to the *Post Dispatch*, "the Zulu 1200s are among the groups under the Mid City umbrella. They are young, Black and angry but Pastard is quick and more sophisticated in the concepts of Black Power and Black Nationalism than they are and they respect him for it."[169]

The Zulu's worked primarily with other liberation organizations in the St. Louis area. For example, in cooperation with the Black Liberators, the Zulus created the "Wall of Respect." The Wall of Respect displayed portraits of Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Muhammad Ali, Stokely Carmichael, Marcus Garvey, Jomo Kenyatta, Elijah Muhammad, Dick Gregory, Phyllis Wheatley, Ray Charles, James Baldwin, LeRoi Jones, Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King Jr., Jean Baptiste Pointe deSable, and W.E.B. DuBois under the slogan of Marcus Garvey, "Rise up, you mighty Black race."[170] The Wall of Respect was a common location where the Liberators and Zulus held public rallies and protests. Skip Guthrie announced the creation of the Wall of Respect in the *St. Louis Argus* stating, "the commander of the Zulu 1200s would like to inform the general public that meetings will be held at the 'Wall of Respect' on the fourth Sunday in every month. Skip Guthrie invites the city of St. Louis to see the 'Wall of Respect' at Franklin and Leffingwell, which slogan is 'Rise up, you mighty Black race.' Mr. Guthrie says this is a step in history to bring on Black awareness and Black consciousness. He says, 'It is no secret that Black is beautiful but to some people it is still a mystery. To erase this mystery, you're invited to the Black Culture meetings every fourth Sunday in each month."[171] While the Wall of Respect offered a cultural rallying point for the larger community, the larger agenda of the Zulus was not limited to the realm of cultural nationalism. As the following chapter illustrates, the Zulus, along with the Liberators, JVL, MCC, and DuBois Club, offered a viable economic, political and cultural program, and often worked in conjunction with one another to improve the daily lives of African Americans in the city of St. Louis.

While these organizations joined CORE in the local fight for Black liberation, the federal government similarly responded to African Americans demands for equality, justice, and human rights. By the mid 1960s, the federal government responded to these demands by declaring war on poverty and endorsing and encouraging the development of African American businesses. However, the federal government also responded to the real and potential threat these organizations posed. Thus, in the context of the Cold War these organizations faced intense government reaction.

Chapter Six
Black Power: The Ideological Debate

The fact that Black Power meant different things to different people, at different times led to great debate and conflict over what Black Power actually meant and how it was to be employed as a vehicle for liberation. This ambiguity and confusion over the meaning of Black Power was aggravated when various organizations and individuals, including the government, scholars, and the media, infused the concept with meanings that promoted their own agendas. The following examines the debate over the larger meaning and utility of Black Power as employed and presented from a variety of positions.

St. Louis Argus publisher, Frank W. Mitchell Sr. criticized the concept of Black Power in an editorial titled "The Corruption of Power."[1] In this editorial Mitchell asserted, "whether it is white power, yellow power, red, brown, or black power, unless it is coupled with a selfless or humanitarian love, it will corrupt individuals, races, and nations . . . Aware of the fact that power may corrupt an individual, our forefathers, the founders of this nation, issued the Declaration of Independence . . . They knew that unless power is coupled with selfless love and a sacrificial humanitarian spirit, it would corrupt not only individuals, but would corrupt a nation. Therefore, power whether it is white, black or otherwise, in the interest of a nation and even of all the world, must be limited and coupled with justice and selfless love."[2]

Mitchell's criticism of Black Power through his appeal to "American values" and tradition as represented by the "founding fathers" and Declaration of Independence reinforces the point that Black Power was attacked for its association with "foreign" or "alien," and therefore threatening, models for liberation. Mitchell's comments point to the disparity between the Civil Rights era's success in achieving a level of legitimacy and support by appealing to American history and "American values," and reaction to

Black Power's use of "foreign" models and ideology. Brian Ward and Tony Badger note, "the very deliberate ways in which the early Movement sought to align itself with the central ideals of American society and manipulate the sacred symbols of American civil religion so as to garner widespread support for its demands. Ultimately, it was the consistent application of social, political and economic pressure from a mass movement, coupled with a blend of legalistic, practical, rhetorical and symbolic appeals to core American values, if not practices, which enabled the civil rights movement to represent itself as a legitimate cause, in pursuit of legitimate ends, by legitimate means."[3] By appealing to American tradition, the movement eventually won the support of the American public as well as the passage of federal and local civil rights legislation.

In addition, many criticized the ousting of whites from organizations such as CORE and SNCC, organizations that had previously prided themselves on working for liberation through interracial cooperation. Many criticized the promotion of "closed ranks" and African American autonomy and control over African American institutions, and criticized the endorsement of self defense and violence as a strategy for liberation. For example, Black Power's emphasis on African American autonomy and community control was scrutinized by roughly 300 African American religious leaders and laymen from around the country who met in St. Louis at the National Committee of Negro Churchmen on October 31, 1968 at the Gateway Hotel. At the luncheon, St. Louis Alderman Joseph W.B. Clark criticized Black Power's rejection of integration. According to the *Post Dispatch*, Clark recognized "a rising demand for Black separatism as the goal of social revolution in the United States, but that he did not accept this. At best Black separatism must be regarded as a short range objective"[4] Clark contended, "if the policy of apartheid is wrong, as practiced by the whites in Africa, then it is just as wrong if practiced by the Blacks in America."[5] Clark went on to suggest, "Negro churchmen should become missionaries to the white community, to help them cleanse themselves of the racism which many are not aware that they have . . . Such a plan should be planned, financed, and staffed by the Black community . . . We cannot expect white ministers to do our work for us, nor can we expect Black ministers who are on staffs of white churches to perform our function."[6] As these remarks illustrate, Black Power raised larger questions over the role of whites in the liberation struggle which brought criticism to the movement's assertion of African American autonomy and self determination.

Black Power was also assailed by Leonor K. Sullivan, a nine-term Democratic Representative from the Second District in St. Louis. At a Fifteenth Ward Regular Democratic Organization meeting, her critique of

Black Power illustrated her failure to take the concept and its advocates seriously. She asserted, "some of today's young militants need the hard hand of parental discipline applied in the proper area of the anatomy."[7] She went on to state, "there was a lot of 'arrogant nonsense' among youths who never knew the hardships of the depression of the 1930s . . . I am talking of both the white militant and the Black militant who want to reform America by destroying the social fabric of this country and the principles of democracy which have made us a great and decent country."[8] She finally stated, "trouble-makers constitute a tiny minority of the youth in this country but make noise out of proportion to their numbers."[9]

Sullivan's remarks illustrate the larger public's refusal to acknowledge the viability of Black Power as a concept for liberation. In fact, Sullivan dismissed Black Power and its advocates, suggesting that they were mere school children in need of strict control. Such remarks point to her myopic view of Black Power, suggesting that the concept simply promoted violence and juvenile delinquency. Her refusal to acknowledge the potential of Black Power to address human rights concerns in the African American community led her to propose that Black Power "nonsense" would disappear and social stability would return with the exercise of stronger discipline and work ethic. Interestingly, while she dismisses "militants" as delinquent and arrogant troublemakers, she does nevertheless recognize the potential threat presented by their collective actions.

While Sullivan mentions this potential threat as part of her larger attack against Black Power advocates, federal and local law enforcement officials took Black Power and those who embraced the concept very serious and reacted accordingly. The government reacted and in many instances over-reacted to the threat that these individuals potentially posed. The federal and city governments did not view these individuals as arrogant, nonsensical youths, nor did they believe that a more firm hand of parental discipline would silence them. Rather, government officials employed the full and often violent power of the government to silence this movement.

In addition, Black Power was constantly misrepresented, berated, and vilified by the media. Media representation, or misrepresentation, of Black Power further contributed to the larger public's misunderstanding and ultimate rejection of the concept as a program for human rights, justice, and equality. For example, Rod Bush states, "Black nationalism is routinely vilified in the media, is seldom taken seriously by white scholars, and is the butt of sarcasm in the popular discourse. The corporate media's coverage of leaders and activists who are sympathetic to Black nationalism is reflexively skeptical, if not oppositional, and generously indulges those political forces antagonistic to Black nationalism."[10] In addition, Floyd McKissick asserts,

"there has been a great deal of misunderstanding about the nature and development of Black Nationalism in America. In flagrant disregard of the truth, the mass media have misrepresented the teachings of Black Nationalism to mean 'Black racism' or 'Black extremism.' The meaning of Black Nationalism has been distorted by white America and certain of its Negro lackeys to mean segregation and race hatred, even though its true goals are unity and pride, self respect and integrity."[11] In St. Louis, the media, according to George Lipsitz, "tended to portray civil rights demonstrators as extremists who tarnished the city's reputation and injured their own cause."[12] This use of the label "extremists" and "extremism" to describe activists and their cause was a common tactic employed by the media.

The *Post Dispatch*, like the *Globe Democrat* and *Argus*, readily employed these labels for Black Power and its advocates. However, the *Post* did at least make some effort to explore the larger meaning and origins of Black Power. In an editorial, the *Post* made reference to "extremist proponents of 'Black power,'" stating, "as the more sensible leaders of the civil rights movement have been warning all along, violent extremism can only provoke extreme reactions."[13] However, the editorial goes on to recognize the underlying causes of this "extremism" stating, "the rise of Black extremism is itself a consequence more than a cause. It is the consequence of too many failures to realize the equality we profess; of too many applications of a double standard in law enforcement; of too many promises unfulfilled. The excesses of Black extremism, in turn, have their own consequences, as shown in the hardening attitude of many white citizens and the stalemate in the Senate."[14] The editorial goes on to warn, "a failure to achieve, both in law and in practice, the basic justice of equal opportunity in housing can only widen disillusionment with our society's values, and breed more extremism."[15] While the *Post Dispatch* labeled Black Power "extremism," it nonetheless attempted to understand its origins, explaining that it arose out of disillusionment, frustration, and anger over continued human rights violations and the failure of civil rights legislation to improve the daily lives of African Americans.

The argument that Black Power was an "extremist" or marginal concept endorsed by only a minority of so-called militants was illustrated in a cartoon in the St. Louis *Argus*.[16] This cartoon depicts a side view of a door. On the one side of the door is an African American man ringing the doorbell. He is dressed in black pants and a turtleneck that reads "The Militants." He is also unshaven, wearing sunglasses and smoking a cigarette. On the other side of the door is another African American man who has his back up against the door, preventing it from opening. With a concerned look on his clean-shaven face, this man appears to be blocking the door

from opening to the "militant." This other man is also dressed in a suit and tie, with his hair parted neatly. Also on this side of the door is a caption that reads, "Most Negroes." Finally, the title of the cartoon states, "they're not all the same."[17] This cartoon echoes the argument that Black Power was an extremist or marginal concept supported only by a small percent of the African American community, suggesting that "most Negroes" in fact feared, and opposed Black Power.

Another cartoon in the *Argus* contributed to the image of Black Power and its advocates as a marginal concept that only promoted violence. The cartoon depicts a caricature of an alleged Black Power advocate. With exaggerated facial features, and dark sunglasses this Black Power "radical," as his title indicates, is portrayed as yelling such inflammatory and stereotypical rhetoric as "Riot," "Burn Baby" and "Kill Whitey." This cartoon does several things. First it promotes and perpetuates the image of Black Power as a movement of masculinity, violence, and militancy. Second, the cartoon defines Black Power as an extreme concept by referring to its advocates as "radicals." Furthermore, this image directly associates the Black Power movement with the most inflammatory and violent rhetoric, clearly ignoring the point that violence and the right to self defense was but one of a number of tactics for Black liberation. Focusing on this rhetoric ignores the larger social, economic, political, and cultural program endorsed by Black Power. Finally, accompanied by the caption, "You've Got Bad Breath, Baby!" this cartoon presents a critical and negative image of Black Power and a rejection of the concept by the leading African American newspaper in the city of St. Louis.[18]

Black Power endorsed the right to self determination, autonomy, and self defense. Thus, violence was one of several tactics that was employed, or at least threatened, for liberation. The inclusion of violence among the strategies for Black liberation symbolized the redefinition of the movement away from a "civil rights" movement to protest and struggle for the extension of the Constitution and Bill of Rights to African Americans in everyday practice; instead it transformed the movement into a movement for liberation, revolution, and an alteration to the "system" as opposed to the inclusion of African Americans within it. While violence was one of many possible tactics, for the larger public violence became *the* defining tactic and characteristic of this movement. Failure to see the viable programs for equality and justice Black Power endorsed ultimately led to harsh government reaction and repression of the movement.

Debate over the concept of Black Power focused particularly on the centrality of culture or the role of culture in the liberation process. Development of Black consciousness through celebration of African

American and African culture was a central component of the larger Black Power concept. Cultural nationalists echoed Mao's assertion that the development of Black consciousness and culture was an essential first step to Black liberation. Komozi Woodard defines cultural nationalism by quoting John Hutchinson, author of *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*, "cultural nationalism is a movement of moral regeneration which seeks to reunite the different aspects of the nation, traditional and modern, agriculture and industry, science and religion, by returning to the creative life principle of the nation."[19] Robert Allen explains, "cultural nationalists place primary emphasis on the development of Black cultural and art forms as a mechanism of Black liberation."[20] According to Woodard, "in a metaphoric sense, the cultural nationalist understands the nation as an organic entity, a natural solidarity expressing the spirit of a people. Such cultural nationalists as Malcolm X and Amiri Baraka emphasized the importance of winning some measure of self determination in order to create the conditions for the flowering of the African personality."[21]

Cultural nationalism, as promoted by Amiri Baraka, Harold Cruse, and Maulana Karenga, was similarly promoted in South Africa through the Black Consciousness Movement. The leading spokesman and theorist of this movement was Steve Biko. Biko's Black Consciousness Movement began in 1967 when, at the National Union of South African Students national conference, a liberal anti-apartheid student group, Black members of the Union, including Biko, were forced to reside and eat in segregated facilities. Upset with the treatment they received at the national conference and the Union's failure to support their Black comrades, in 1969 Biko led the Black students to form their own South African Student Organization under the slogan "Black man, you are on your own." Like cultural nationalists in the United States, Biko asserted that "psychological rehabilitation was a precondition for political resistance" and "the primary task of their movement was to 'conscientize' Black people, which meant giving them a sense of pride or a belief in their own strength and worthiness. Only in this way could the psychological debilitating effects of white domination be overcome."[22]

Black Consciousness in South Africa and cultural nationalism in the United States appear to have many similarities, such as the celebration of racial identity and culture as a means to develop pride and self esteem as a prerequisite to total liberation. However, at the 1971 Conference on Student Perspectives on South Africa, Biko differentiated the two movements in stating, "I think the end result of Black Power is fundamentally different from the goal of Black Consciousness in this country [South Africa], that is, Black Power . . . is the preparation of a group for participation in an

already established society, a society which is essentially a majority society, and Black Power therefore in the States operates as a minority philosophy . . ."[23] On the other hand, Black Consciousness operated within a country in which Blacks were the majority and Black Consciousness was a philosophy of the majority.

Two of the most outspoken critics of cultural nationalism in the United States were Robert Allen and the Black Panthers. Allen quotes Huey Newton's criticism of cultural nationalism stating, "cultural nationalism, or pork chop nationalism, as I sometimes call it, is basically the problem of having the wrong political perspective. It seems to be a reaction instead of responding to political oppression. The cultural nationalists are concerned with returning to the old African culture and thereby regaining their identity and freedom. In other words, they feel that the African culture will automatically bring political freedom. Many times cultural nationalists fall into line as reactionary nationalists."[24] Allen offered a more complete criticism of cultural nationalism stating, "the cultural nationalism being advocated by Jones [Amiri Baraka] and Karenga had several weaknesses when viewed in the light of Black liberation which it claims to seek. In the first place, in their political and economic program, both Jones and Karenga have allied themselves with reformist nationalists and placed almost exclusive emphasis on electoral politics, Black-owned small businesses, and 'buy Black' campaigns . . . In their fascination with Africa, the cultural nationalists seem to believe that Black culture and art alone will somehow bring about a revolution . . . this belief has had two consequences. First of all, it has allowed a passive retreat into 'blackness' on the part of some of those who call themselves revolutionaries. These so-called Black revolutionaries measure their militancy by how much 'Black awareness' they have or how 'bad' they can talk. Verbal militancy thus replaces action, and the new result is passive nonresistance to oppression. Secondly, the fascination with African culture and art has led to a distortion and vulgarization of the whole idea of Black culture. Black culture has become a badge to be worn rather than an experience to be shared."[25] Furthermore, Allen argued, "the cultural nationalists would replace the hope of Black revolution with a curious mystique encompassing Black culture and art and reactionary African social forms . . . In essence the cultural nationalists asked nothing more than that Black people be accorded recognition as a distinct cultural group. If it meant pacifying rebellious ghettos, white America was only too happy to grant this minor concession."[26]

Such criticism of cultural nationalism was echoed by George Frederickson in his study of Black Consciousness in South Africa. Frederickson notes, "Biko's advocacy of organization, self help, and 'conscientication,'

with no clearly specified program for political resistance, resembled the stance of cultural nationalists in the United States. Like them, he seemed to be saying that for the time being Black people should devote themselves mainly to building self esteem. Just as African American cultural nationalists were criticized by the Black Panthers and other revolutionary nationalists for their lack of political militancy and failure to address the class basis of racial oppression, so Biko was criticized by the ANC, the South African Communist Party, and assorted freelance Marxists for his idealist conception of the power of consciousness and his failure to link up with the struggle of Black workers for economic justice."[27]

Allen and the Black Panthers' criticism of cultural nationalism were repeated by Eddie S. Glaude Jr. who explains, "the nationalist politics of Black Power often detached Black cultural forms from their historical contexts. In their search for a pristine cultural history, Black nationalists of the period ironically often stepped outside of history to account for Black America's and, by extension, their own conditions of possibility. 'Blackness' then became all pervasive, to the extent that all aspects of Black life, the social and political spheres and the private domain, were reducible to it. As such, Black cultural practices in the context of a politics of blackness took on a commodity form. African Americans could literally buy their salvation."[28]

In St. Louis visual displays of African American and African cultures were often easy targets for critics of cultural nationalism. For instance, attacks against the natural hairstyle, or Afro, surfaced in the local African American media. In particular, an editorial in the *St. Louis Argus* stated, "a group of celebrated entertainers has given impetus to the natural hair look sported by militant soul brothers wishing to be identified with the Black Power Movement . . . The new movement toward Black identity is summed up in the question: 'Who am I? People wearing the natural hair style have referred to the new look as 'Freedom cap' other extremists call it 'Afro' while still there are those who have labeled the hair style as the 'nappy revolution."[29] The editorial goes on to argue, "Negroes are not in need of another mark of identification. Simply being Black is sufficient for all purpose and intents . . . The color, size, style, and texture of one's hair will not reveal one's thinking about his contribution to take many problems facing the nation in 1968. We are not concerned with the outside appearance of the head, but we are definitely concerned about what's in that head and how are we going to help develop that brain into a productive part of everyday environment. For years Negroes have been saying ways and means of lightening the heavy loads of necessary baggage and eliminating the excess baggage. In the natural hair look case, if it is to

serve as an identification of some sort of cultural revolution then it is not in the best interest of the Negro goals. If the purpose is to destroy the high fashion ideals of Negro women have attained then it is again, not in the best interests of feminine vanity and self esteem."[30]

An incident involving the "natural" hairstyle, or "Afro," occurred at Vashon High school in October 1968. On the morning of October 10, 1968 around 250 students began a protest against school officials' decision to remove Shirley Dronres from the Prom Queen candidacy because of her natural hairstyle. While protests centered initially on Dronres, additional issues regarding student rights and needs quickly surfaced. According to reports in the *Post Dispatch*, the lunchroom was the location of the primary damage. Tables and chairs were destroyed and bottles were thrown through windows. Police were called to the school. Students and representatives from ACTION, the Black Liberators and Zulu 1200s met with school officials to negotiate a series of student demands. Demands included the offering of African American history courses, the creation of a student faculty advisory committee, longer lunch periods, and smoking privileges. According to Assistant Superintendent Samuel Sheppard, school officials considered some of the student proposals.[31]

Criticism and conflict over the Afro centered on the argument that such cultural displays were essentially empty without a political and economic agenda to back them up. In addition, such criticism drew upon models of female beauty and vanity, asserting that an Afro was somehow a violation of female beauty. Appeals to female beauty and vanity raises the question of standards and implies that the Afro is a violation of "high fashion ideals" that damage the self esteem and vanity of African American women because it does not resemble or adhere to a white standard of female beauty in straight hair. Or perhaps critics of the natural hairstyle on women did recognize the political significance of the hairstyle and did not think that such political statements were flattering on a woman. The name "natural" promoted a new standard of beauty, one that promoted Black pride by suggesting that any other hairstyle worn by African American women, especially straight hair, was "unnatural" because it conformed to white beauty standards.

Conflict over expressions of African American culture and control over its format and dissemination to the larger African American community in St. Louis occurred in a battle over control of a local radio station. In June 1968, Charles Koen, Prime Minister of the Black Liberators, and Clarence Guthrie of the Zulu 1200s met with representatives from KATZ, a radio station in St. Louis that was "aimed primarily at Negro audiences" to discuss African American programming.[32] Koen and Guthrie presented the

station with a list of demands that included "an hour of Black nationalism programming each week 'at ideal times,' at least two hours of interviews with Black nationalists, more 'positive' news coverage for the Black community, promotion of drives for Black nationalist organizations, and restrictions on white station personnel censoring programs."[33] If these demands were not met, Koen and Guthrie threatened to stage boycotts and pickets against station advertisers. General Manager of KATZ, George Lasker, told the *Globe Democrat* that the station had already lost "a considerable amount of money by advertising firms which have cancelled contracts because of harassment by the Black Nationalists."[34]

Protests against the radio station raised additional concerns of Black exploitation. For example, the *Globe Democrat* reported that Koen and Guthrie asserted that "the stations have made their owners rich and their entire sales message revolved around their Negro listenership and in return for what they take, they have given little in pay and recognition and responsibility to the Negro help, without which there would be no "'Negro Radio.'"[35] For example, Koen and Guthrie demanded "more news oriented to and about the Black community. They want a general upgrading of jobs and income so that those on whom the business is built can share in the profits more equitably."[36] Ultimately, according to the *Globe Democrat*, the meeting between Koen and Guthrie and KATZ ended "without conclusive results on the Negroes' demands for more air time."[37]

The meaning and utility of Black Power as a concept for liberation in St. Louis was also debated between generations of African Americans. As has been previously discussed, following CORE's successful Jefferson Bank protests in 1963 and 1964, the younger generation of activists, the "Young Turks," embraced Black Power, questioning the tactics of nonviolence, interracial cooperation, and integration as a goal. This younger generation which included Percy Green, William Clay, James Peake, Charles Koen, and Eugene Tournour, witnessed firsthand what these tactics could accomplish with regard to local hiring practices. However, they also recognized what little such tactics accomplished beyond hiring practices, with regard to police brutality, employment, education, and housing. Thus, these Young Turks, as the media referred to them, looked to Black Power as an ideology that could address these broader human rights concerns. With their embrace of Black Power, many in this younger generation broke from the older generation to redirect CORE as well as to form the Black Liberators, Zulu 1200s, DuBois Club, and Black Nationalists.

While a division between generations occurred over the concept of Black Power, this split took on the appearance of a class division as

well. Put simply, while advocates of Black Power represented the younger generation of St. Louis African Americans, the majority of members in the organizations they formed came from the so-called lumpen-proletariat, individuals who were often unemployed, often with minor criminal records, and little formal education.[38] While this segment of the African American community, the "Young Turks," supported Black Power, the older middle class members of traditional civil rights groups, such as NAACP and Urban League, continued to endorse the traditional tactics and goals that had brought success to the earlier movement. As the Young Turks recognized the limits of these traditional tactics and goals, they subsequently criticized the older middle class.

As previously explained, Black Power was a concept by which issues of employment, housing, education, health care, and public safety could be addressed. The civil rights movement brought legal reforms and desegrega-tion of public accommodations, yet had not addressed these larger human rights issues. It was also asserted by Black Power advocates that such civil rights reforms benefited the middle class without directly improving the lives of the working class or lumpen-proletariat, who eventually came to embrace the concept of Black Power. For example, Stokely Carmichael asserted, "in the past ten years or so the 'Negro revolt'—the intensified legal actions, nonviolent demonstrations, court decisions, and legislation —and changing economic conditions have brought rapid and significant gains for middle class Negroes. The mass of low income Negroes have made little progress however; many have been aroused by civil rights talk but few have benefited."[39]

In other words, the sit-in movement for the integration of public accommodations, the integration of schools, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 brought improvement to the lives of middle class African Americans, but barely affected the lives of working class African Americans. As sociologist Inge Powell Bell states in her work *CORE and the Strategy of Nonviolence*, "the problems of the slums, police brutality, and, most important, unemployment had not yet really been touched."[40] These limits were revealed during the urban rebellions of the mid 1960s, which similarly demonstrated to middle class leaders of the civil rights movement that working class voices had gone unheard and their needs had not yet been met. According to Bell, the large-scale racial violence that erupted in urban centers across the nation in the mid 1960s signified to mainstream civil rights organizations just how far disconnected they had become from the working class. For example, Bell states, "the riots that broke out during the summers of 1964 and 1965 brought home to CORE leaders their almost total lack of effective contact in the ghetto."[41] Therefore,

Black Power was embraced as a vehicle to address human rights issues that affected all African Americans.

An editorial in the *St. Louis Argus*, by its publisher Frank W. Mitchell, Sr., illustrates this class division. Mitchell asserts, "the 'middle class' Negro must make a contribution to the basic foundation of molding a symbolic encouragement image for the slum ridden and ghetto stationed Negro . . . Regardless of the self progress attained by the middle class Negro, no matter how hard he tries, he cannot lose his identity, he is still a Negro irrespective of his employment attainment, professional status, social status and neighborhood that he seeks to hide in, there is no possible way to escape his racial ties to his brothers and sisters in the ghettos."[42] The editorial went on to state, "as a result of self sufficiency and financial stability he has become complacent and satisfied with the fact that 'I am doing all right; This narrow area of selfishness has caused the well-to-do Negro to look, with disfavor, upon various approaches and methods employed by militant civil rights groups, civil rights leaders and other instruments used to attain the freedom that he is enjoying by virtue of being identified with the ethnic groups, all the enumerated factors are directed to aid. The new breed of Negro middle class, influential, confident and growing, is taking its place in the mainstream of American middle class society. This new breed is not at all as tolerant as their counterparts, he is definitely concerned with participation more and more in total society, and as he seeks to advance, he becomes more critical of Negro leadership. This is the area that challenges Negro leadership, this is the area that requires organization and motivation. This group can make a great and needed contribution."[43]

In this editorial Mitchell also echoes E. Franklin Frazier's argument concerning the disconnection between middle class African Americans and the African American masses.[44] For instance, Mitchell states, "there is a large gap between him and his ghetto buddy. The slum ridden brothers and sisters don't trust the middle class Negro because he too believes that his well-to-do brother not desire to associate with him or his related problems. This distrust or gap is consequently, conspicuously evident, simply because the middle class Negro is running from the ghetto just as the whites are, they are rapidly moving to the attractive suburban areas, where they enjoy isolated comforts and the exposure to better schools and specialized training for their children. Therefore, the vast majority of less fortunate city dwellers and poor people neither communicate with nor feels acceptable to the middle class Negro. He distrusts his as much as he does the whites."[45] Ultimately, Mitchell, like the "Young Turks," argues that the African American middle class must maintain "identification" with the African American masses, working to lift up the entire community.[46]

Debate over the meaning and utility of Black Power as a concept for Black liberation also raised the question of the role of the African American church and religious leaders. Many historians have noted that the African American church was at the center of the civil rights movement. For example, Aldon Morris asserts, "the Black church functioned as the institutional center of the modern civil rights movement. Churches provided the movement with an organized mass base; a leadership of clergymen largely economically independent of the larger white society and skilled in the art of managing people and resources; an institutionalized financial base through which protest was financed; and meeting places where the masses planned tactics and strategies and collectively committed themselves to the struggle."[47] In addition, Manning Marable states, "at every level of organization, and in almost every small town where sit-ins or jail-ins occurred, Black ministers were at the very center of the struggle."[48]

In St. Louis, Reverend I.C. Peay headed the Ministers and Laymen's Association for Equal Opportunity, organized in April 1963. MALAEO was an interracial organization but was comprised predominantly of members of St. Louis African American churches. The Ministers and Laymen's Association for Equal Opportunity stated that the group had been formed "to call attention to the seriousness of racial injustice in employment, housing, and education."[49] The group's first demonstration was a candlelight service on the steps of the civil courts building in downtown St. Louis in 1963. The service was attended by more than 350 Catholic laymen, priests, and nuns to protest employment discrimination.

Encouraged by the success of the candlelight service, the Ministers and Laymen's Association for Equal Opportunity held its first city-wide meeting to discuss future demonstrations and goals in October 1963. Roughly seventy five St. Louis area churches were represented during this meeting. The Association planned a city-wide "buying boycott" to coincide with the "Downtown Sales Days," on November 14 and 15, one of the biggest shopping events of the year. After the boycott, store owners were asked if indeed their business was affected by the boycott. In general, business owners stated that they were not affected by the boycott. Reverend Peay rebutted by saying that although the boycott was visibly less dramatic than hoped for, the one million dollars that African Americans would normally have spent during the two-day sales event were missed.[50]

While historians have emphasized the central role of the African American church, others have argued that this role has been overemphasized and African American clergy distanced themselves from the movement as it came to embrace Black Power. For instance, Charles Payne, in his study of the civil rights movement in Mississippi, argues, "the church

has gotten more credit for generating the leadership of the movement than it deserves, probably a matter of people looking at the movement's national leaders, many of whom were ministers, and assuming they were all the leadership that mattered. In fact, the local situation could be very different. In the urban South, where churches were larger and better financed, where ministers were not so subject to reprisal, churches could afford to play a more active role in the early stages of the movement."[51] A similar argument was made by Adam Fairclough in his study of the Louisiana movement. For example he notes, "there were, to be sure, Black ministers who became strong leaders, but such men were few and far between. In Louisiana, and perhaps in other states, the civil rights struggle seems to have been a largely secular affair. Ministers were often conspicuously absent from local movements; not only did they fail to provide leadership, often they refused to participate at all."[52]

     Beyond the Ministers and Laymen's Association for Equal Opportunity, African American religious leaders were not at the forefront of the movement in St. Louis. In fact, African American clergy were often criticized by local civil rights organizations for their lack of leadership and activism on the frontlines. For example, Vice Chairman of St. Louis CORE, Bill Bailey, criticized local African American religious leaders stating, "I think that that the people of the city of St. Louis have been fooled long enough about civil rights. The ministers of St. Louis are not taking an active part in the struggle for civil rights. There are no Black ministers active today in the city of St. Louis. Many Black ministers and laymen alike are beating their drums and gums for their own causes but not for civil rights . . . I wish they would think more about all Black people and less about the Cadillacs they drive . . ."[53]

     In response to dissatisfaction with African American clergy, efforts to encourage religious leaders in St. Louis to become more actively involved in the movement were made by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in September 1968. St. Louis was chosen to participate in the Minister Leadership Training Program along with Atlanta, Baltimore, Birmingham, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Memphis, New York City, Newark, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. This program was specifically designed to train local African American religious leaders to assume leadership of local movements and was funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation.[54] The SCLC stated, "our focus is the Black preacher and the Black church for we believe that the greatest potential power for controlling forces which make and sustain as well as those which can change the structure of the ghetto is within the Black church. We further believe that because of the central

place which the Black church holds in the community we can develop the kind of leadership which will develop programs to transfer control of the ghetto to those who reside there."[55] In particular, the program focused on six areas of training. The program hoped to "redefine the mission of the Black Church" by developing "a theology to meet the needs of those who make up the world's disinherited."[56] In addition, the SCLC wanted to facilitate the creation of "positive programs" through local churches to address the "crisis of the cities" and "develop an awareness of the need for Black clergymen to work vigorously to solve the everyday problems of the ghetto."[57] Finally the SCLC program looked to "develop local leadership through study, investigations, action, and fellowship" and to "expose Black clergymen to all the forces which make the city a blessing or a curse."[58]

However, such efforts to mobilize local African American religious leaders continued to be met with skepticism and criticism. For example, Ivory Perry repeated Bailey's assault against religious leaders' "lifestyles." Perry contended, "the Black church is also really a hindrance to the Black community. They're not really telling the truth. They're up there talking about Christianity and religion; they're not giving the public the real issue of what's happening in today's society . . . A lot of people in this town are using it, they use religion to line the inside of their coat pockets, and keep their iceboxes and refrigerators, and wear $300 suits and drive $20,000 Cadillacs."[59] Like Bailey, Perry condemned the alleged lavish lifestyle that preoccupied religious leaders at the expense of the movement.

Moreover, despite the fact that in the early and mid 1940s the St. Louis Catholic Church under Cardinal Joseph Ritter was a leading advocate of integration and school desegregation, by the mid 1960s, it too came under attack. For example, a letter to Cardinal Ritter from individual religious leaders, labor leaders, educators, and business people acknowledged Cardinal Ritter's initial support for desegregation stating, "the Archdiocese has taken the initiative in the Council on Religion and Race in promoting cooperative work among the synagogues and churches in matters relating to racial problems." However, the letter went on to assert that "from the very beginning [1964] even until now, this interfaith Council has been initiated by and financed solely by white churchmen. Negroes have always been on its Board but Negro churches, their clergy and laymen have not been involved."[60] After promoting desegregation in the 1950s and early 1960s, the St. Louis Catholic church was criticized for limiting the role of African Americans in the interfaith and interracial programs initiated by the Catholic Church. Although African American clergy in St. Louis were criticized for playing a limited role in the liberation

movement, the Catholic Church was criticized for restricting the role of African Americans in their civil rights efforts.

Historians have emphasized the role African American religious leaders played in the Black freedom struggle. While it is certainly true that African American clergy played a dominant role in the struggle in the Deep South in the 1950s and early 1960s and became some of the most recognized figures in the Black freedom struggle, the same cannot be said of the local movement in St. Louis. Leaders from all religions came together in St. Louis to promote integration, civil rights, and peace. Yet, religious leaders were not at the forefront of the local movement. Perhaps it was because African American clergy had played such a prominent role in the struggle in the Deep South that other local movements expected the same of their religious leaders. Nevertheless, as was the case in St. Louis, when local clergy fell far short of these expectations they were subsequently criticized for their lack of leadership and activism.

As these remarks illustrate, the role of whites, the middle class, and religious leaders in the Black liberation struggle was highly contested. The role of women and the gendered representation of the movement were similarly contested issues. Black Power shifted the goals of the movement away from civil rights to human rights, redefining the struggle from a movement looking to extend to African Americans the Constitution, Bill of Rights and so-called American Dream, to a movement emphasizing revolutionary structural change that would fundamentally alter rather than extend the "system" to African Americans. As the struggle became a revolutionary liberation movement, liberation and revolution increasingly came to be defined as a "man thing," a revolution for Black liberation and self determination but equally a revolution for the recovery of manhood.

Black Panther co-founder Huey Newton intimately connected Black liberation and the recovery of manhood. Newton states, "once we compromise we will be compromising not only our freedom, but also our manhood . . . we know that the enemy is very powerful and that our manhood is at stake, but we feel it necessary to be victorious in regaining ourselves, regaining our manhood."[61] For Newton, compromise could not be reached because total revolution was necessary for the complete recovery of manhood.

This connection between Black liberation and the recovery of African American masculinity suggests a conservative element found in Black Power. The successful liberation of African Americans would not only bring political, economic, and cultural self determination, but would also reestablish the African American man as the head of the African American family. As the liberation struggle was portrayed as a masculine endeavor to

begin with, once the revolution was won, men would assume the position as both head of the newly freed African American community as well as the newly freed African American family. Historian Cynthia Griggs Fleming states, "one of the distinctive tenets of the Black Power philosophy was the belief in Black male dominance. For so long, Black Power advocates argued, Black men had been virtually emasculated by white American society. Thus, they must assume leadership roles and reclaim their masculinity as a prerequisite to the empowerment of all Black people."[62] In this sense, Black Power was a conservative concept by which African American men could reassert their masculinity and their control over the larger community as well as their individual families. For example, in her article, "Africa on My Mind: Gender, Counter Discourse and African American Nationalism," historian E. Francis White argues that Black Power "can be radical and progressive in relation to white racism" yet with regards to gender relations within the larger African American community, Black Power can be "conservative and repressive."[63]

Tracye Matthews points out that defense of the family took on additional significance in the context of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's *The Negro Family: a Case for National Action*, published in March 1965. Summarized by Matthews, Moynihan's work argued "Black families were matriarchal, that Black men were unable to fulfill the roles required of men in a patriarchal society, and that the resulting pattern of female headed household was largely responsible for the 'tangle of pathology' in which Black people found themselves."[64] Moynihan's report added another important element to the defense of the African American family and the recovery of African American manhood, as the report challenged the ability of African American men to provide and protect their families, thus blaming them for the "problems" facing Black America.

Debate over the gendered representation of the Black liberation struggle also illuminated the movement's efforts to define the relationship of the Black liberation movement with that of other oppressed minority groups in the United States. For example, the Black Panther Party struggled to define its relationship to the gay and women's liberation movement. Remarks by Huey Newton illustrate this debate over the movement's relationship to the gay and women's liberation movements. For example, Newton states, "whatever your personal opinions and insecurities about homosexuality and the various liberation movements among homosexuals and women . . . we should try to unite with them in a revolutionary fashion. I say, 'whatever your insecurities are' because, as we very well know sometimes our first instinct is to want to hit a homosexual in the mouth and want a woman to be quiet. We want to hit the homosexual in the mouth because

we're afraid we might be homosexual; and we want to hit the woman or shut her up because we're afraid that she might castrate us, or take the nuts that we might not have to start with . . . We should try to form a working coalition with the gay liberation and women's liberation groups. We must always handle social forces in the most appropriate manner. And this is really a significant part of the population both women and the growing number of homosexuals that we have to deal with."[65]

Such statements indicate an ambiguous and contradictory acknowledgment of the Party's connection to other minority liberation groups. Also, of particular significance is the fact that Newton does not make racial distinctions when referring to women and homosexuals. Thus, Newton's vision of the Black Panther Party is strictly Black, masculine, and heterosexual. Moreover, such statements further illustrate that Party members constantly subjected themselves to internal criticism and review, evaluating their relationships to other oppressed groups while evaluating how these relationships would impact the success of the Black liberation movement and their own construction of masculinity. As these remarks illustrate, Black Power groups had difficulty navigating and defining their relationship with the gay and women's liberation movements. Because of the masculine connotations of revolution and warfare, the connection to liberation movements in other parts of the world were perceived as reinforcing rather than threatening the masculinity of African American revolutionaries. Therefore, Black Power groups were more hesitant to connect themselves to the gay and women's liberation movements because of the perceived threat it would have on their masculinity.

Whereas the Black freedom movement had a difficult time defining its relationship to the gay and women's liberation movements, it had a clear sense of its relationship to liberation movements by other oppressed, exploited, and colonized people throughout the world. In fact, the connection between the domestic African American liberation movement and liberation movements throughout the African Diaspora was a fundamental aspect of Black Power that cannot be overlooked. Scholars Michael L. Clemons and Charles E. Jones state, "in short, African American internationalism has been an integral aspect of the struggle for Black equality. Consequently, to restrict Black political participation to the confines of the American borders limits an understanding of the global initiatives, linkages, and accomplishments of African American actors."[66] In early September 1968 Stokely Carmichael spoke for nearly two hours to a large crowd in St. Louis telling them "the United States is the leader of the world imperialism. She has exploited Africa, Asia, and South America. The white man has colonized and dehumanized our people. We are fighting for our humanity."[67]

Responding to the applause of the crowd, Carmichael told the audience that "being Black made you the same as Black people all over the world" and urged the St. Louis African American community to "stop infighting and bickering, and establish a Black united front to work toward Black goals."[68] While the local media focused on Carmichael's words as incendiary rhetoric to promote violence, as was typically the case with the media's coverage of the Black Power movement, it failed to recognize the greater significance and meaning of Carmichael's message. In this speech Carmichael critiqued U.S. foreign policy, equated U.S. capitalism with imperialism and colonialism, and connected the local St. Louis liberation struggle with freedom struggles by other oppressed, colonized, and exploited people throughout the world.

While the Black Panther Party created a formal international network in Algeria, Cuba, and Japan, local organizations, due primarily to limited resources, were unable to create similar formal connections with movements outside of the United States. Nonetheless these local organizations still connected themselves to this larger movement on an ideological level. For instance, local groups connected themselves to this larger struggle by reading books written by liberation theorists such as Franz Fanon, Che Guevara, Malcolm X, Karl Marx, Kwame Nkrumah, and Mao Tse-Tung.[69] According to Michael L. Clemons and Charles E. Jones, "the successful drive for independence by many African states from the 1950s through the 1970s reified the dual objectives of civil rights and human dignity for African Americans. Especially significant in this regard were the rise of Ghanaian independence under Kwame Nkrumah, Kenya's Mau Mau rebellion, the resistance of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo, and the violent Algerian revolution against the colonial power of France."[70]

In St. Louis, groups such as the Black Liberators, Zulu 1200s, and Black Nationalists looked to national and international organizations and international and historical leaders of liberation struggles for inspiration and direction. The very name of these local groups clearly demonstrates their connection with the Diaspora. For example, the name Zulu 1200s was a direct reference to the Zulu kingdom of South Africa that rose to dominance under the leadership of Shaka between 1819 and 1828. Assuming the name Zulu reflected how the local organization looked to the Zulu in South Africa as inspiration and as a model of Black military strength and power.

While St. Louis groups looked outward, beyond U.S. borders for inspiration and models of liberation, local organizations aimed to formally unite with other organizations in the United States. Prime Minister of the St. Louis Black Liberators, Charles Koen stated, "generally . . . all we

are talking about is uniting Black people. There is a need in St. Louis for a structure that will be organized as part of a national Black Party and national Black defense."[71] In response to this need, Black Power groups in St. Louis offered their support to other liberation groups throughout the country. For example, the Friends of the Mississippi Freedom Democrat Party formed in St. Louis "[to] answer to an appeal for support from the Mississippi Freedom Democrat Party."[72] The FMFDP was comprised of CORE, the NAACP, the Action Committee to Increase Opportunities for Negroes, the Citizens for Liberal Action, the Young Cooperative Civic Association, and the Friends of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.[73] Friends of the MFDP tried to get Congresswoman Leonor K. Sullivan from the Third District in St. Louis to co-author a resolution which would prevent the seating of the five representatives from Mississippi.[74] Congresswoman Sullivan refused to co-sponsor the resolution, arguing that she did not have the "necessary legal knowledge."[75] Sullivan did however inform the FMFDP that if such a resolution were put to a vote she would give it her support.[76] As previously noted, SNCC did not exist as an independent organization in St. Louis as it did in the Deep South. Nonetheless, SNCC did create a formal alliance with the Black Liberators on November 8, 1968 when H. Rap Brown's successor, Philip L. Hutchings, visited St. Louis. At a rally at the Riviera Night Club in St. Louis, Hutchings introduced Charles Koen, Prime Minister of the Black Liberators, as the new Midwest Deputy Chairman of SNCC, and introduced himself as the General Field Marshal of the Black Liberators. In addition, H. Rap Brown, former head of SNCC, was named General of Human Justice of the Liberators, and James Forman was named the Liberator's General for Foreign Affairs.[77]

In addition, on February 5, 1970, Black Panther and Field Representative of the Rainbow Coalition, Robert Lee, came to St. Louis to hold a discussion that would hopefully lead to the creation of a union between St. Louis "minority groups" and the Black Panthers.[78] As reported by the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, Lee spoke to approximately 150 people at Webster College, in St. Louis, stating, "the vanguard groups were 'the only ones working for liberation of oppressed people.' Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, Indians, and the rural poor are inflamed, and it is time to end the 'racist power structure.'"[79] Lee went on to appeal to the United States historical tradition of violence and revolution, connecting the African American freedom struggle to a continuous thread of struggle by oppressed people over time. The *Post* reported, "American history confirms the right to revolution, Lee asserted. He said that Paul Revere, in warning the colonists to 'get your guns, the police are coming,' was the first Black Panther. He called the Boston Tea Party the first riot."[80] As this event illustrates,

Black Power promoted the creation of a united front stretching across racial and ethnic lines, across national borders, to unite all oppressed, exploited, and colonized peoples. In his speech, Lee also emphasized the movement's use of American history and tradition to justify its tactics and goals of human rights. Lee's reference to Paul Revere as the "first Black Panther" relies on American history and traditions to legitimatize, sustain, validate, and authenticate Black liberation.

One of the central ideas that linked the domestic Black liberation movement with a larger international movement was the notion that African Americans represented an occupied colony within the United States. It is in this shared experience as an oppressed and exploited colony at the hands of imperialism that African Americans felt connected to other colonies throughout the world. Thus, the African American liberation struggle was very much part of other liberation struggles by similar colonies throughout the world. For example, Julius Lester states, "Black Power is not an isolated phenomenon. It is only another manifestation of what is transpiring in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. People are reclaiming their lives on those three continents and Blacks in America are reclaiming theirs. These liberation movements are not saying give us a share; they are saying we want it all! The existence of the present system in the United States depends upon the United States taking all. This system is threatened more and more each day by the refusal of those in the Third World to be exploited. They are colonial people outside the United states; Blacks are a colonial people within. Thus, we have a common enemy. As the Black Power movement becomes more politically conscious, the spiritual coalition that exists between Blacks in America and the Third World will become more evident."[81] This internal colonialism theory was promoted by such people as Stokely Carmichael, Huey Newton, Robert Allen, Robert Blauner, and Amiri Baraka. For instance, Carmichael asserted, "the colonies of the United States, and this includes the Black ghettos within its borders, north and south, must be liberated. For a century, this nation has been like an octopus of exploitation, its tentacles stretching from Mississippi and Harlem to South America, the Middle East, southern Africa, and Vietnam; the form of exploitation carries from area to area but the essential result has been the same, a powerful few have been maintained and enriched at the expense of the poor and voiceless colored masses. This pattern must be broken. As its grip loosens here and there around the world, the hopes of Black Americans become more realistic. For racism to die, a totally different America must be born."[82]

Floyd McKissick contributed to the internal colonialism model in stating, "young Blacks are learning of revolutionary experiences around the world. They are becoming aware that the values of America need not be

accepted, that treachery and oppression need not be tolerated. Inevitably, they are comparing the conditions and experiences of foreign revolutionaries to their own. And they are becoming convinced that their experiences are comparable in many ways to those of other oppressed people. Some are becoming convinced that in America too, the only satisfactory answer is total revolution."[83]

The argument that African Americans represented an internally colonized people within the borders of the United States, an occupied domestic colony struggling to gain liberation through revolution, was illustrated in resistance to police occupation of local African American neighborhoods and communities. As previously discussed, the Black Liberators in August 1968, looked to purge the community of "occupying" white police and patrol the neighborhood themselves.

In addition, the Wall of Respect further connected the local movement to the larger African Diaspora. The Wall portrayed Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Muhammad Ali, Stokely Carmichael, Marcus Garvey, Jomo Kenyatta, Elijah Muhammad, Dick Gregory, Phyllis Wheatley, Ray Charles, James Baldwin, LeRoi Jones, Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King Jr., Jean Baptiste Pointe deSable, and W.E.B. DuBois under the slogan of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, "Up You Mighty Race." The Wall of Respect's portrayal of contemporary and historic African American and African leaders further demonstrated how, on a cultural level, the local Black liberation movement connected itself to a larger movement that existed beyond St. Louis and U.S. boundaries, and even beyond the 1960s.

Furthermore, the Wall of Respect in St. Louis also linked the local movement to other movements throughout the country that similarly created Walls of Respect in their own communities. Historian Erika Doss explains that Walls of Respect were inspired by Emory Douglas, artist for the Black Panther's newspaper, *The Black Panther*. Doss explains that through his work with *The Black Panther*, "Douglas crafted a protest aesthetic aimed at convincing audiences of Black Power."[84] According to Doss, Douglas inspired "community muralists" and "throughout the late 1960s, urban artists painted gigantic Walls of Dignity and Walls of Respect on the sides and facades of inner city buildings, representing Panthers en masse and Panthers engaged in standoffs and shoot outs with the police."[85]

Perhaps the foremost model connecting the African American liberation movement and African liberation movements was Malcolm X and the Organization of Afro-American Unity, founded June 28, 1964. As William W. Sales, Jr. points out, Malcolm X's "OAAU concept was an attempt to give the previously domestically based civil rights movement more of the

form, content, and personality of a legitimate national liberation movement."[86] Sales explains that Malcolm X reinvigorated the Pan-Africanist element in the civil rights movement through his two trips to Africa in the spring and summer of 1964.[87] According to Sales, Malcolm X "became the first major African American leader to go to Africa and present a detailed description and explanation of racism in the United States. It was Malcolm who attempted to unite the African unity movement, which reached its high point with the creation of the Organization of African Unity in May 1963, with the human rights thrust of African-descended communities in the Diaspora. It was Malcolm X's intention to garner the support of Africans everywhere behind the struggle of the African American, and take the United States before the international bar of justice for violating the human rights of African Americans."[88]

Malcolm's vision was a clear articulation of Black Power as a concept for revolutionary liberation for African Americans, or as Sales states, by 1964 "Malcolm X defined the African American nationalist tradition as a revolutionary one, a violent struggle for land and self determination. He saw African American nationalism as an integral part of the worldwide revolution of Afro-Asians against white domination."[89] Thus, for Malcolm X, the African American liberation movement was inherently and essentially part of the larger struggle for liberation within the African Diaspora. Sales states, "Malcolm X essentially saw Black nationalism in an international perspective. Malcolm saw Black nationalism as a part of a larger revolutionary reaction to white racist oppression which was changing power relationships on a global basis."[90]

The Organization of Afro-American Unity was therefore to be the vehicle by which to connect the domestic struggle to the larger Diaspora. According to Sales, "Malcolm X visualized the OAAU as the organizational vehicle for internationalizing the struggle of the African American. Such an internationalization of the Civil Rights struggle, he felt, was absolutely essential if it were to have any chance of success."[91] Malcolm X continued by asserting, "I would like to impress upon every African American leader that there is no kind of action in this country that is ever going to bear fruit unless that action is tied in with the overall international struggle."[92] Through the OAAU, Malcolm X promoted the larger theory of internal or domestic colonization and tried to strengthen the relationship between Africans and African Americans through a shared experience of colonialism and oppression, to redefine this relationship to facilitate common resistance and to create an international united front. For example, Sale states, "Malcolm attempted to establish an identity for African Americans, not as popularly conceived in the African continent as U.S. citizens, but as subject

peoples, colonized by white men and racially oppressed. Malcolm talked to this audience about the condition of African Americans in the United States, speaking the language of human rights, not civil rights."[93] Speaking the language of human rights rather than civil rights redefined the movement by connecting individuals through experience as opposed to connecting individuals exclusively through race and location. The movement could now be larger, broader by including not only the "Black race" but the human race. Defined as an international human rights struggle, the movement redefined Blackness to be a majority in a larger Diaspora as opposed to a minority isolated, disconnected, and separated in individual countries and continents.

St. Louis also connected itself to the African Diaspora through the Committee for Africa, founded in 1965. The St. Louis Committee for Africa had approximately seventy to eighty members and included professionals in the St. Louis, area including students and faculty from St. Louis University and Washington University, and staff from Homer G. Phillips Hospital.[94] The St. Louis Committee on Africa explained its interest in connecting the local African American community in St. Louis to the larger African Diaspora in stating that the group was "concerned with the cultural and political ties that have bound and will continue to bind Black people together whether they are African by birth or happen to be separated from the Motherland by a few miles and a few centuries."[95] Specifically, according to the International Folklore Federation of Greater St. Louis's *Nationalities of Greater St. Louis*, a pamphlet highlighting the various "nationalities" of the metropolitan area, the St. Louis Committee on Africa had several objectives. The SLCOA looked "to promote the total liberation and unification of Africa."[96] The SLCOA held various programs, demonstrations, and exhibits for the public. The SLCOA aimed to "bridge the socio-economic, political, and cultural gaps between Africans and their descendants (in quest of self determination and human dignity) . . . by promoting communication, understanding, and participation on all levels regarding the various struggles of Black people in Africa, America, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the Diaspora"[97] In addition, the SLCOA provided food, clothing, and medicine to "African freedom fighters" while condemning "American policy in Africa insofar as that policy upholds racist and/or colonist regimes there."[98]

Organizationally, the Committee was divided into six sub-committees to focus on cultural, political, and economic aspects of the Diaspora and to strengthen the ties between Africa and the United States. For example, the Programs Committee sponsored "public educational programs on Africa, including conferences, panel discussions, seminars, workshops,

demonstrations, as well as African plays, movies, dance troupes, and fashion shows."[99] The Political Action Committee was "involved in issues related to African liberation and development, and to United States policies toward Africa."[100] The Communications and Publicity Committee publicized the various programs and public events as well as communicating with the media.[101] The Hospitality Committee aided "African students and visitors by providing them with host families, and also through sponsoring receptions and parties given in their honor. The Committee has hosted and/ or co-sponsored dance troupes from Guinea, Mali, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Nigeria, and Ghana."[102] The Speakers' Bureau fought "negative stereotypes regarding Africa by disseminating accurate historical and current information to schools, churches, and other organizations. The Committee also represents the heritage of Africa by sponsoring, in cooperation with other organizations, educational, cultural, and/or fund-raising exhibits during various folk festivals and fairs."[103] Moreover, the SLCOA established an African Student Emergency Loan Fund that provided money to African students in St. Louis who found themselves in "emergency financial needs." The African Student Emergency Loan Fund was itself funded through money "raised during paid public service programs and benefits sponsored by the Committee."[104]

The St. Louis Committee on Africa was designed specifically to link the local African American experience with the larger Diaspora through economic, political, educational, and cultural programs that operated on the local level. The SLCOA, like the Black Liberators, Zulus, Black Nationalists, and DuBois Club reflect Mary Dudziak's conclusion that "many activists saw the struggle for civil rights in the United States and anti-colonial movements abroad as different branches of one worldwide human rights movement. Civil rights activists turned especially to Africa, which became a source of support and inspiration."[105] However, as these groups connected the local movement to larger international liberation movements, they faced intense hostility and reaction. The initial years of the civil rights movement looked to the fundamental philosophies of the United States, drawing upon the "sacred symbols," of the United States, basing its strategies and goals upon the documents that defined America, the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights. Historians Brian Ward and Tony Badger state that the early years of the civil rights movement made an "appeal to core American values . . . which enabled the civil rights movement to represent itself as a legitimate cause, in pursuit of legitimate ends, by legitimate means."[106] In doing so, the civil right movement eventually won the support of the American public as well as the passage of federal and local civil rights legislation.

On the other hand, the manner in which Black Power represented itself, borrowing the language, images, rhetoric, terminology, strategies, tactics, and ideologies from other liberation movements throughout the world set it apart, in direct opposition to "American core values." By the late 1960s the movement shifted from a civil rights movement, a struggle to extend to African Americans the Constitution, Bill of rights and "American Dream," to an international revolutionary movement for liberation. Ultimately, in the context of urban rebellions and the Cold War's efforts to preserve and protect the "American way of life," this local movement came under intense attack and its goal of uncompromised liberation was violently challenged. While an ideological debate over the concept and nature of Black power occurred, as the following chapters explain, a real battle between Black Power advocates and government officials raged throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Black Power Challenged: The War on Poverty and Black Capitalism

The mid 1960s saw the creation of two new developments that challenged the Black Power movement. The War on Poverty and Black Capitalism emerged in response to both the rise of Black Power and the outbreak of urban rebellions throughout the country in the mid and late 1960s. The War on Poverty and Black Capitalism were responses to Black Power's demands for self determination, autonomy, and the right to self defense.

On August 20, 1964 President Lyndon Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act that declared war on poverty and created the Office of Economic Opportunity, headed by Sargent Shriver. The War on Poverty aimed to attack poverty and its causes on both the federal and local level. Locally, the War on Poverty was to be fought by Community Action Agencies (CAA) that would "plan and implement programs for the poor" in various local communities.[1] Yet the War on Poverty in St. Louis unofficially started two years earlier with the creation of the Human Development Corporation (HDC).

Immediately following Johnson's creation of the OEO in August 1964, HDC in St. Louis was "officially" recognized as the CAA for administration of poverty programs in St. Louis, becoming one of sixteen programs throughout the country funded through the OEO.[2] According to William Locke's 1974 study of the HDC, "from the date of original funding by OEO until November 30, 1970, approximately $69,000,000 in federal funds have been spent by the Human Development Corporation in the implementation and maintenance of poverty related programs in the St. Louis area. Approximately 150,000 individuals . . . had been directly or indirectly affected by this organization's operations."[3]

The first year of OEO funding of the HDC officially began in January 1965 and lasted until October 1965. Prior to its recognition as the

Community Action Agency for St. Louis, the HDC received its funding, from 1962 until 1965, from the Juvenile Delinquency Planning Grant Funds awarded by President Kennedy's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime, created through the 1961 Juvenile Delinquency Act.[4]

   To fight the local War on Poverty, the HDC, as a Community Action Agency, worked with local neighborhood representatives, supporting local anti-poverty programs initiated by individual neighborhoods. In other words, the HDC was designed to work with what it called "neighborhood based organizations, neighborhood advisory councils or neighborhood corporations" that were defined as "organizations composed predominantly, if not entirely, of residents of designated poverty areas and members of groups served by a community action program."[5] According to the OEO, "these organizations assist the CAA [in this case HDC] in the planning, policy, conduct, and evaluation of programs within their neighborhoods. They may be delegate agencies of the CAA or they may serve in an advisory capacity to the CAA."[6] In other words, HDC would facilitate local programs designed by individual neighborhood districts by serving as the "conduit" or liaison between these local anti-poverty initiates and the OEO. In addition, cooperation between the HDC and neighborhood districts was encouraged, with neighborhood representatives aiding the HDC in creating and implementing anti-poverty programs. By encouraging local participation in the planning and implementation of anti-poverty programs, the HDC encouraged "community autonomy," asserting that local control of these programs was a "prerequisite to success." According to a September 23, 1964 HDC document, "the Corporation will operate some of its own programs. However, it will allocate most of its funds to existing public and private agencies which will implement major parts of the program under contract with the Corporation. In a sense, the Corporation will be a coordinating conduit through which funds will pass."[7] Serving as a liaison or "conduit" through which federal funds could reach local communities, the HDC thus promoted local control of anti-poverty programs and "self managed institutions" stating that "these organizations can enhance resident participation, build neighborhood responsibility, promote self pride, improve motivation, and strengthen program effectiveness."[8] Specifically, these neighborhood districts in St. Louis included Wellston, Valley Park, Kinloch City, Carr-Central, Chouteau-Russell, Easton-Taylor, Midtown, Montgomery-Hyde Park, Murphy-Blaire, Pruitt-Igoe, Union-Sarah, West-End, Wells-Goodfellow, and Yeatman.[9] These neighborhood districts, officially referred to as "poverty districts," were defined as "a geographical area in which 30 to 50 percent of the families are in poverty, which is $3,800 for a family of four and $700 for each additional member

of the family."[10] As William Locke notes, these 14 districts were created by the HDC in 1965, "utilizing data from the 1960 census, as well as AFDC, health, housing, and employment statistics."[11]

Neighborhood districts supported by the HDC initiated a variety of programs. For example, the Chouteau-Russell Neighborhood Advisory Committee organized the Neighborhood Leadership Workshop, on August 11–13, 1967. According to the *St. Louis Argus*, approximately 35 residents attended the workshop. Joan Harrison, chairman of the Chouteau-Russell Committee, stated that the workshop's purpose was "to raise questions about what it means to be a leader in neighborhoods like ours and join ideas from community action workers from other St. Louis areas."[12] The workshop aimed to develop community leadership and educate local leaders on how to successfully fight the War on Poverty. Specifically, Harrison stated, "the purpose of the workshop was not to push new ideas for social action on resident leaders, but to provide the forum to develop new plans of action acceptable to those involved, to provide the impetus and motivation to put those plans to work for the betterment of the community."[13] For example, Ivory Perry was a guest speaker on "Recruiting Techniques: How to Motivate Your Neighbor at his Front Door" and Norman Seay spoke on "How to use Conflict."[14]

Another program organized by the Chouteau Russel Neighborhood Advisory Committee of the HDC was the "The Black Hip Session '68" on Sunday, July 28, 1968 at Lafayette Park. This program was designed to promote cultural Black nationalism. According to the *St. Louis Argus*, the program was designed "to entertain and help continually recharge the Black man's concept of self and to change non-Blacks' concepts of Blacks. This program is a series designed for all St. Louisans interested in the plight of positive growth and improvement of the St. Louis community."[15] The *Argus* went on to explain that such a program was necessary for the development of Black pride which was an essential first step to larger self determination, "just to say that Black is beautiful is not enough. There must be unity and singleness of purpose from a united group to gear the reawakening of the Black culture . . . The general unrest of Blacks all over the country is very significant. One solution might be that more responsible people should take a more active part in these affairs with programs directed at teaching the Black man to assume his own identity and to have Black confidence and pride."[16] At the Hip Session, Chester Lewis, local NAACP activist and attorney, was the keynote speaker and Katherine Dunham "presented authentic portrayals, in dance, of some creative contributions of the African to the world of art," and Mrs. Eugene Redmond "gave poetic examples of the Black man's dilemma in America."[17] This program organized by the

Chouteau-Russell Neighborhood Advisory Committee, and funded by the HDC, was designed specifically to enhance "Black confidence and pride" within the local African American community.

The West End Neighborhood Advisory Committee and Gateway Center also sponsored an anti-poverty program called Operation Challenge. According to the *St. Louis Argus*, "Operation Challenge highlights the self help aspect of the War on Poverty. The program will train for community leadership and employment in West End area youth between the ages of 14 and 21."[18] Specifically, the program offered classes on sewing, arts and crafts, African American history, clerical and business skills, electronics, and leadership. Seventy five people took part in the program.[19]

In Novembers 1968, the HDC issued a report entitled "Poverty: Approximate Costs for Elimination of Poverty in St. Louis."[20] The report argued that rather than recognizing one specific "'key' to the 'poverty problem' such as jobs, or education or some other factor, this report assumes that there is no 'key' and instead asserts that a gamut of problems must be dealt with simultaneously and with equal vigor."[21] With a variety of issues needing to be addressed to win the war against poverty, the HDC concluded that a "comprehensive approach" was necessary that targeted "five basic areas: transfer payments for persons presently on welfare but still in poverty; employment; special services such as legal aid, family planning, adult education, and similar programs; and education."[22] However, the report also noted that money alone would not bring victory against poverty. The report stated that "money is one of a number of factors that must be dealt with before the problem can be solved. For instance, if money was appropriated to adequately train hard core unemployed Negroes, but employers persisted in their discriminatory hiring practices, then money alone would not have been able to solve the problem."[23]

Interestingly, this HDC report on the costs of eliminating poverty in St. Louis echoed the "guns and butter" argument that surrounded the War on Poverty and Vietnam War. Specifically, the report states, "this proposal comes at a propitious time, however, since it is possible that a large amount of federal tax resources may be free as a result of the deescalation of the war in Vietnam. Direct federal expenditures in Vietnam are estimated at approximately $30 billion a year, and there are probably several billions extra in hidden expenses, such as increased service for the national debt, increased veterans payments, and increased governmental costs because of the war caused inflation. Proposals here must therefore be viewed in light as not necessarily calling for a tax increase, but simply calling for less of a tax decrease following the war."[24] This report concludes that the total federal subsidy for the elimination of poverty in St. Louis would be $386

million per year, and "in St. Louis the program would serve approximately 85,000 families, or a total of 255,000 persons." The report goes on to estimate that the number of poor in St. Louis was roughly 1 percent of the total poor in the country. Thus, the report suggests "extending the program nationwide would therefore cost one hundred times the cost of the St. Louis program, or $38,600,000,000. This would be the first year cost, and is probably about equal to the direct and hidden costs of the Vietnam War."[25] Put simply, the report suggested that the War on Poverty could be won if the money invested in the war in Vietnam were redirected to the domestic war against poverty.

In 1971 the HDC issued another report entitled "Social and Economic Poverty: St. Louis Metropolitan Area, Causes, Conditions and Recommendations, 1971." In this report the HDC offered several general "causes" of poverty in St. Louis. These causes included, "ineffectiveness and low participation of poor people (Black and white) within the active political power base; pervasive white racism; evident lack of significant alternatives for the living conditions of the poor; inadequate local, state, and federal commitment to solving the problems of poor people, especially in urban areas; technological advancement which has reduced availability of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs through automation; fragmented and ineffective poverty area social welfare services."[26] The report went on to list several "specific conditions" of poverty in the area. These conditions included, "high unemployment; low educational opportunity and achievement; high death and disease rates; food price inflation; high cost of living; housing discrimination and deterioration; and deceptive retailing practices."[27]

Included in this 1971 report were several additional recommendations for the elimination of poverty in St. Louis. For example, the report stated, "essential to the elimination of poverty in the St. Louis city and county areas, is a broadening of opportunity and freedom of choice in at least three specific areas."[28] These areas included jobs, housing, and education. In particular, the report noted, "ghetto residents should be helped to gain the skills and the transportation needed to obtain newly developed jobs throughout the Metropolitan area. New employment opportunities should also be developed in and near their neighborhoods." With regard to housing the report suggested, "the poor should have access to good housing throughout the city and county of St. Louis to which they can move if they so choose. There should be housing rehabilitation and new construction in the inner city." The HDC's recommendations for education included, "equal educational quality and opportunity (as indicated by dollars per pupil; teacher academic and experience background; equal pupil loads; and special curricula as developed and chosen by students and parents) should

be enforced."[29] Finally, the HDC noted that "pursuant to the above rec-
ommendations, cooperation of more economically endowed people, and
development of decentralization of community services and institutions are
necessary."[30]

Furthermore, the HDC scrutinized the government's commitment to
eliminating poverty, criticizing government spending as contributing to and
perpetuating poverty. In its report, "Social and Economic Poverty: St. Louis
Metropolitan Area, Causes, Conditions and Recommendations, 1971" the
HDC argued, "local state, and federal government spending structures may
also be viewed as perpetuating both causes and conditions of poverty. These
budgets should be the first and foremost instruments for the development of
a long range consistent drive to eliminate poverty. But governmental bud-
gets do not allocate sufficient anti-poverty monies. Governmental officials
are not responsive to poverty conditions and do not marshal our Ameri-
can economic and moral strength for the full and effective attack on the
basic causes of social and economic poverty in this country."[31] The HDC
also contended, "there appears to be a lack of collective will to solve our
problems, a lack of sense of urgency for change, failure of governmental
and other institutions to involve people in the decision making processes,
and an inability to get the job done. Such a callous attitude toward the
less fortunate American cannot be allowed to continue."[32] Such criticism
drew reaction from local political leaders, including Father Cervantes of the
Catholic Church and brother of the Mayor, who speaking on behalf of the
Mayor, denounced the HDC for its criticism of government commitment
to the War on Poverty and for sending out this "propaganda" on HDC
stationery.[33]

As an official CAA, HDC was charged with the task of eliminating
poverty in the St. Louis area. However, as a CAA, the HDC was affected
by the limits and problems inherent within the very concept of "community
action" and the larger debates surrounding the War on Poverty. Specifically,
the HDC General Manager, Samuel Bernstein, who assumed this position
on November 15, 1965, stated in his November 1965 report to the Board
of Directors, "the law implied that it is not enough to change the poor by
teaching them new skills and improving their education, but that the pov-
erty programs must also work to change society. For this reason, there was
bound to be tension because action is sometimes responsible and at other
times it is not."[34] Bernstein went on to note, "across the country, there has
been confusion, emotional reactions, fear, and vacillation to this question of
social change. Sooner or later, one must have a clear understanding of any
problem and at least some general guidelines for dealing with problems.
Until this is done, each staff member and lay leader can only react from his

personal framework which may be sound or unsound."[35] As Bernstein's remarks point out, neighborhood districts had their own agendas for the War on Poverty and implemented programs that often conflicted with the OEO's ideal notion of community action.

The HDC ran into additional problems in early 1966 when St. Louis began participating in the Model Cities Program. On January 27, 1966, President Johnson proposed to Congress the creation of the Federal Demonstration Cities Program and in the spring of 1966 Congress approved this proposal. The Program, "committed the government to assist comprehensive programs for rebuilding slum and blighted areas, as well as to provide public facilities and services necessary to improve the general welfare of the people who live in those areas."[36] The Model Cities Program was overseen by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) but local planning and implementation "was to be under the auspices of the city government in those cities that were designated by HUD as Demonstration Cities."[37] Two days after Johnson proposed the Demonstration Cities Program to Congress Mayor Cervantes applied to the program.[38]

On December 2, 1966, St. Louis became a Model City as Mayor Cervantes announced the appointment of A. Donald Bourgeois, Deputy General of HDC, as the new Director of Model City Affairs.[39] Tension between the HDC and Model City Agency developed almost immediately, as both programs were essentially designed to perform the same task, to eliminate poverty in St. Louis.[40] Charged with the same purpose, the HDC and Model City Agency fought and competed over resources, support, and staff. With the development of the MCA, the HDC became concerned that it "would establish the same type of citizen participation organizations which would become a duplication of effort and which would create strong competition between these groups."[41] In addition, HDC argued that, "as the established poverty agency in St. Louis," it should in fact oversee the Model City Agency and "to operate much of the program through its district stations."[42] HDC went on to establish specific guidelines to clearly define its relationship with the Model City Agency. These guidelines clarified responsibilities and jurisdiction to prevent "duplication of effort" and competition.[43] Despite greater clarification of responsibilities and jurisdiction, relations between the two agencies remained tense.

The HDC faced competition from the Model City Agency and local reaction to its scrutiny of federal commitment to the War on Poverty. However, the Office of Economic Opportunity believed HDC was one of the best Community Action Agencies in the country. For example, the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* reported, "the OEO considers St. Louis poverty programs among the best nationally because of two things: one, there have been no

scandals here and, so far, little political interference here. Two, a sizable number of programs, costing many millions, have actually got started here, both more programs and more money than most other cities of comparable size."[44] According to Locke, "one reason Mayor Cervantes did not attempt to control the program was the basic structure of the organization which permitted him only to name members to the Board of Directors from a list of nominations supplied by the Board itself."[45] Specific programs introduced to St. Louis by the OEO will be discussed in the following discussion of Black Capitalism.

While the OEO praised the HDC as one of the leading Community Action Agencies in the country, local activists were not so quick to endorse the local War on Poverty agency. For example, Percy Green, chairman of ACTION (Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes), argued in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* "that the Human Development Corporation is incapable of identifying with 'the brother,' the man in the ghetto."[46] In addition, Green echoed criticism of the War on Poverty that it co-opted civil rights leadership and drained resources from an already beleaguered local movement. Green asserted, "leaders within the Negro community are themselves considered by many to be badly fragmented and ineffectual. The politicians are divided. The clergy have, so some lament, provided no leadership. The civil rights groups, in the opinion of many, are feeble, unable to attract a following or make an impact. Always limited in numbers, rarely able to work together, they have lost a number of key persons to the antipoverty program and to politics. This has been particularly true of CORE. Its leaders object that HDC has preempted the energies and compromised the independence of once active members."[47] While it is true that numerous activists left local liberation organizations to work in War on Poverty programs, many others allied with the federal government in their struggle for African American liberation, self determination, and autonomy through Black Capitalism.

In early 1969 the *St. Louis Argus* reported on the growing trend of public and private support for the development of African American business enterprises in St. Louis. Specifically, the *Argus* reported, "the beginning of the new year has brought new grants to the community to help Black businessmen expand, improve, and initiate new businesses. More training programs have been funded, geared to teach hard core employables means and ways of becoming integrated into the vast labor market. Big business and industry have lent their successful methods to projects directed to the economic life of the community. These resources have included executive level advice and direction, expert cooperation in building solid business foundations, and other necessary aids in building Black capitalism."[48]

In addition, the *Argus* praised Mayor Cervantes for this new interest and enthusiasm for local African American economic development stating, "Mayor Cervantes has been a major factor in involving the business community in the social welfare problems that must be eliminated in order for the city to develop on a broad wholesome scale."[49]

In this instance Black Capitalism represented public and private support for Black business development. However Black Capitalism had several additional interpretations and representations. Specifically, the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* reported, "one reason for the divergent views on the potential of Black Capitalism is that different individuals ascribe to it different goals. Some see it as a means of building economic power in the ghetto with Black-owned businesses providing jobs for Black employees. Others see it as a way for the Negro to gain identity and personal dignity in a society that has placed much emphasis on materialism and economic independence. Still others see Black Capitalism as a branch movement of the Black Power philosophy that turns thumbs down on integration in favor of Black controlled enclaves within the white community."[50]

For Robert Allen and Eldridge Cleaver, Black Capitalism was not a means of building Black economic power, identity, or dignity but a program of neo-colonialism. On the other hand, members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) including James Farmer, Floyd McKissick, Roy Innis, and Clarence Hodges, asserted that Black Capitalism offered the means for African Americans to achieve the "American Dream." An examination of Black Capitalism in the 1960s and '70s illuminates the continuity of several central components to the more expansive concept of Black Nationalism. It is important to emphasize that while Black economic power, identity, dignity, economic independence, self sufficiency, and self determination lay at the heart of some definitions of Black Capitalism, these goals have always defined the goals of the Black liberation struggle. In other words, while some advocates of Black Capitalism in the 1960s and '70s endorsed these larger goals, African Americans and people of African descent throughout the world have always fought against economic exploitation and for economic power, identity, dignity, self sufficiency, and self determination.

Black Capitalism emerged on the national political landscape in response to the increased presence of Black Nationalism in the national civil rights agenda, the limits of civil rights legislation to improve the lives of most African Americans, and the outbreak of urban rebellions throughout the country in the mid and late 1960s. For example, the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* reported, "after the Negro riots in the Watts section of Los Angeles in August 1965, members of the steering committee of Civic Progress, Inc., designated civil rights as the major community problem in St. Louis.

A committee was named to monitor the problem and to determine how the organization could help."[51] Moreover, Robert Allen asserts, Black Capitalism "was designed to counter the potentially revolutionary thrust of the recent Black rebellions in major cities across the country. This program was formulated by America's corporate elite, the major owners, managers, and directors of the giant corporations, banks, and foundations which increasingly dominate the economy and society as a whole, because they believe that the urban revolts pose a serious threat to economic and social stability . . . the corporations are attempting with considerable success to co-opt the Black Power movement. Their strategy is to equate Black Power with Black Capitalism."[52]

Whether promoted by Black organizations, corporate elites, or the federal government, it is important to again emphasize the point that encouragement and support for the development of African American business and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit was not new to the 1960s and '70s. Rather, this has deeper historical roots. For example, Paul Cuffe and James Forten built highly successful ship manufacturing businesses in the early nineteenth century. In 1827, Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm created the first African American newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*. Of course, building upon this history, more recent examples of successful African American media outlets include Black Entertainment Television, Johnson Publishing, and Russell Simmon's Def Jam Records. Perhaps the most significant example of African American media success is Oprah Winfrey's HARPO Production, *O*, and Oxygen Media. In addition, Annie Malone and C.J. Walker built fortunes in the cosmetics industry in the early twentieth century. Moreover, the connection between African American entrepreneurial success and civil rights was promoted by Booker T. Washington's Negro Business League. Created in 1900, the Negro Business League promoted a "classical" brand of free competition, individualism, work ethic, and morality.[53]

Marcus Garvey added a nationalist element to Washington's philosophy that economic ingenuity, integrity, and hard work would bring civil rights rewards to African Americans. Through the Universal Negro Improvement Association, Garvey aimed to develop a self sufficient Black economy independent of white capital. Institutions created to accomplish this goal included the Black Star Line, Negro Factory Corporation, Black Cross Nurses, and *The Negro World*.

Mirroring Garvey's plan for a self sufficient Black economy, the Nation of Islam, under the leadership of Elijah Muhammad, similarly built independent Black businesses. Political Scientist Dean E. Robinson states, "[Elijah] Muhammad, like Garvey, adopted a model of capitalistic

self help. His followers did not seek a greater slice of the pie of economic opportunity. They attempted to establish a separate economy."[54] The NOI also reflected Washington's philosophy that Black economic self sufficiency would encourage self confidence, dignity, a strong work ethic, and "moral 'rehabilitation.'"[55] As previously noted, by the 1950s the St. Louis Nation of Islam, like other NOI temples throughout the country, established several businesses to serve the local African American community. Businesses created by the Nation of Islam demonstrated and encouraged local community autonomy, Black self sufficiency, and self determination.

Local Black Capitalism initiatives received an important boost in March 1969 with the opening of the Interracial Council for Business Opportunity (ICBO). William E. Douthit, Director of the St. Louis Urban League, was appointed Acting Chairman of ICBO in St. Louis. The ICBO was originally created in 1964 in New York City by the New York Urban League and the American Jewish Congress. ICBO co-chairmen were Rodman Rockefeller, son of the New York governor, and Harvey Russell, vice president of community relations for PepsiCo., Inc. Before coming to St. Louis in 1969, the ICBO had already established branches in New York, Newark, New Orleans, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C.[56]

The ICBO received its funding for national programs from the Ford and Rockefeller foundations and other corporations, while the local ICBO received a start up grant of $25,000 from the Danforth Foundation.[57] This money was used to hire a local staff and to begin the process of "consultation" between local African American and white business leaders.

It should be noted that initial planning for the creation of a St. Louis ICBO branch had begun earlier in June 1968 when Rodman Rockefeller and Harvey C. Russell, National Co-Chairmen of ICBO, along with National President William R. Hodgins and Executive Director Darwin W. Bolden traveled to St. Louis on October 20, 1968 to meet with local civic leaders interested in enhancing local African American businesses enterprises. In 1970 the ICBO received $47,000 from the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration and the Danforth Foundation gave an additional $50,000 in 1971 and $80,000 in 1972.[58]

The Danforth Foundation was created in 1927 by Mr. and Mrs. William H. Danforth of St. Louis. The stated purpose of the Foundation was "to give aid and encouragement to persons and to emphasize the humane values that come from a religious and democratic heritage. The Foundation seeks to serve these purposes through activity in education and urban affairs. In education, emphasis is placed upon secondary schools, colleges, and universities in the United States, especially on the liberal arts and sciences. In urban affairs, activities are limited largely to the St. Louis

metropolitan area and priority is given to projects having an educational character."[59] By and large the Danforth Foundation provided grants "to schools, colleges, universities, and other public and private agencies that reflected the Foundation's purpose."[60] Members of the Danforth Foundation included Dr. John B. Ervin, Dean of Washington University's School of Continuing Education and Summer School; George S. McGovern, U.S. Senator from South Dakota; and Frederic M. Pierce, President General American Life Insurance Company and President of Civic Progress, Inc. St. Louis.

As Robert Allen asserts in his work, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*, the Danforth Foundation, like the Ford Foundation, was also concerned with protecting their interests in the tranquility of the country's urban centers which was threatened by the Black revolts.[61] Specifically, the Danforth Foundation stated in its publication, "The Urban Program of the Danforth Foundation: The First Three Years," "the decision to enter the urban field . . . was also a response to the distress and turmoil of the city. We proposed to give attention to problems of the inner city, and to people of the ghettoes who are denied participation as full citizens, politically, economically, and socially."[62] Moreover, the Danforth Foundation was concerned with improving not only the conditions of "people of the ghettoes" but was similarly interested in improving race relations in general. The Foundation stated, "no less interested were we, however, with the problems of suburbia, and with those who do the denying. Our concern was and is the whole metropolis, and the attitudes of Blacks and whites, rich and poor, young and old, everybody. In the view of the Foundation, the city, like the campus, is a setting in which basic values are at stake. The metropolis today represents a challenge to which an organization with purposes such as those of the Danforth Foundation cannot fail to respond."[63]

To improve race relations the Foundation focused on what it called "community reconciliation." For example, the Foundation stated that "community reconciliation points to the need for overcoming racial tensions and for reversing the tendency toward polarization. The Foundation has supported cooperative programs that bring Blacks and white together, that seek to give a more unified voice to Blacks on issues concerning them and the welfare of the metropolitan region, and that promote more equal treatment and more opportunity for Black people to participate in the full life of the city. Efforts have also been aimed at making changes in the structures and practices that stem from or perpetuate racial discrimination."[64] The Foundation went on to state, "St. Louis is fortunate in possessing able leaders across a broad spectrum of occupations, religions, and races, and its tradition is that they work together for the betterment of the metropolitan

region. The city has its share of heartbreaking situations, and of recalcitrant citizens who want to do nothing about them, but if any city can hope to survive the urban crisis St. Louis seems to have a good chance."[65]

Danforth Foundation grants, as related to programs discussed in this work, included, The Arrowhead Foundation, Inc. which provided $25,000 to the Jeff Vander Lou, Inc. in 1968 for "home maintenance and education program for inner city families." The HDC received $3,105 in 1969 for "support of Economic Development Conference for HDC neighborhood districts." In 1969 the Foundation gave $4,000 to the Human Relations Commission of East St. Louis for a "sensitivity training workshop for citizens and policemen." In 1970 the Institute of Black Studies received $300 for "sponsorship of one day conference on 'Poverty, Racism and Power.'" The Mid-City Community Congress received $40,000 in 1969 to "assist community development agency in program implementation," and also received $5,000 in 1970 to "assist in organizational phase of the Mid-City Cultural Center." The Foundation gave $5,478 in 1969 to University of Missouri, St. Louis for the programs "Supervisory Development for Black Workers" and "Black Entrepreneurship—Management Development." Operation Family in East St. Louis received $50,000 in 1969 and 1970 for a "program to encourage communication between Blacks and whites." The St. Louis Council of Black People received $60,000 in 1968 and 1971 for "program of cooperation among local Black organizations to increase citizen participation in decision making processes." In 1971 the St. Louis Regional Industrial Development Corporation received $21,200 for the "Jobs in the Ghetto" program aimed at job development, and St. Louis University received $1,000 in 1969 for a "bibliographic survey of the historical role of Blacks in the city of St. Louis."[66]

Moreover, in 1966 the Ford Foundation provided a $300,000 grant to Washington University to encourage business development, job training, and management within the local African American community. According to the *Globe Democrat* this "bold new project [was designed] to prepare ambitious Negro students for careers in corporate management."[67] The grant provided each student with a two-year full tuition scholarship and a $2,500 a year stipend for living expenses.[68] In 1968 this program entered its second phase with an additional $100,000 Ford Foundation grant.[69] This second phase included summer internships that would provide "on the job training with major business firms across the country."[70] Fifty six firms participated in the summer internship program which included Monsanto, Ralston Purina, Union electric, TWA, Union Carbide, American Metal Climax, and Du Pont. Along with Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Wisconsin and University of Indiana also participated in the

program. Twenty students, divided between the three schools, completed the first year of training. Of these initial twenty students seventeen found part time employment, two continued with the second phase or summer internship phase of the program, and one found full-time employment.[71]

Another local Black Capitalism initiative for job training and employment in the African American community was created in April 1968. The new program was announced by chief executive officer of Emerson Electric Company and chairman of Civic Progress, W.R. Persons at the lavish Chase Park Plaza Hotel. The new program, named B.Y.U., after its primary participants, local businesses, the YMCA, and St. Louis Urban League, hoped to address specific issues of employment in St. Louis. Specifically, working with a professional staff of about twenty, the program aimed at job recruitment, "improved screening for the unemployed, counseling or job orientation, job development and placement, and job follow-up."[72] B.Y.U. received its funding from a Danforth Foundation start-up grant of $300,000.[73]

Another program designed to promote African American businesses was Partners in Progress. In general, this program was designed, "to encourage Negro business ownership and thus provide stability to inner city neighborhoods." Specifically, Partners in Progress was created by the Big Signal Broadcasting Company that owned local radio stations KXLW and KADL, two FM radio stations aimed at local African American consumers. The program, started in late August 1968, helped new African American businesses produce advertisements that would run free of charge on both stations for thirteen weeks. By October 1968 the program was providing free ads to fifteen businesses. According to the Big Signal Broadcasting, the program offered a valuable service to entrepreneurs who had invested so much of their money in starting their business that they had little capital left for advertising. Thus the program provided them with this initial advertising. The only criteria were that they be new businesses, African American owned, and "have the potential for hiring and training others in the immediate neighborhood." Businesses involved in the program included a floral shop, car stereo store, dry cleaners, exterminator, printing firm, barber shop, and restaurant.[74]

The University of Missouri, St. Louis was the recipient of a $10,500 grant through the Federal Higher Education Act of 1965. This program, aimed at African American entrepreneurs, was also designed to teach management skills. Dr. Stanley L. Sokolik, Professor of Management at UMSL, was the program director. The program selected thirty individuals to participate in the year-long program. These individuals were recruited through the Small Business Administration, St. Louis Municipal Business

Development Commission, the Interracial Council for Business Opportunity (ICBO) and the Union-Sarah Economic Development Corporation associated with the HDC.[75]

As these examples illustrate, public and private support for Black Capitalism rested on the goals of improving race relations and improving job training and employment. However, many also interpreted these initiatives as measures to prevent large scale violence in areas of major corporate interests. As Robert Allen states, "the urban uprisings of 1967 made it painfully obvious to America's corporate leaders that the 'race problem' was out of control and posed a potential threat to the continued existence of the present society."[76] Thus, "law and order" or more specifically, riot control, was one of the primary motives of Black Capitalism initiatives. As Weems and Randolph clearly state, "'Black Capitalism' offered U.S. Black militants a monetary incentive to move away from notions of 'Burn Baby Burn.'"[77]

While public and private interests aimed to neutralize the Black Power threat to law and order by offering a "piece of the American pie" through job training and employment programs, federal grants were also provided to local law enforcement agencies to strengthen their ability to maintain "law and order." For example, on September 3, 1968 through the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, the United States Department of Justice distributed $3,900,000 to forty states. Missouri received $99,596 "for riot prevention and control" and the state legislature provided and additional $132,787 in state funds to this effort. According to the *Post Dispatch*, most of this money was to be spent for riot control equipment.[78]

In addition, on October 23, 1968 the Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, headed by Patrick V. Murphy, was created. Upon its inception the Administration appropriated $2,500,000 in grants to thirty-three states to help develop new law enforcement and crime prevention programs on both the state and local level.[79] Through this grant program Missouri received $81,830 while its neighboring state Illinois received $166,610 (grants were determined by state population). States were to use this grant money to create a "law enforcement planning agency with a permanent staff, supervised by a board of representatives of the entire system of law enforcement and units of local government."[80]

By 1968 CORE, under the national leadership of Floyd McKissick and Roy Innis, endorsed Black Capitalism.[81] Like the national organization, St. Louis CORE also promoted Black Capitalism initiatives in the St. Louis area. For example, on August 26 and 27, 1969, St. Louis CORE held what the *St. Louis Argus* called a Black Capitalism seminar.[82] Officially called a Management Conference, St. Louis CORE invited local African American

business owners to the seminar where they would receive training in business management from civic leaders including Clarence Hodges of CORE; Jim Ashley, St. Louis Manager of Southwestern Bell; Dr. Stuart Taylor, Southern Illinois University professor; Dolph Von Arx, Vice President Ralston Purina; Timothy Person, President of Person Moving and Storage Company; Marco Gilliam, Southwestern Bell Public Relations Department.[83]

Local CORE Chairman Clarence Hodges explained the local affiliate's endorsement of Black Capitalism stating, "build, baby, build" is the new motto of CORE.[84] Hodges asserted that CORE was now concerned with developing and implementing "constructive programs to rebuild the ghetto." According to the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, Hodges suggested that "civil disobedience, marches, picketing, and confrontations with police have captured the headlines in the civil rights movement in recent years, overshadowing a number of constructive programs to rebuild the ghetto."[85] In addition, Hodges added that direct action protests would continue to serve as major tactics of the movement, however, "the future of the civil rights movement is in racial cooperation rather than confrontation."[86] In the fall of 1969 Hodges announced that he was resigning as Chairman of St. Louis CORE. Like Floyd McKissick, who left the national office to pursue a personal business venture, Hodges, according to the *St. Louis Argus*, left CORE to finish school and to establish a "business firm with offices in New York, Chicago, as well as St. Louis."[87] Hodges was replaced by Donald Gammon who had previously served as St. Louis CORE's Vice President and Chairman of the Employment Committee.

CORE's support for Black Capitalism was also a reaction to the perceived failure of the War on Poverty to improve the lives of African Americans. This was reflected in the group's support for a Black Capitalism bill proposed by Republican Representative Thomas B. Curtis of St. Louis. The Community Development Corporation Act was designed to filter money from local corporations into "poor neighborhoods" in St. Louis. Specifically, Curtis stated, "earnings generated by the corporations would be used for neighborhood service programs such as youth employment, recreation, basic education and training, home ownership and credit counseling, family planning, day care centers for working mothers, and the like."[88] Curtis criticized federal poverty programs as largely unsuccessful, arguing that private interests working in conjunction with the African American community could better serve the War on Poverty. Curtis argued that poverty should be attacked through holistic local ventures that contributed to the development and growth of all facets within African American neighborhoods, including the growth of African American businesses, education, community development, and crime prevention. Such faith in the private

sector's ability to fight poverty was echoed by CORE leaders Danny Gant and Edmond Boston who criticized federal anti-poverty programs as a "flop" and asserted that "federal anti-poverty programs have failed to draw the poor into the American economic system as earners, producers, owners, and entrepreneurs."[89] Leading the local private sector's charge against poverty was Civic Progress.

The federal government defined urban renewal as "the name given to the National effort to help cities revitalize residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial districts which are blighted or are beginning to show signs of age and deterioration. It is an official plan of action utilizing private, local, and federal resources to assist cities in solving problems of sub-standard housing and depressed business areas."[90] Urban renewal began in St. Louis in 1933 with the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (otherwise known as the Gateway Arch) which was the "first federally assisted program for the city."[91] Additional urban renewal projects in St. Louis include the Stadium Project (Busch Stadium); the development of the Mill Creek Valley area, the West-End area, Grandel and DeSoto-Carr area, and LaSalle Park.[92]

Civic Progress was comprised of the city's leading corporate elites who, with the help of Mayor Raymond Tucker in the early 1950s, won the passage of a $110.6 million civic improvement bond. One of the first projects created by Civic Progress was the construction of the infamous Pruitt-Igoe housing project completed in 1956.[93] Between 1960 and 1965, Civic Progress was also responsible for the construction of over 6,000 new housing units. However, over 12,000 additional houses were destroyed by Civic Progress to make way for highway expansion, commercial developments, and expensive housing.[94] In addition, according to an October 1968 report by the Action/Housing Department of the Human Development Corporation, "from April 1967 to April 1969, 2,700 families in the city were estimated displaced by Urban Renewal."[95] Along with providing funds for housing and commercial developments, the Civic Progress bond provided tax breaks to those who invested in city development.

As has been previously stated, Black Capitalism emerged as a reaction of both public and private interests to urban rebellions in the mid 1960s. The *Post Dispatch* reported, "after the Negro riots in the Watts section of Los Angeles in August 1965, members of the steering committee of Civic Progress, Inc., designated civil rights as the major community problem in St. Louis. A committee was named to monitor the problem and to determine how the organization could help."[96] One should take notice of the fact that Civic Progress representatives served on the boards of

several local Black Capitalism initiatives. For example, Chairman of Civic Progress, W.R. Persons, launched the B.Y.U. program, while the president of Civic Progress, Frederic M. Pierce, served on the board of the Danforth Foundation, one of the leading foundations that funded Black Capitalism ventures in St. Louis.

In addition, Civic Progress supported management and job training programs in St. Louis. For example, Civic Progress received a $278,128 grant from the Labor Department's Bureau of Apprenticeship Training from November 1966 to April 1967, and an additional grant of $78,000 from the Office of Economic Opportunity to implement Work Opportunities Unlimited. This program was mirrored after Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a youth employment program created in 1965 by the Industrial Relations Club of Greater St. Louis. Work Opportunities Unlimited was established at 1700 South Second Street with a staff of twenty five. WOU was designed to work with the Human Development Corporation to train and find employment for unemployed individuals in the St. Louis area. Specifically, WOU received the names of unemployed individuals from the neighborhood districts associated with the HDC. These individuals would then receive job training, employment, and follow-up through the WOU program. Upon its inception the WOU filled 110 jobs, which led the *Post Dispatch* to praise the program as a successful example of private contributions to the War on Poverty.[97]

On the surface Black Capitalism, as promoted by corporate elites and government officials, appeared to champion the cause of African American empowerment. However, according to its critics, Black Capitalism was a "Machiavellian" plan to co-opt "Black militants" and "preserve law and order." Weems and Randolph argue that Nixon perceived Black Nationalism as a "threat to the internal security of the United States" and therefore consciously promoted Black Capitalism as a strategy to neutralize this perceived threat.[98] In other words, Black Capitalism would neutralize the threat of Black Nationalism by "offering Blacks a substantial 'piece' of the proverbial American 'pie' through government and private sector programs to promote Black business development, along with claiming the compatibility of Blacks' growing sense of racial pride and self assurance with the doctrines of free enterprise."[99] The *Post Dispatch* similarly noted, "Black Capitalism, an economic system in which Negroes own and manage business ventures, is seen as one way to cut the Negro in on a piece of the free enterprise action."[100]

For Robert Allen and Eldridge Cleaver, Black Capitalism was a program of neo-colonialism. For example, Allen states, "in the United States today a program of domestic neo-colonialism is rapidly advancing. It was

designed to counter the potentially revolutionary thrust of the recent Black rebellions in major cities across the country. This program was formulated by America's corporate elite, the major owners, managers, and directors of the giant corporations, banks, and foundations which increasingly dominate the economy and society as a whole, because they believe that the urban revolts pose a serious threat to economic and social stability. Led by such organizations as the Ford Foundation, the Urban Coalition, and National Alliance of Businessmen, the corporatists are attempting with considerable success to co-opt the Black Power movement. Their strategy is to equate Black Power with Black Capitalism."[101]

Cleaver similarly asserts, "we regard this as the advent of the neo-colonialist phase of our peculiar situation in the United States because it corresponds to the moment the colonial power decides to grant a measure of independence to the colony and replace the colonial regime with a regime of puppets. And this is what they're doing now in the United States by pulling certain levels of the Black bourgeoisie into the power structure and developing for them a vested interest in the capitalist system. So these really defiant positions, the people who pretended to be evolutionary, are accepting funds."[102]

Furthermore, reminiscent of E. Franklin Frazier's critique of the Black middle class, Allen contended that corporate-sponsored job training programs for the "hardcore" unemployed were essentially a scheme by corporate elites to create a "Black elite which can administer the ghettoes." In other words, these programs were designed to co-opt a class of Black leaders responsive to corporate interests and remove potential rioters from the streets by placing them in job training programs. As Allen points out, corporate elites believed that giving African Americans a small place at the table was better than sharing the food or taking drastic and violent steps to prevent them from overturning the table. Allen states, "from a corporate viewpoint, this strategy is more efficient, less costly, and more profitable, than either traditional welfare state-ism or massive repression."[103]

The *St. Louis Argus* also published a scathing critique of Black Capitalism by Clarence Funnye, Director of Planning for the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, Inc. and former Chairman of New York CORE. In "Model Cities and Poverty Programs Called 'Plantations,'" Funnye argues that Model City Programs gave "the illusion of movement, cooling the ghetto, even involving the militant separatists, while in fact, often aggravating the basic problem."[104] Funnye echoed criticism of the War on Poverty as neo-colonialism and argued that it co-opted already scarce resources from the Black liberation struggle. For example, he states, "such self help plans as Model Cities and the poverty programs as presently

conducted reinforce the ghetto, a 'latter day plantation,' and diverts Black leaders from the real sources of power."[105] Thus, Funnye called for such programs to be replaced by "a new, higher form of militancy, one that avoids getting snared in the diversionary Model Cities trap and one that keeps an eye on the big ball where the power is, and that's not in a model neighborhood headquarters."[106]

The *Argus* published another editorial that assailed Black Capitalism and its local initiatives entitled "When Will We Wake Up?" This editorial blasted Black Capitalism and the HDC, stating, "the biggest joke perpetuated on the Negro community in recent years, is the numerous programs announced by various organized groups and professional businessmen, in cooperation with several civic organizations active in community affairs and HDC agencies, designed and directed to assisting Negro businessmen in enlarging, improving, and expanding their business."[108] The editorial concludes that such efforts "appear to be an imperative step toward productive potential, it has failed to materialize in the Negro economic world."[109]

By the mid and late 1960s, many government officials, private interests, and civil rights leaders equated Black Power with Black Capitalism. This was done to fulfill a variety of agendas and goals. Examination of local interpretations and uses of Black Capitalism raises important questions of the meaning of Black Power, the material basis for civil and human rights, the power of the pocketbook, and economic leverage or coercion to force change. In addition, considering Black Capitalism as neo-colonialism illuminates larger trans-national elements of Black Power that link all people of African descent through a shared experience of economic exploitation and economic empowerment.

Black Capitalism and the War on Poverty threatened to undermine the Black Power movement by co-opting its precious resources and, as Allen, Cleaver and others argue, create a puppet regime of middle class African Americans responsive to corporate elites who would maintain law and order, thus protecting their interests at the expense of African American interests. While these programs continue to spark intense debate, the Black liberation struggle faced a more formidable and overt enemy in the Cold War.

Chapter Eight

Black Power Challenged: The Cold War, the FBI, and the Communist Threat

Federal investigation of Black America began during World War One and after the Great Migration, a massive migratory shift of the African American population from southern communities to northern urban areas. Suspicion of African American loyalty peaked in the wake of wide scale racial violence that occurred throughout the country in the late 1910s. For example, on July 2, 1917, East St. Louis, Illinois experienced one of the worst race riots in history. A result of the Great Migration of African Americans into East St. Louis, the riot left several African Americans and whites dead and several hundred more wounded and displaced with the massive destruction of property. In addition, the summer of 1919, referred to as "Red Summer," witnessed twenty six riots throughout the country, resulting in hundreds of deaths and injuries and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of property destruction.

Later examination of these riots confirmed that these were incidents of white aggression directed against African Americans. Yet at the time these incidents occurred, the skin color of the aggressors and victims was distorted by racist assumptions and paranoia that these incidents were the work of Communists who had preyed on the assumed ignorance and naiveté of African Americans to promote their own agenda. While the summer of 1919 was dubbed Red Summer to convey a sense of the level of violence, it alludes to the government's suspicion that Communists were in fact responsible for inspiring and manipulating the riots. A pattern that would play out time and again throughout the Black liberation struggle, the federal government blamed and targeted Communists for inspiring

and manipulating racial issues, promoting domestic unrest for their own agenda.

During the Red Scare and after, there was a basic assertion by the FBI that any and all groups and individuals promoting social change were un-American. This was particularly the case for African American civil right efforts. For example, scholar Kenneth O'Reilly articulated the FBI's assumption that African Americans were inherently subversive and prone to anti-American activities by stating, "concluding that second class citizens would have second class loyalty, the FBI dismissed every Black dissident as subversive, every criticism of American policy as un-American."[1] Historian Theodore Kornweibel also states, "during the war many whites had believed that African Americans were less than wholeheartedly patriotic and were particular targets of enemy subversion, easily duped into acts of disloyalty."[2] This seemingly automatic connection between social change and un-American activities would also serve as the bedrock of government reaction to the post World War Two struggle for civil rights, which drew similar criticism and suspicion as an anti-American and even communist inspired threat. As a direct outgrowth of the post World War Two Cold War, these concerns ultimately promoted and justified federal and local repression of those individuals and organizations that worked for social change in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the racial climate that brought overwhelming praise to D.W. Griffith's film, *Birth of a Nation*, President Wilson's segregation of the federal government in Washington D.C. in April 1913, Red Summer, the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan, anger and disillusionment among African American troops returning from European war theaters to find Jim Crow as entrenched in U.S. society as before the war, and a new wave of African American consciousness and celebration of culture termed the Harlem Renaissance, the federal government became suspicious of African American loyalty in the 1910s and 1920s, fearing that communists were secretly pulling the strings of Black America for their own advantage.

Thus, the FBI, immediately following the summer of 1919, initiated a systematic investigation of Black America. As O'Reilly points out, "Bureau field offices across the country covered 'the Negro question' systematically, recruiting 'reliable Negroes' as informants."[3] Information was gathered from government informants in African American institutions that included the NAACP, fraternal organizations, African American religious groups and leaders, "and anyone else who preached 'social equality' and 'equal rights.'"[4] Information garnered from these informants was collected under the Justice Department's General Intelligence Division (GID), headed by twenty four year old J. Edgar Hoover.

The first individual targeted by FBI/GID investigation into the so-called Negro Question was Marcus Garvey. According to Kornweibel, "no Black militant drew more investigation and surveillance by the Military Intelligence Division, State Department, and Bureau of Investigation in the Red Scare years than Marcus Garvey."[5] On August 1, 1920 Garvey held the first national convention of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), his nationalist organization that promoted Black self determination under the slogan, "Up You Mighty Race." Garvey's nationalist vision included the creation of Black business enterprises, a league of nurses, and a steamship line. This ambitious program drew suspicion and harsh reaction from government officials including Hoover, who called him "the foremost radical among his race."[6] On June 21, 1923 Garvey was indicted and found guilty of using the mail to defraud by selling stock in his Black Star Steamship Ship Line through the U.S. mail. On February 8, 1925 he was transported to a federal prison in Atlanta, Georgia to begin his five year sentence. After serving two years, President Coolidge commuted his sentence and Garvey was subsequently deported from the United States to Jamaica. After continued efforts to revive the UNIA in Jamaica and England, Garvey died in London in 1940. It is important to point out that the FBI's assault on Marcus Garvey illustrates what would become the Bureau's ongoing crusade to prevent the rise of a Black Messiah figure, an individual that possessed specific characteristics that would allow him to unite the so-called Black masses under a banner of liberation. For the FBI and federal and local government officials, the rise of a Messiah posed a severe threat to the stability of the country and was thus to be opposed at all cost.

In the 1930s the premier FBI investigation of Black America centered on the Scottsboro Boys. This case involved the arrest and conviction of nine African American boys from Alabama on charges of raping two white women in 1931. The nine boys, the youngest was thirteen years old, were sentenced to death. Ultimately, by 1950, all nine had been released from prison. However, the International Labor Defense, an organization controlled by the Communist Party, aided in the original defense. The Communist Party's involvement in this case further contributed to suspicion and fear that communists were secretly pulling the strings of the civil rights movement, encouraging and manipulating social unrest for their own agenda. In addition, with its defense of the Scottsboro Boys, the Communist Party allied itself with the larger African American civil rights movement. As a result of this case, Black America became further aligned with the Communist Party in the eyes of the federal government, and thus became a target of government reaction just as the Communist Party had become. In other words, "the party represented the single most dangerous subversive

force in the nation, and its proposed alliance with the Black cause raised the specter of thirteen million colored people willing to follow communist leadership."[7]

During Roosevelt's administration in the 1940s, the FBI enhanced its investigation into Black America. Specifically, the FBI added a special "Negroes" category to their larger investigations of domestic communism.[8] In addition, as O'Reilly notes, agents increased both the rate and coverage of reports that "led to the filing of weekly reports with government policymakers on such expansive subjects as 'Negro trends.'"[9] Hoover also expanded investigations of civil rights organizations that included the Southern Conference for Human Welfare and the March on Washington Movement (MOWM). The organizer of the MOWM, A. Philip Randolph, quickly became one of the government's primary targets for domestic subversion. His planning of a massive protest in Washington D.C. for African American civil rights led to Roosevelt's Executive Order 8802 that prohibited hiring discrimination in war industries and created the Fair Employment Practice Commission.

In St. Louis in January 1946 the Knights of Columbus embarked on a campaign "endeavoring to inform Catholics and others about the alleged danger posed by the Soviet Union."[10] The Knights of Columbus publicized its anti-communism campaign in local St. Louis newspapers. The Knights of Columbus were joined by the American War Dads in this local anti-communism crusade which similarly publicized its mission in local papers and its pamphlet "The Communist Cancer."[11] These were the first two formal organizations to launch local campaigns against communism in St. Louis in the 1940s. It is important to note that according to historian Ronald W. Johnson, in 1946 the Missouri Communist Party had less than 500 "card carrying members."[12]

The Knights of Columbus and American War Dads were soon joined by the Christian Nationalists led by Gerald L.K. Smith. Smith's "Christian Nationalism" movement was defined by the group's paper, *The Cross and the Flag* as having the following goals: "1. Preserve America as a Christian Nation being conscious of the fact that there is a highly organized campaign to substitute Jewish traditions for Christian traditions. 2. Expose, fight and outlaw communism. 3. Safeguard American liberty against the menace of bureaucratic fascism. 4. Maintain a government set up by the majority which abuses no minority and is abused by no minority. Fight mongrelization and all attempts being made to force the inter mixture of the Black and white races. 5. Protect and earmark national resources for our citizenry first. 6. Maintain the George Washington foreign policy of friendship with all nations, trade with all nations, entangling alliances with

none. 7. Oppose a world government and a super-state. 8. Prove that the worker, the farmer, the businessman, the veteran, the unemployed, the aged, and the infirmed can enjoy more abundance under the true American system than an alien system now being proposed by foreign propagandists. 9. Stop immigration in order that American jobs and American houses may be safeguarded for American citizens. 10. Enforce the Constitution as it pertains to our money system."[13]

The Christian Nationalists devoted most of their energy to propaganda, publishing and distributing anti-communist, anti-integration, and anti-Semitic pamphlets in the St. Louis area. For example, a pamphlet entitled "Hollywood Treason" was evidently designed to support HUAC's investigation of communist infiltration of Hollywood.[14] Another pamphlet was entitled "Names of Jews Running the United Nations." By listing the names of United Nations representatives followed by "Jew" in parentheses, the Christian Nationalists hoped that such information, according to the pamphlet, "should prove to the most skeptical observer that the United Nations is in fact the 'Jew-nited' Nations. The real name for it should be the 'Jew N' rather than U.N."[15] Additional pamphlets included "I was Branded with the Number 666"; "The Jewish Problem as Dealt with by the Popes"; "The Plot of the Jews"; and "School Integration is Racial Suicide." This pamphlet, printed in April 1956, pictured a group of African American and white school children with the caption, "will you permit this to happen to your children?"[16]

In addition, Gerald Smith spoke in St. Louis on April 2, May 28, and June 28, 1946 at Kiel Auditorium. On all three occasions the Missouri Communist Party protested outside the event. During the June 28 rally, protestors violently clashed with Smith supporters and several protestors were arrested.[17] These arrests provided additional ammunition for the St. Louis press to attack the local Communist Party.

As previously discussed, the St. Louis Board of Alderman passed the Public Accommodations law in 1961 after seven previous attempts.[18] Initially introduced in 1948, the Christian Nationalists led the opposition of the bill. Under the guise of the Racial Purity Committee, the Christian Nationalists circulated a petition in opposition to the proposed law.[19] Specifically, the petition stated, "it shall be unlawful for any member of one race to occupy, any entrance, exit, or seating, or standing section set aside and assigned to the use of the other race."[20] The petition failed to garner enough signatures and the proposal quickly died out.[21] Nevertheless, the Public Accomodations law similarly did not pass until 1961.

In 1963, St. Louis witnessed the formation of another white supremacist, anti-Semitic, and anti-communism group. In June 1963 the

Post Dispatch reported, "a new group of self styled guerilla fighters is operating in the St. Louis area, training as a last defense against Communism."[22] This group, the Counter-Insurgency Council, was headed by Richard Lauchli, a-36-year old former regional director of the right-wing group the Minutemen. Lauchli was the operator of a metal shop in Collinsville, Illinois. In September 1963 Lauchli left the Minutemen, as reported by the *Post*, "because of lack of recognition from the national group for programs considered more suitable here. 'Since we couldn't get cooperation from the Minutemen national office in working with problems in the St. Louis area . . . we decided to pull out and devote all of our time to a local unit which would be dedicated solely to this region."[23] According to Lauchli, the Counter-Insurgency Council had about twenty four members, all former Minutemen who were between the ages 28 and 57. The *Post Dispatch* also noted that members of the Council, "operating in three eight-man sections, practiced ambushes, map reading, and use of explosives in sparsely inhabited sections of St. Louis county and the East Side. They carry old Army rifles, using blank ammunition or none at all," and many members were accompanied by their wives on these "maneuvers."[24]

In 1969, white supremacist pamphlets were also circulated in South St. Louis, a predominantly white neighborhood. These pamphlets were distributed by another anti-communist, racist, and anti-Semitic group active in the St. Louis area, the National Socialist White People's Party, headquartered in Chicago. The pamphlet portrayed a swastika under the title "Black Terror or White Unity?"[25] This pamphlet stated, "communist revolutionaries, using the militant Black masses, are at this moment preparing for a terror campaign in the city of St. Louis. The racial attacks on our white people will be centered in St. Louis starting early next year! The honest white workers will suffer the arrogance of Black rabble rousers who demand high positions on the job line without earning those positions. This criminal intrusion by a stupid, savage minority will slow construction in St. Louis and result in the loss of employment for thousands of white working men. The White youth will bare the brunt of Negro savagery in the high schools, where the battle for our survival as a race is being determined. White people do not allow yourselves to be terrorized! Stand now against the storm of race war and communist anarchy soon to come! Only in a mighty unification of our disunited white people can we hope to survive the terror and chaos soon to confront us." The pamphlet noted that the organization was "against communism, Black revolution, peace creep treason" and supported the "U.S. Constitution, white power, the resurrection of American patriotism."[26]

This pamphlet's attack against "communist revolutionaries, using the militant Black masses," echoed the commonly held suspicion and fear of many Cold War officials that so-called outside agitators, namely communists, were secretly manipulating and controlling the Black liberation movement. Equating civil rights with communism justified repression of the civil rights movement through the Cold War's defense against a domestic and international communist threat. This group also attacked school desegregation, aimed to foster racial conflict between local workers, and blame unemployment and economic difficulties on integration.

By the mid 1940s, the larger public began to respond to local anti-communism crusades by groups such as the Knights of Columbus, American War Dads, and the Christian Nationalists. For example, in 1946 the Kansas City School Board "required every teacher to sign a 'Pledge of Loyalty and Allegiance.' This oath contained a pledge of fidelity to city and state government."[27] In 1948 the St. Louis city charter was amended to include a loyalty oath for all city employees, and the St. Louis Police Department began including "anti-subversive" training in their police academy.[28]

Johnson explains that by the 1940s, anti-communist activity had not yet reached a hysterical level capable of producing mass paranoia and violence. Specifically, Johnson asserts, "during 1946–1947, the Communist issue developed gradually in Missouri . . . at this point, the issue had not become a full-fledged Red Scare. Largely symbolic, it did not produce major casualties in this early period. Yet the issue was taking on recognizable form as religious groups, veteran organizations, educators, and others served as pipelines for the dispersal of anti-communism."[29] This issue raises the question of what activities did the local Communist Party actually engage in and how did they contribute to the local African American freedom struggle?

One activity that gained the local public's attention was the local Communist Party's 1948 "trial against white chauvinism." In particular, this trial, held Sunday, February 22, 1948 at the Pleasant Green Baptist Church in St. Louis, was designed to censure "members of the Communist Party charged with racial prejudice and white chauvinism" and to "expose the rotten system of Jim Crowism and all it stands for."[30] Generally speaking, this "trial" served as a formal public display of the Missouri Communist Party's support for the local Black liberation struggle. For example, the "trial" transcript asserted, "our party is the only consistent defender of the rights and aspirations of the Negro people in America; our party is the only organization that has not hesitated to unmask the real enemies of progress and democracy. Our party consistently exposes the role of Bilbos and Rankins, the Uncle Toms and paternalists who would hide the history

and contributions of the Negro people to the advance of our nation; who would hide and deny the national aspirations of an oppressed people."[31] The "trial" transcript went on to state, "Here in St. Louis we have most forms of white chauvinism to combat. The leading committee of our Party, supporting the view expressed by a large number of our comrades that, in the past period of time, our Party has not centered its attention sufficiently on the struggle against white chauvinism, is calling upon our Party members to wage a continuous struggle against discrimination, economic, political, and social."[32]

Missouri's anti-communist crusade received additional inspiration with the outbreak of the Korean War. For example, Johnson states, "the Korean situation inspired renewed displays of anti-communism from Missouri's patriotic organizations. The American Legion, the VFW, and the Missouri DAR expanded and intensified their programs. These organizations continued to act as conduits for their national bodies."[33] As a result, institutions in St. Louis began to respond to these "patriotic organizations'" warnings and launched their own investigations into communist subversion. For example, in October 1950, Arthur H. Compton, Chancellor of Washington University, announced the start of an investigation into allegations linking the university with the Communist Party.[34] No investigation actually occurred but rather, as Johnson explains, Chancellor Compton "shrewdly employed the proposed investigation as a lightning rod to divert attention and criticism during a tense period when such activities disrupted educational institutions elsewhere."[35]

Local anti-communist efforts successfully culminated on January 25, 1954, when the United States Justice Department prosecuted five Missouri Communist Party officials. In September 1952, the FBI arrested William Sentner, James and Dorothy Forest, Marcus A. Murphy, and Robert Manowitz for violating the 1940 Alien Registration Act.[36] Prosecuted for violating what was known as the Smith Act, the five defendants faced a five-year prison sentence and/or a $10,000 fine on nine counts of conspiracy for advocating the violent overthrow of the government.[37] Simply called the St. Louis Smith Act trial, the trial lasted eighteen weeks and ended with guilty verdicts on all counts, on May 28, 1954.[38] The defendants received the maximum penalty of five years in prison and a $10,000 fine except for Dorothy Forest, who received a three-year prison sentence because, according to Johnson, the "judge felt compassion for her family."[39] In all probability she was spared the full sentence because she was a woman. In April 1958 the United States Court of Appeals overturned the verdict and in October 1958 the Justice Department dropped the charges against all five defendants.[40]

The 1954 St. Louis Smith Act trial "marked the high point of the government's anti-communist involvement in Missouri."[41] Yet the five individuals prosecuted in 1954 were part of a larger wave of government reaction against alleged communists and communist sympathizers. In particular, Johnson notes, "during the 1947–1955 interval, approximately seventy five Missouri residents were among those investigated, discharged, tried and convicted of both alleged and actual left wing activity."[42] It is also interesting to note that as government reaction to a suspected domestic communist threat reached its peak in St. Louis in 1954, the Missouri Communist Party had nearly ceased to exist as an active organization. Johnson states, "by 1954, the time of the Smith Act trial in St. Louis, the CP was a hollow shell riddled by government agents, its leaders scattered, and its activities a pale reflection of the busy 1946–1948 interval. At the grass roots in Missouri, the radical left could muster no viable threat."[43]

As this discussion illustrates, it is essential that one examine reaction to the modern Civil Rights movement and Black Power movement in the larger context of the Cold War's fight against an international and domestic communist threat. Reaction to the civil rights movement was intimately linked with a suspicion and concern for communist infiltration and manipulation of civil rights groups. By the early 1960s, FBI investigations of civil rights organizations fell within two Bureau programs, COMINFIL (communist infiltration) and COINTELPRO (counterintelligence program). Under these programs, investigations of civil rights groups centered primarily on "efforts to purge Communist Party members and others from 'legitimate mass organizations.'"[44] This suspicion of Communist Party infiltration of civil rights organizations contributed to the FBI's targeting of Martin Luther King Jr. for exposure, disruption, and neutralization.

The March on Washington, on August 28, 1963, elevated King to a national and international status as a human rights leader, and secured his position in the annals of history as one of the most important people of the twentieth century. However, while the March elevated King to this status among human rights supporters, the March on Washington also secured King's position as the FBI's primary target until his death on April 4, 1968. Kenneth O'Reilly states, "the March on Washington convinced Hoover that the civil rights movement would not wither away on its own, that he would have to smash it before it irreparably damaged his America."[45] Furthermore, the March on Washington had established King as the potential Messiah figure that the government had always feared.

The government had long feared the rise of a "messiah" figure, a charismatic leader "who could unify, and electrify, the militant Black nationalist movement."[46] Marcus Garvey had represented the first major threat as a

Messiah and had been successfully "neutralized." Following the March on Washington, King now topped the FBI's list as a "potential Messiah." It should be noted that following King's assassination Huey P. Newton, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, became the FBI's primary target as a "potential messiah." In addition, as will be later discussed, Percy Green and Charles Koen were singled out for specific FBI and local police suppression as "potential Messiahs" in St. Louis.

Following the March on Washington, the FBI found itself justified in attacking King and the civil rights movement as one and the same. In other words, "King's targeting was quite rational. He was the available man, the most well known, effective, and charismatic civil rights leader. After the March on Washington, King and the movement were inseparable in the public mind. If King could be damaged, the movement could be damaged."[47] The FBI then enhanced its operations against King and the civil rights movement by specifically employing counterintelligence tactics to "expose, disrupt, or otherwise neutralize" King and the civil rights movement. These new efforts following the March on Washington were justified by the Cold War's battle against domestic communism.

Specifically, the FBI's investigation of King was based on the suspicion that he was being controlled by communists. Suspicion primarily centered on King's association with Stanley Levison. As King biographer, David Garrow explains, FBI investigation of King, including Attorney General Robert Kennedy's authorization of FBI wiretaps, resulted from the Administration's suspicion that "King's closest adviser was a top level member of the American Communist Party, and King had repeatedly misled Administration officials about his ongoing close ties with the man."[48] According to Garrow, Levison met King immediately following the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1956. Levison was a white lawyer from New York and had, according to FBI informants, "served as one of the top two financiers of the Communist Party USA in the years just before he met King."[49] While Garrow asserts that recently publicized FBI documents confirm Levison's position in the Party, he points out that Levison was no longer involved in CPUSA activities after 1956, after he met King.[50] Garrow notes that in March 1957 the FBI "dropped Levison from its list of 'key figure' Communists."[51] Yet the FBI and Kennedy administration refused to believe that Levison had completely ended his relationship with the Party and after Levison became one of King's "most influential white counselors," the FBI, with Attorney General Kennedy's authorization, targeted King for investigation.[52]

Despite King's association with Levison, O'Reilly admits that the FBI's case alleging King's communist ties was weak. O'Reilly states, "the charges were soft, products of a utilitarian definition of communism. FBI

officials knew they had little to work with."[53] Nonetheless, these allegations were enough to warrant a more thorough investigation of King's public and private life. On October 10, 1963 Attorney General Robert Kennedy approved the FBI's request to wiretap King's telephone in Atlanta, Georgia as well as the SCLC's phones in New York and Atlanta.[54]

Specifically, information garnered through wiretaps, including information of a personal nature, was exposed to the public in an effort to discredit King and disrupt his professional and private life. In addition, as this information was publicized the FBI offered its solution to this potentially embarrassing situation. In November 1964, FBI official William Sullivan wrote King a letter intending for it to cause King to take his own life. The letter stated, "King, look into your heart. You know you are a complete fraud and a great liability to all of us Negroes . . . King, like all frauds your end is approaching. You could have been our greatest leader . . . But you are done . . . No person can overcome facts . . . The American public, the church organizations that have been helping—Protestant, Catholic and Jews, will know you for what you are . . . So will others who have backed you. You are done . . . there is only one thing left for you to do. You know what it is. You have just thirty four days in which to do (this exact number has been selected for a specific reason, it has definite practical significant [sic]). You are done. There is but one way out for you. You better take it before your filthy, abnormal fraudulent self is bared to the nation."[55]

As the FBI operations against King became more creative and insidious, by 1964, the time this letter was written, the government had begun investigating additional leaders and groups, similarly targeting them for exposure, disruption, and neutralization. In particular, the race riots of the mid 1960s, like those of 1917 and 1919, reinvigorated official investigations into Black America. Riots in northern urban areas in the mid 1960s confirmed the administration's suspicion that revolution and social unrest, rather than human rights, were the primary goal of the civil rights movement. As a result, reaction to the movement became justified not only under the guise of fighting domestic communism and communist infiltration of the movement, but also maintaining law and order in the face of a movement apparently intent on destroying America.

In August 1967, the federal government created a new counterintelligence program to investigate so-called Black Power advocates.[56] The new program, entitled, "Black Hate Group" was a direct response to this new wave of riots as well as the rise of Black Power as a concept for African American liberation. Black Power's promotion of economic, political, and cultural self determination, coupled with its advocacy of revolutionary structural change and the right of African Americans to self defense, sparked

immediate reaction from law enforcement officials. As defined by O'Reilly, "the original directive establishing the program emphasized the immediate goals in a straightforward manner: 'to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of Black nationalist, hate type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters.' Long range goals followed: to prevent militant Black groups from forming coalitions, building up their membership, gaining respectability, and developing a charismatic leader."[57] The Black Panther Party was one of the primary organizations targeted by this new program.

Black Panther Party co-founder, Huey Newton, asserts in his doctoral dissertation, *War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America*, "since its inception, the [Black Panther] Party has been subject to a variety of actions by agencies and officers of the federal government intended to destroy it politically and financially."[58] In addition, O'Reilly asserts, "of the thousands of domestic intelligence and counterintelligence investigations launched against Black activists, only the Martin Luther King case rivaled the Panther case in its ferocity."[59] Moreover, Newton maintained, "of the 295 documented actions taken by COINTELPRO alone to disrupt Black groups, 233, or 79%, were specifically directed toward destruction of the Party."[60] As part of the Black Hate Group program, the FBI "engaged in or encouraged a variety of actions intended to cause (and in fact causing) deaths of BPP members, loss of membership and community support, draining of revenues from the Party, false arrests of members and supporters, and defamatory discrediting of constructive Party programs and leaders."[61]

For example, as part of the Black Hate Group program's long term goal of preventing the formation of coalitions among advocates of Black Power, the FBI encouraged tension and conflict between the Black Panthers and US, a cultural nationalist organization headed by Mualana Karenga in California. One of the primary tactics employed by the FBI to prevent these two groups from cooperating with one another and encourage violent conflict was misinformation. Specifically, the FBI antagonized relations between the Panthers and US by sending insulting and threatening anonymous letters to both groups in hope that these letters would "inspire an US and Panther vendetta."[62] FBI efforts reached grave success on January 17, 1969 when two Panthers were shot by several US members at the University of California, Los Angeles. This incident touched off a larger wave of violent and deadly reprisals from each group throughout California in 1968 and 1969.

The Panther's community action programs were also targeted for "neutralization" by the FBI. For example, one of the programs targeted was the free breakfast program for school children. According to Newton, the FBI forged a Panther comic book that advocated violence. The comic books were

then distributed throughout the country to businesses that financially supported the free breakfast program and were told that the comic books were being handed out by the Panthers to children participating in the breakfast program.[63] Newton also reported that churches and clergymen that supported the breakfast program also received forged FBI letters from parishioners claiming that they opposed the churches' support of the program.[64] Newton notes that these tactics were highly successful in reducing funding for the program.[65]

Like Martin Luther King and the Black Panthers, local civil rights organizations in St. Louis became targets of these FBI programs and faced reaction from local law enforcement officials. Local civil rights groups such as CORE, ACTION, and the Black Liberators were also investigated for alleged communist infiltration. In St. Louis, investigations of alleged communist infiltration of the local civil rights movement were often publicized in the white media and published as exposes designed to expose, disrupt, and neutralize the local movement by connecting it with communists.

For example, the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* ran a ten-segment piece on its front page accusing the local movement of communist infiltration and manipulation. The piece was written as an expose in which individuals and organizations were exposed as communists or communist fronts. For instance, the stated purpose of one of the articles was "to probe the background and activism of CORE and to determine the extent of any Communist infiltration in CORE's ranks."[66] The reporter, Denny Walsh, drew his information from government (HUAC) and police investigation files, and "officials" from Washington, New York, Chicago, New Orleans, Louisville, and St. Louis. Throughout its run, the piece drew heavy support from St. Louisans who praised Walsh and his investigation in editorials published in the *Globe Democrat*.

In his article Walsh "exposed" specific local activists as directly or indirectly associated with communism or leftist radical politics. For example, Walsh "exposed" William A. Massingale who was involved in the Jefferson Bank campaign, as the former Vice Chairman of the Missouri Communist Party.[67] Walsh went on to report, "at least 13 of the 39 members of CORE's advisory committee have been connected with organizations or publications cited as subversive by various arms of the federal government."[68] Walsh also cites Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth as "president of the Southern Conference Educational Fund Inc., a group described by the Senate Subcommittee as seeking 'to promote communism throughout the southern states.'"[69] He also cites A.J. Muste, A. Phillip Randolph and Bayard Rustin as communists who had "infiltrated" CORE's top leadership.[70] Walsh states, "the Southern Conference Educational Fund Inc., a large communist front organiza-

tion in the South, includes among its officers two officials of CORE . . . This is not to say that CORE is communistic. Rather, it indicates the danger facing CORE that the organization may be used as an unwitting communist tool."[71] The two officials referred to were Fred Shuttlesworth and C. Ewbank Tucker, Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Director of the Southern Conference Educational Fund Inc. and Chairman of the Louisville, Kentucky chapter of CORE.

Walsh's piece relies heavily on traditional red baiting, scapegoating, and panic inspiring tactics that became a Cold War staple. Specifically, his segment "Use of Professional Demonstrators is Frequent Maneuver" falls back on the traditional strategy of blaming "outside agitators" for inciting local civil rights activism. Walsh states, "the use of 'professional' demonstrators has become one of CORE's favorite tactical maneuvers. When a local chapter begins to make headway with a demonstration campaign, new faces begin appearing and new names are recorded on the police blotter."[72] Similar arguments maintained that local African Americans were perfectly content with social, economic, and political inequality until others from outside the community inspired them to challenge the status quo.

Moreover, in the context of the Cold War, as the world watched the African American liberation movement unfold throughout the 1950s, '60s and '70s, Walsh contended that "civil rights militancy" could be employed as ammunition against the United States in the important battle for the hearts and minds of the world, and especially colonies in Africa, Asia, South and Central America, fighting for their own independence and looking to the U.S. and Soviet Union for developmental models. In particular, Walsh states, "when a group takes on a militant look, those dedicated to embarrassing the United States in other countries are naturally attracted to this militancy. For out of this can spring open internal war which would make even its closest allies wary of America as a nation growing weak from within."[73]

Following the publication of Walsh's series, the *Globe Democrat* published several editorials praising Walsh's work. For instance, one editorial published January 1, 1964, stated, "I want to congratulate the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* for its exposure of pro-communists who have infiltrated the Congress of Racial Equality. Your paper is the first publication in the middle West to do so."[74] This editorial goes on to imply that Harold Gibbons, head of Local 688, was similarly guilty of being a communist sympathizer because of his association with St. Louis CORE. The editorial specifically states, "it may interest St. Louisans to learn that a St. Louisan, the Vice President of the Teamsters Union, Harold Gibbons, is

also a member of CORE's advisory board and has been associated with CORE for more than fifteen years, playing an important part in its financing and organization."[75]

Another editorial praises Walsh's piece while similarly warning of potential communist infiltration and manipulation of the local movement. The editorial states, "although CORE is not controlled by communists, the predominant weight of evidence show pro-communist and red front supporters have heavily infiltrated CORE at certain points over the nation . . . The St. Louis chapter of CORE, which like the parent organization has been dedicated to bringing the Negro struggle out of the courts and onto the streets, shows little red tinge, although one of its most active demonstrators has been identified as a former vice chairman of the Missouri Communist Party [William A Massingale was "identified" in Walsh's piece] How long communist fronts will be kept out of the local CORE is another question. Particularly alarming is the fact that by its own officers' admission, CORE seems wholly unconcerned about pro-reds in its ranks."[76] This editorial went on to praise the Walsh piece, stating, "staff writer Denny Walsh approached his assignment with objectivity. He has done a most illuminating job, predicated on the conviction that justice and democracy dictate equality of citizenship for all races, all minorities."[77] Finally, relying again on traditional tactics of scapegoating, red baiting and panic inspiring, this editorial argues that militant tactics endorsed by St. Louis CORE will ultimately damage the movement by instigating violence. The editorial states, "the militant tactics of CORE, however, can boomerang upon the civil rights purpose; it involves serious dangers to public peace . . . and wherever militancy and disregard for law exists, communists and their stooges gang up to infiltrate . . . Certainly CORE in St. Louis has acted outside the law as at the Jefferson Bank, the sit downs at City Hall, and in store boycotts. This breeds violence."[78] Thus, the author concludes that violence and social unrest will consequently encourage larger communist challenges to the social order.

A cartoon published in the *Globe Democrat* on July 5, 1965 continued the local media's claims of communist manipulation of the local civil rights movement. In this cartoon two middle-aged men dressed in suits, walk side by side smiling and speaking to one another while carrying signs that read, "We shall overcome" and "Rights now." Stuck to their backs are pieces of paper displaying the Soviet hammer and sickle and the word "comrade." The caption of the cartoon stated, "'Several even patted our backs, Reverend.'"[79] This cartoon illustrates the argument that the movement had been infiltrated by communists and its leaders had been unknowingly manipulated by them. In the larger context of the Cold War's fight against a

domestic and international communist threat, communist infiltration of the civil rights movement represented a severe threat to the national security of the country, thus justifying the government's reaction to the civil rights movement.

Moreover, as part of their Black Hate Group program, the FBI attempted to undermine the Black Power movement by facilitating and aggravating inter-group and intra-group conflict. Like the antagonized relations between US and the Black Panthers in California, St. Louis police attempted to antagonize relations between the Black Liberators and the Zulu 1200s in September 1968. On September 5, 1968 the headquarters of the Black Liberators was destroyed. St. Louis police lieutenant Fred Grimes told the Liberators that the Zulus were responsible for the damage. However, witnesses reported in the *Post Dispatch* that they in fact saw plain clothes police destroying the headquarters. Nonetheless, these efforts to promote conflict between the Liberators and Zulus produced no conflict between the two organizations as they had with the Panthers and US.

It was also alleged that local law enforcement agents garnered information about the local movement by working with an informant in the Black Liberators. The *Post Dispatch* reported on September 17, 1970 that Yusuf Oziz Shabazz had been found guilty on four counts of transporting forged money orders across state lines. During his testimony Shabazz asserted that he was an operative working with the St. Louis and Los Angeles police department to infiltrate civil rights organizations in St. Louis and to provide information to the authorities. Although it seems highly likely that the Black Liberators, like other civil rights groups, had in fact been infiltrated by the authorities, Shabazz's claim has not been confirmed.

In addition, like its attack on Garvey, King, and Newton, the FBI attempted to prevent the rise of a local Messiah figure in St. Louis by attacking the personal life of Charles Koen, Prime Minister of the Black Liberators. For example, the *Post Dispatch* reported, "a memo was dated February 14, 1969 from the St. Louis FBI office to Hoover indicated that the target was separated from his wife. Permission was granted by Hoover on February 28, 1969 to send the man's wife a letter hinting that her husband had been unfaithful."[80] The letter stated, "Us Black Liberators are trained to respect Black Women and special our wives and girls. Brother (name deleted) keeps telling the Brothers this but he don't treat you that way. I only been in the organization two months but (name deleted) been makin' it here with Sister Marva and Sister Tony and then he gives us this jive bout their better in bed that you are and how he keeps you off his back by sending you a little dough ever now and then. He says he gotta send

you money. The draft board gonna chuck him in the army or something. This ain't right and were sayin' that (name deleted) is treatin' you wrong." The letter was signed "A Black Liberator."[81]

In 1970 another letter was sent by the FBI field office in St. Louis "to the Black husband of a white woman" member of ACTION.[82] The letter stated, "Look man I guess your old lady doesn't get enough at home or she wouldn't be shucking and jiving with our Black men in ACTION, you dig? Like all she wants to integrate is the bed room and us Black sisters ain't gonna take no second best from our men. So lay it on her, man or get her the hell off Newstead." The letter was signed, "A Soul Sister."[83] According to Nelson Blackstock, "five months later, the St. Louis agent in charge reported to Washington that the operation was a success. He said the FBI's efforts 'certainly contributed very strongly' to the couple's separation."[84] This assertion was later confirmed on November 19, 1975, in an article in the *Post Dispatch* entitled "St. Louisan Wants FBI Curbed." In this article the woman demanded legislation to "end the FBI's harassment of political groups."[85] This woman confirmed that the letter successfully contributed to their divorce within a year after receiving the letter, and as a result of her divorce she was forced to "curtail her political activities and seek full time work."[86] She told the *Post Dispatch*, "I would like to see some legislation coming out of this that would prevent this from happening to somebody else, or to me again."[87]

These letters attempting to undermine the local movement by targeting the private lives of its leaders were not designed to single handedly bring the collapse of the local liberation efforts. Yet included within larger systematic and coordinated suppression that employed a variety of tactics and strategies to attack individuals and groups on multiple levels, letters such as these were largely successful in aggravating relationships that were often already tense as a result of these additional tactics.

It is essential to consider government reaction to the Black liberation movement in the larger context of the Cold War's struggle against an international and domestic communist threat. The Cold War encouraged extensive unfettered investigations into Black America and ultimately justified neutralization of the Black liberation struggle by any means necessary. The Cold War's battle against an international and domestic Communist threat had a dramatic impact on the Black freedom struggle both locally and internationally.

As the case of Washington University illustrates, anti-communism crusades forced many mainstream institutions and organizations to purge so-called radicals from their ranks for fear that these individuals would bring reaction and repression to the entire institution or organization. In

addition, the NAACP took an aggressive position with regard to alleged communists by excluding suspected communists from their ranks and openly supporting America's Cold War policies. For example, the St. Louis NAACP reported in the *St. Louis Argus* in 1955 that it had always resisted the influence of radical elements, including communists from its ranks stating, "down through the years, the NAACP has had its internal battles. It has also had to be vigilant against the encroachment of politicians of both major political parties, the communists and other outside forces. To its credit, the branch has emerged in every instance victorious."[88] As Mary Dudziak states, "while efforts to change American society during the Cold War were usually viewed as 'un-American,' the NAACP cast its efforts at racial reform as part of the struggle against communism."[89] In other words, the NAACP sold its brand of social justice and racial equality as part of traditional "American values" that not only did not threaten these values, but in fact contributed to and strengthened the U.S. resolve against communism.

On the other hand, by purging so-called radicals from institutions and organizations committed to racial equality and human rights, the focus and agenda of the movement narrowed in scope, reducing its focus on class and human rights to focus primarily on African American "civil" rights. Dudziak explains, "by silencing certain voices and by promoting a particular vision of racial justice, the Cold War led to a narrowing of acceptable civil rights discourse. The narrow boundaries of Cold War, era civil rights politics kept discussions of broad based social change, or a linking of race and class, off the agenda."[90] Moreover, as Adam Fairclough points out, anti-communist attacks, "also weakened the efforts of Black Americans to link their struggle for equal rights with the cause of anti-colonial movements abroad. Indeed, the Cold War discouraged any opposition to the basic tents of American foreign policy."[91] Thus, the Cold War both encouraged and justified government reaction to the Black liberation struggle for fear that communists would manipulate the movement, aggravating social unrest to their advantage.

This fear seemed to be confirmed on July 4, 1965, when FBI Director Hoover warned of the threat presented by the DuBois Club stating, "last summer the [Communist] Party established the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs, a communist front group designed to appeal to college young people . . . at no time in the party's history in this country have the college students and faculty member been more the target of communist attention."[92] As previously discussed, the DuBois Club was founded as a national organization in Chicago in 1965 to unite young people, the working class, and African Americans to promote the "welfare, progress and security of the American

people."[93] Under the leadership of James Peake and Eugene Tournour the DuBois Club took root in St. Louis.

In the context of the Cold War, the mere implication of the group's communist associations was enough to elicit criticism and reaction from the government and larger public. An editorial in the *Globe Democrat* echoed Hoover's fears that the DuBois Club represented communist infiltration and manipulation of the Black liberation movement stating, "I understand the DuBois Club (a communist-sponsored organization) is coming to St. Louis this summer to recruit new members. They are apparently going to concentrate on the Washington University campus and civil rights issues. Are the people of St. Louis going to sit back and do nothing? Our boys in South Vietnam are fighting and dying to combat this very thing, communism. It's like handing over our ammunition to the enemy to allow these groups to operate freely and openly in our city."[94] It should also be pointed out that the local African American press similarly criticized the DuBois Club's alleged Marxist agenda. Criticism of the club in the local African American press received coverage from the *St. Louis Globe Democrat,* which ran a story detailing the editor of the *St. Louis Argus*, Frank W. Mitchell's attack on the club. The story entitled "Editor Blames 'Soreheads' for Racial Discontent," reported Mitchell as asserting that violence had been avoided in St. Louis, yet warns, "we must admit the danger is not passed."[95] Mitchell went on to criticize James Peake, head of the St. Louis DuBois Club, arguing that the group's message would only bring violence to the city. In particular Mitchell stated, "they do nothing but breed violence and utter contempt for the law."[96]

Allegations that the club was a "communist front" aimed to infiltrate the Black liberation movement and manipulate it for its own advantage brought the DuBois Club under investigation by the federal government. In response to being targeted by the FBI's COINTELPRO investigations, the DuBois Club sought to protect itself from government repression by petitioning the United States Supreme Court on January 8, 1968 contesting that the club was being targeted by the Subversive Activities Control Board. This board, created by Congress in 1950, was designed to "identify communist and communist front organizations operating in the U.S."[97] The Board was specifically demanding that the DuBois Club register with the federal government as a communist organization. In its petition, the club asked the Supreme Court to "block" the board's request that the Club register as a communist organization while asserting that the law prohibited the board from continued investigations of the club "if it fails to institute a proceeding or conduct a hearing by December 31, 1969."[98]

Direct attacks against organizations and individuals engaged in the local Black liberation struggle were justified by the Cold War's battle

against domestic and international communism as well as the preservation and maintenance of law and order. It is, however, also important to recognize that government violence against Black Power was part and parcel of the larger militarism of the United States government in the 1960s and 1970s as was related to the Vietnam War. In other words, U.S. involvement in Vietnam shaped and inspired a larger domestic atmosphere of militancy and violence that advocated the use of violence as the primary means to solve problems and protect U.S. interests at home and abroad. For example, Maulana Karenga states of this larger context, "it was a violent time. Vietnam. Talk about power from the barrel of a gun. It was a time and context in which the gun was considered a political god, the ultimate arbiter of all conflicts . . . we knew it wasn't going to be a tea party, but we didn't anticipate how violent the U.S. government would get. This is obviously an American problem, not an isolated campaign against rantin' and ravin' radicals."[99]

Yet it is important to point out that violence and militarism similarly became a strategy for Black Power as well. The use of violence as a viable and often successful tactic for liberation was well documented by Frantz Fanon for example and became inspiration for local Black liberation movements. Thus, while violence has historically been a primary strategy for the United States to solve its problems and protect its interests, violence has also been a strategy employed to protect and promote African American interests. As the following illustrates, the willingness of the United States government and African Americans to employ violence to promote and protect their interests often resulted in direct and violent conflict.

Chapter Nine

Black Power Challenged: Direct Conflict and Violence

On August 17, 1968 Congressman Adam Clayton Powell walked through the streets of downtown St. Louis surrounded by armed guards from the St. Louis Black Liberators. At Kiel Auditorium Powell delivered his speech, "The Challenge to be Met" as an "appeal to Negro businessmen to use their power of economics, education, and 'innate sociological know-how' to forge their way into the nation's mainstream."[1] The Black Liberators provided security for Powell, "the stated reason being a full awareness of the general threat upon the lives of Black leaders."[2] Following Powell's speech, two Black Liberators were arrested while returning to their cars. Nineteen-year-old Edward S. Baily was charged with carrying a concealed weapon, a pistol in his car, while the second, nineteen-year-old Larone Thomas, was charged with having a shotgun under sixteen inches.[3] These arrests touched off a larger wave of direct conflict between the Liberators and police and government officials.

These incidents garnered the larger public's attention in St. Louis, helped galvanize support and sympathy for the Black Liberators, and sparked concern and suspicion within organized labor, religious groups, and other human rights organizations that police could target their activities next. Yet it is essential to point out that such incidents were not unusual or atypical of the time. Rather, these local incidents were part of a larger systematic and coordinated effort by federal and local law enforcement officials to "expose, disrupt, or otherwise neutralize" the Black liberation movement.

On the evening of September 5, 1968, shots were fired through a window of the St. Louis Police Department's 9th Precinct headquarters, through the window of Lt. Fred Grimes' home, and a fire bomb was thrown through

the window of the real estate office of an African American member of the police board, Clifton W. Gates, to protest the arrest and police intimidation of Charles Koen the previous day. Immediately following these incidents, on September 5, the Black Liberator's headquarters was destroyed. According to the United Methodist Church, local residents "observed plainclothes policemen" destroy the offices.[4] In addition, the *Post Dispatch* reported that several people in the community witnessed plainclothes police destroying the headquarters.[5] Russell Wright testified in District Court that as he was driving home from his job at a refrigeration company he drove past the Liberator's headquarters, where he saw Lt. Fred Grimes fire a shotgun through the window of the office.[6] However, Lt. Grimes told the Liberators and the press that the Zulu 1200s were responsible for the damage. As previously noted, similar to the conflict between US and the Black Panthers in California, Grimes' efforts to blame the destruction of the Liberator's headquarters on the Zulus represented standard operating procedure by law enforcement to divide the African American liberation struggle and to create, exploit, and encourage conflict between groups.

The same night that St. Louis Police destroyed the Liberator's headquarters, twenty one Liberators were arrested by St. Louis police. No charges were filed against these individuals and they were released after several hours. The *Post Dispatch* headline, "Police Round Up Militants After Shots, Fire Bombing" alludes to the reciprocal conflict between the police and Liberators.[7] Yet, for those who sympathized with the Liberators, the headline also suggested a more insidious, systematic reaction to the Black Liberators. For Liberator sympathizers and supporters, the use of the phrase "round up" was also suggestive of other "round ups" by government and law enforcement officials, such as the Palmer Raids of 1919. In addition, the Black Liberators speculated that the "round up" was simply a way to remove Liberators from the area so police could destroy their headquarters. The following day, September 6, I.A. Long, president of the Board of Police Commissioners, responded to the "round up," asserting that he "strongly endorsed the police crackdown on Black militants."[8] No police investigation into the destruction of the Liberator's office occurred because, according to police officials, no complaint had been filed.

Conflict between the Black Liberators and police reached a crescendo on Friday, September 13, 1968 when Charles Koen and Leon Dent were stopped by four white police officers for a defective brake light. Koen and Dent later told police that they drove to a friend's house to get some "African apparel" and on their way home they were stopped by the police for a defective brake light. Koen and Dent were then arrested and taken to the 9th Police Precinct, where Dent was charged with carrying a concealed

weapon, later discovered to have been a comb. Dent was also charged with two counts of assaulting a police officer and one count of destruction of city property, a chair in the police station. Koen was charged with the traffic violation, two counts of assaulting a police officer, and one count of destruction of city property.

According to the *St. Louis Argus*, Robert Curtis and Ocie Pastard, and testimony from Koen, Dent and police officers, following their arrests, Dent and Koen were taken to the basement of the 9th Precinct, where they were beaten by police. Both Koen and Dent suffered "lacerated scalps that required several stitches and severe facial bruises" and broken hands and fingers. The police argued that Koen and Dent had attacked the police officers inside the police station.

Upon investigation into the incident, the St. Louis City Police Board, as quoted in the *St. Louis Argus*, stated that "'reports indicate that Koen and Dent provoked and started the incident."[9] However, the Board went on to state, "in view of the fact that they were in a police district station with available assistance, we believe the officers used greater force than the occasion called for.'"[10] Consequently, Detective Rudolph Oehlert was suspended for thirty days, Detective Sergeant William Fitzgerald was suspended for ten days and four officers, Detective Anthoney Wachter, Brian Graft, Rosario Greco, and James Robertson were reprimanded.

The St. Louis City Police Board's punishment of the police officers was attacked by the larger community. For example, the *St. Louis Argus* reported that "Governor Warren E. Hearnes called the St. Louis Police Commissioner's action against six police officers calling for suspension for two and reprimands for four who were involved in the brutal beating of Charles Koen, Prime Minister of the Black Liberators and Leon Dent, a general of the same group at the 9th District Police Headquarters about a week ago, as not meeting his approval."[11] The *Argus* went on to note of Hearnes that "from what he had read from the police reports of the beatings, that the officers involved were justified in taking the action they took."[12] Specifically, Hearnes was quoted as stating, "under the circumstances, it seems to me there was no alternative to the action taken by the officers."[13] In addition, St. Louis Mayor Alfonso Cervantes attacked Charles Koen, blaming him for the incident with the police, but also blaming him for increased agitation in the city. The *Argus* stated that Cervantes "understood that Koen caused trouble in Cairo, Illinois. 'It is odd that the minute he came here the whole place is up in arms. I hope the city never blows up, especially when so many people, Black and white, are working here to change the inequities of two hundred years."[14] Cervantes' remarks also illustrate the common assertion by local officials that so-called outside

agitators were responsible for instigating social unrest and disrupting the "racial harmony" that existed in the city before they got there.

In early December 1968, commissioners of the City Police Board announced that they were dropping their charges against the officers who had previously been charged with "using greater force than necessary under the circumstances" in the beating of Koen and Dent.[15] The board's decision to drop the charges came after Koen and Dent were indicted for "assault with intent to do great bodily harm with malice" in November 1968 by a grand jury for their role in the fight with the police at the 9th District Police Station on September 13, 1968. This decision was met with outrage and criticism from the African American community, which echoed the local NAACP's assertion, "the reversed decision made by the Police Department regarding officers involved in the incident of the Black Liberators is intolerable and a personal affront to every Negro in the city."[16]

The arrest of two Liberators following Adam Clayton Powell's speech on August 17 sparked this larger pattern of conflict and violence between local law enforcement and the Black Liberators. Like the FBI's investigations of Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King Jr., and the Black Panthers, this conflict greatly undermined the success of the Black Liberators. As former "liaison officer" for the Black Liberators, William B. Helmreich notes, "perhaps the greatest single tactical error made by the [Liberators] was providing Adam Clayton Powell with an armed escort when he visited [St. Louis]. Such an action gave the police and, by extension, the political structure, an excellent opportunity to brand the [Liberators] from the start as a violent and dangerous organization. Moreover, partly as a result of this incident, the [Liberators] became deeply involved in battling an enemy having far superior resources at its disposal rather than concentrating on building a powerful base within the community."[17]

While this conflict initially involved the Liberators and police, it ultimately became a larger issue involving other local human rights groups and organized labor. Sympathy came from CORE, ACTION, the Mid City Congress, NAACP, the *St. Louis Argus*, Local 688 of the Teamsters, Local 562 of the Pipefitters, the United Methodist Church, the St. Louis Archdiocese, Congressman William Clay, Sr., the ACLU, SDS, and the Committee for War Resistance. These groups and individuals expressed solidarity with the Liberators during their struggle with the police for fear that if unchecked, the police would target their organizations for exposure, disruption, and neutralization.

Following the Koen and Dent incident, the Missouri East Conference of the United Methodist Church in Columbia, Missouri suggested the formation of an "impartial and non-partisan" citizen review board to

investigate the St. Louis Police Department.[18] In addition, on September 17, 1968, the Executive Committee of the Archdiocese Commission on Human Rights expressed "an urgent concern over the growing antagonism between the police and certain segments of the Black and white communities."[19] Furthermore, the Committee supported the United Methodist Church Conference's demand for "investigation into recent events that 'have called the objectivity and the justice of certain policemen into question.'"[20] The Committee also advised that "those who claim to be victims of police brutality initiate suits in federal court under various civil rights acts."[21]

Moreover, Democratic candidate for Congress in the First District, Bill Clay, sent a telegram to the U.S. Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, urging him to investigate the incident involving Koen and Dent and the police. Clay demanded that the Attorney General investigate six charges stemming specifically from the beatings of Koen and Dent. These charges included, "making mass, illegal arrests of persons leaving an orderly, peaceful meeting; brutal beatings of persons inside the 9th police station; harassment through repeated arrests of individuals on suspicion of minor traffic offenses, such as faulty brake lights; flourishing automatic weapons from identifiable police cars cruising in the Negro community; destruction of private property by known police officers; intimidating and threatening public statements by high ranking police officials which create sanctions for acts of police brutality."[22]

President of the Teamsters, Harold Gibbons, also led organized labor's reaction to police harassment of the Black Liberators. In an editorial published in the *Argus*, Gibbons warned, "I declared that the basic values of American life are at stake whenever police power becomes a substitute for due process. When police break up a public assembly and arrest persons for what they say; when those arrested are unable to secure bond through ordinary channels because the authorities decide to harass them; when police threaten citizens; when the Chairman of the Police Board authorizes police to use a 'heavy hand'; when Mayor Cervantes lets it be known that certain persons are 'unwelcome' in this city; when persons are followed, arrested, and jailed for minor infractions; or when persons are severely beaten in a police station, we are already caught in the web of a police state."[23] Gibbons went on to caution that if such incidents went unpunished or were not investigated, law enforcement could attack organized labor next and continue to threaten and violate human rights. Gibbons asserted, "this concern ought to be of particular importance to the labor movement. The memories of some appear to be very short, as if labor itself did not cry out against the arrest, intimidation, and beatings of strikers which was once so prevalent. Perhaps some think now that we 'have made it' I can only warn that the

next few years could see a turning of the tide where labor is concerned, then an anti-labor movement by official organs of the state . . . Once tolerated, police state tactics can very easily be turned to a new target. And throughout history, whenever police states have arisen, the labor movement has become the first target."[24]

On the other hand, organized labor's support of the Black Liberators was criticized by a faction within the Teamsters that circulated a petition opposing Harold Gibbons and the Teamsters' support for the Liberators. Specifically, immediately following the Koen and Dent incident with the police, Gibbons offered to provide arrested Liberators with bond.[25] On September 24, 1968 a petition was circulated during a Teamster meeting stating, "we the undersigned Teamsters do not pledge out support to the Black militant movement as stated by Harold Gibbons. We will support a movement to restore law and order in our cities and maintain it."[26]

Moreover, according to Ocie Pastard of the Mid City Congress and Robert Curtis, attorney for the Black Liberators, these incidents between police and the Black Liberators had a tremendous impact on the mood of the city. In the context of the long hot summers of the mid and late 1960s, as well as other incidents of police brutality against civil rights activists that occurred throughout the country, this incident in St. Louis heightened racial tension and increased concern for the potential for rioting in St. Louis. Pastard and Curtis stated, "the community is tense, with many person fearing another lawless outburst by the St. Louis police, as witnessed by their lawless harassment and attacks on the Liberators and by the actions of police in other cities, the attacks on the Panther headquarters in Oakland, and the beating up of Panthers in New York."[27] In mentioning attacks against the Panthers in addition to attacks against the Liberators, their statement further connected the local liberation movement in St. Louis with a larger national movement by documenting the common reaction and repression these movements faced from government officials. Put simply, a shared experience as targets of law enforcement harassment and repression connected the local St. Louis Black Power movement with other movements throughout the country.

As hostility between the Liberators and police continued through September 1968, support for the Liberators surfaced through marches, rallies, and protests. For example, a rally to protest police harassment was held on September 7, 1968 at the Sheldon Memorial and on September 10, 1968 "more than one hundred leaders of virtually every civil rights group agreed to sponsor a rally . . . for community opposition to what was called increased police action against Negro activists."[28] A rally was also held on September 15, 1968 at the Page Park YMCA and included a march

to Mayor Cervantes's home. Speakers at this rally included Harold Gibbons, International Vice President of Teamsters Union; Norman Seay; State Representative Ray Howard; Percy Green of ACTION; Alderman Darst; Benjamin Uchitelle, lawyer from the American Jewish Committee. Another march to protest police harassment occurred on September 30, 1968 from the Old Cathedral to Busch Stadium. Marchers were scheduled to arrive at Busch Stadium at the time when the first game of the 1968 World Series between the St. Louis Cardinals and Detroit Tigers was to begin.

These efforts to develop a united front against police harassment and repression culminated in a law suit, filed October 10, 1968 by the ACLU, seeking an injunction against police harassment of local human rights groups. Defendants in the suit included Charles Koen, Percy Green, Richard Koch, and Joel Allen of Washington University SDS. The trial lasted three days with twenty witnesses heard. Ultimately U.S. District Court Judge Roy W. Harper denied the injunction against alleged police harassment. Explaining his decision Judge Harper stated, "in my opinion the suit was brought in an effort to get publicity and to raise money for the various organizations involved."[29] Furthermore, he stated, "we live in a good city . . . these are trying times. The effort of this law suit is to rock the boat and not keep it in steady waters."[30] Moreover, with regard to a larger systematic effort by police and law enforcement officials to attack human rights organizations in the city, Judge Harper, contrary to the evidence provided, was reported in the *Post Dispatch* to have asserted that "he heard no evidence to show that police were engaged in any pattern of harassment against" local human rights groups.[31]

It is important to emphasize that attacks against the Black Liberators were part of a larger systematic and coordinated effort by local and national law enforcement officials to "neutralize" the Black liberation struggle. For example, Robert Curtis and Ocie Pastard argued that "after the Powell arrests, St. Louis Police, in an organizational move, assigned new commanding officers, Capt. Harry Lee and an African American Lieutenant, Fred Grimes, to the 9th Precinct. Reliable information was gained that Capt. Lee and Lt. Grimes were assigned to that precinct for the purpose of putting the Black Liberators out of business. Lt. Grimes was overheard in a conversation that he was going to 'get' the Black Liberators out of there."[32] This was a systematic, coordinated, and conscious effort because reaction and repression occurred on such a broad plane, taking many forms, employing a wide variety of tactics, all the while being defended and justified by the larger legal and political system as well as sanctioned by the larger public. While the beating of Koen and Dent did help galvanize many in the community behind the Black Liberators, no significant structural changes

occurred and no legislation was passed to punish or prevent future police brutality As previously explained, such actions were defended and justified initially by the Cold War's battle against a domestic and international communist threat, and then as an effort to preserve law and order that many believed to be threatened by this movement.

This coordinated and conscious attack against the local Black Power movement was commented on by George Johnson, Chairman and Mrs. Darby Tate, Vice Chair; and Craig Johnson, of the Community Organization for Neighborhood Enlightenment. They asserted, "if the St. Louis Police Department would pursue the Cosa Nostra with the same vigor they use to harass the Black Liberators, this would be a better and safer city in which to live. The police department is finally showing its true, blue color. It is trying to wipe out a group of Black men without due process of law. The department takes this stand based on its own warped sense of justice assuming that the policeman on the beat is to act as judge, jury, and executioner. But, it is not supposed to work that way in our democratic society. The fact that Black men were arrested, while exercising a constitution right (freedom of speech) while other Black men are fighting for 'freedom' in Vietnam, even though they will never enjoy freedom at home, only points up the gross hypocrisy in our so-called democratic society. We wonder when Lt. Fred Grimes will realize what we all know: that he is being used by the white power structure to clamp down on Black people who dare to speak out against this hypocrisy and injustice, because that power structure thinks it will 'look better' coming from a Black man in a Black community. One faint hope for justice is the establishment of a civilian review board, composed of the people of the city of St. Louis. If action is not taken toward establishment of such a civilian board, the trend, already begun, toward a police state, reminiscent of Nazi Germany, will continue, becoming worse."[33] Additional evidence of this systematic and coordinated reaction to the Black liberation movement becomes apparent when we examine government repression of other groups engaged in the St. Louis Black liberation struggle.

The St. Louis Nation of Islam, like other NOI temples throughout the country, established institutions to serve the local community. Such institutions represented efforts by local people to express their autonomy, right to self determination and control over their own communities. One of these institutions was the Shabazz restaurant in St. Louis. Institutions established by the Nation of Islam and other organizations that fought for Black liberation became easy targets for government repression. Such was the case in 1966 when the St. Louis health inspector closed the Shabazz restaurant.[34] The *St. Louis Argus* criticized the closing. The day after the

story ran in the *Argus*, the Shabazz restaurant was reopened. Institutions such as the Shabazz restaurant represented power and independence in the African American community. However, for corporate interests and the government, these institutions represented potential breeding grounds for subversion and violence. The tragic irony illustrated by this incident is on the one hand the government promoted the formation of African American businesses through Black Capitalism, yet on the other hand targeted successful African American businesses such as the Shabazz restaurant. Yet the irony of this situation disappears when considering that the goal of Black Capitalism was to establish "responsible" African American institutions controlled by the white power structure. Shabazz restaurant was an institution that was fiercely independent from the white power structure and thus represented a threat to the corporate monopoly on the African American dollar as well as control and exploitation of the larger African American community.

The *Globe Democrat*'s series on the Nation of Islam in St. Louis further illustrates how the larger public was unable to see beyond the rhetoric of Black Power to recognize and understand the programs offered by Black Power advocates. The article's title "Extremists Bear Watching: Black Muslims Fail to Flourish Here," immediately inspires fear, paranoia and vigilance, further attesting to the inability and refusal of the media and larger public to recognize and understand the actual programs of the Nation of Islam.[35] In addition, the article contributes to misunderstanding and fear of the NOI when it ominously describes the local mosque as "this squatty former dry goods store at 1434 North Grand Blvd. is a house of worship with a difference, a difference that has aroused concern here and elsewhere across the nation."[36] It goes on to state, "it is the St. Louis home of the 'Black Muslim' movement, an extremist Negro sect that peppers its sermons and texts with militantly anti-white preaching."[37] By focusing on the Nation's most inflammatory rhetoric and controversial ideas, this article presents the NOI in a myopic and prejudiced manner in order to justify government repression of the movement. For example, the article states, "the Muslims reject not only the 'white man's name' but his church and his company as well. They are as ardently anti-integrationist as the Ku Klux Klan, and their professed goal is to be given a part of the United States for their own 'Black Nation.' Because of such teachings and their blanket labeling of white people as 'enemies' and 'devils,' the Muslims have frequently been accused of hate-mongering."[38] The article even quotes from a "textbook" written by Elijah Muhammad, "the whole Caucasian race is a race of devils . . . the truth of the white race and kind will make all Black mankind hate them."[39]

Globe Democrat editorialist Edith Kermit Roosevelt offered another misguided analysis of the Nation of Islam. Roosevelt compared the Nation of Islam to "the secret society of the Assassins or Hashishiyin," "Carbonari," "Irish Republican Brotherhood," and other "secret societies" that employed Islam "as a cloak" under which to "rise to power" to commit crimes and murder.[40] Consistent with other attacks against Black liberation groups, Roosevelt draws on Cold War paranoia and fears of domestic communist conspiracies by asserting that the Communist Party had "infiltrated" the Nation and was to include them in their larger revolutionary effort. She writes, "the Communist Party has assigned them a real role to play only when the time is ripe. In wartime or in an emergency the Muslims could also be used by modern internationalists to create panic and violence among our people. State and federal legislatures should immediately investigate this cult which Rep. Frances E. Walter, Chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee, brands 'a growing danger to our security.'"[41] The primary point made here is that the Nation of Islam offered a viable program for African American liberation and social equality, a program that went unacknowledged and misunderstood by the larger public due to the inability of the media to see past their preconceived notions of Black Power and the Cold War. This shallow and prejudiced interpretation of the NOI encouraged and justified reaction to the larger Black liberation movement.

While the *Globe* reported the possible "threat" of these so-called extremists, it also disarmed the local NOI, assuring the public that the NOI did not represent any real threat to the city. The *Globe* stated, "while the movement has grown in recent years and is said to have more than 100,000 followers nationally, it apparently has not gotten fully off the ground here. It claims 1,100 temple-going members in St. Louis. But the best informed student of the movement, Prof. C. Eric Lincoln of Clark College, Atlanta, places the count at 150 to 200, and some local estimates are even lower."[42] Moreover, the *Globe Democrat* tried to further disarm the Nation of Islam by reporting the larger African American community's opposition to the NOI.[43] For instance, the *Globe* reported that "some" local African American leaders "are unimpressed by the small active following enlisted by the Black supremacy sect here. They say the Muslims are ignored in Negro leadership circles and should be. Some are disturbed by the membership the movement does have, particularly when its uncounted fringe sympathizers are taken into consideration . . . some feel the Muslims are too bound up in their own anti-white, anti-Christian, anti-integrationist doctrine to be a serious mass force in themselves. But they worry about whether the movement is a symptom of more extensive hostility."[44] Among those

leaders whose attitudes were included in this article, were M. Leo Bohanon, Urban League executive director; Margaret Bush Wilson, president of St. Louis NAACP; Chester Stovall, Director of Welfare.[45]

By the fall of 1968 direct conflict between the federal government and Black Power advocates, including the Black Liberators, led to greater publicity and scrutiny of reaction and repression of the Black liberation movement and the use of government intelligence. By the early 1970s many of these local and national programs to expose, disrupt and neutralize the movement, its activists and sympathizers came under increased scrutiny. One of the primary incidents that ultimately brought these counterintelligence programs under investigation was the Watergate scandal. As O'Reilly notes, "Watergate had damaged the national security mystique. Intelligence community files, including the FBI's records, opened to an unprecedented degree."[46]

In addition, concern with government abuses of intelligence led to the creation of the U.S. Senate's Select Committee to study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities in 1975.[47] The Church Committee, as it became known, was specifically created to examine, "the extent, if any, to which illegal, improper, or unethical activities were engaged in" by the intelligence agencies. The Select Committee was also authorized to investigate specific charges of illegal domestic surveillance by the CIA, domestic intelligence and counterintelligence operations carried out against Americans by the FBI."[48]

Although Kenneth O'Reilly concludes that "in reality, there were few ties between the Communist Party and the civil rights movement and only one dusty connection (Stanley Levison) serious enough to give reasonable men pause," in the context of the Cold War, repression of the Black Power movement, in part, stemmed from concern that domestic social unrest was and could be manipulated and encouraged by America's enemies.[49] Moving beyond the debate regarding the actual threat communists presented to the movement, that domestic social unrest would be used by America's enemies as important Cold War propaganda for the hearts and minds of people throughout the world, this concern was substantiated time again as school desegregation, and incidents of police brutality and racial violence, became front page news in foreign countries throughout the 1960s.

Despite the creation of the Church Committee and greater scrutiny of federal intelligence, government reaction to Black Power continued to employ extralegal devices and strategies to neutralize and remove individuals from the movement. These efforts resulted in the wrongful and illegal imprisonment of many activists who, because of the reasons for their detention, became political prisoners.

     After graduating from Harris Teachers College in St. Louis, Bobby
Williams traveled from his home in St. Louis to Cape Girardeau to begin
work with the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) in 1965. Williams
was accompanied by his wife Shirley and their two children. From 1965 to
1969 Williams worked for the OEO and Civic Center in Cape Girardeau
providing food, clothes, housing, and tutoring classes in the African Ameri-
can community.[50] In 1969 the OEO and Civic Center fired Williams.[51]
After being fired Williams helped organize the United Front of Cape
Girardeau.[52] The United Front "took Black people to city council, church,
and civic board meetings to request jobs, housing, and medical care for
poor Blacks in Cape Girardeau."[53] Immediately after he began this work he
started receiving death threats from anonymous callers and effigies of him
were hung from the lampposts at night and burned.[54] Refusing to give up
his work in the face of intimidation, Williams continued his work with the
United Front. In May 1971, Williams legally purchased two rifles in Cape
Girardeau. In June 1971, he was arrested for "lying about his residency"
on the federal gun application and failing to include a previous concealed
weapon charge that had been under appeal.[55] The U.S. Justice Department
headed by John Mitchell and Robert Mardian prosecuted the case and an
all white jury found him guilty and sentenced him to one year in the county
jail.[56] Williams appealed his case and the Missouri Supreme Court acquit-
ted him, admitting that he had been framed.[57] After his acquittal Williams
began commuting between Cape Girardeau and Cairo, Illinois where he
worked with the Cairo United Front. His family stayed in Cape Girardeau.
Between his acquittal in 1971 and 1974 Williams was tried and convicted
three more times on weapons charges. For the first two convictions he won
appeals in federal court. However, on September 3, 1974 Williams was sen-
tenced to five years in the United States Penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indi-
ana.[58] In response to Williams's imprisonment, the National Committee to
Free Bobby Williams was formed to fight for his freedom and the freedom
of other political prisoners.[59]

     While the specific case of Bobby Williams was reported by *Proud* in
St. Louis, the magazine also made a point of emphasizing that his case was
part of a larger systematic and coordinated war against the Black liberation
movement. For example, *Proud* reported, "the trial and imprisonment of
Bobby Williams is one more example of how activists, mainly Black, have
been treated in this country in the past ten years."[60] *Proud* also asserted that
Williams was another victim of government repression included in a long
list of others who had been prosecuted and imprisoned for their promotion
of racial justice and equality. The magazine wrote, "after the past ten years,
Bobby Williams, Angela Davis, Reverend Ben Chavis, Martin Luther King,

Fred Hampton, and many Vietnam veterans, Black and white, have been jailed or killed because they said racism was the greatest American problem, and that it had to be solved by Blacks and whites together."[61]

In another article on political prisoners in the Missouri prison system, *Proud* reported on the 1975 death of Jesse Lang, a 31-year-old African American prisoner at the Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City.[62] According to *Proud*, "Lang, who had been incarcerated since 1968, was first labeled a 'troublemaker' and a 'communist' about three years ago when he became interested in political writings and requested that his family send him such material. From that point on, he experienced constant intimidation by the prison administration."[63] As reported by *Proud*, Lang explained that "1972 and 1973 were very brutal years, particularly for him and other Black inmates who were engaged in political education projects. Many prisoners were beaten and threatened."[64] In protest to prison reaction, Lang led African American prisoners in a work strike in January 1973. Lang and the other protestors were subsequently beaten and placed in maximum security.[65] According to *Proud*, Lang spent the last months of his life in solidarity confinement under the influence of Prolixin, a strong sedative given to him by the prison.[66] Lang died of an unreported cause while in the confines of Missouri State Penitentiary.

As the cases of Bobby Williams and Jesse Lang illustrate, direct conflict between local law enforcement and the Black Liberators in the Fall 1968 reflects only part of this discussion of violence and repression in the city of St. Louis. After 1964 additional violence occurred in St. Louis, incidents that were in fact initiated by local activists. While it is necessary to review how violence was employed in these rare instances, it is also important to examine how activists employed the mere threat of violence as a tactic and how the city responded to such threats.

On September 10, 1967, with the fraudulent 1967 mayoral election in East St. Louis still fresh in people's minds, H. Rap Brown, SNCC chairman, spoke to roughly 2,000 people at Lincoln Senior High School in East St. Louis. The media found it easy to blame Brown for inciting two days of violence that followed. However, the *Post Dispatch* reported that the central issue around which violence erupted was the murder of 19 year old Roosevelt Young by East St. Louis police officers.[67] Although Brown was not personally involved in the outbreak of violence, according to witnesses, several people who were present at Brown's speech were later involved in a rally during which violence was advocated. According to witnesses, "a group of about 200 Negroes, most of whom had been at the Brown rally about five hours earlier, met on a parking lot adjacent to the liquor store at 1500 Broadway at about 8:00. Five local Black Power

advocates spoke. 'You know what you got to do, brother. Let's get to it,' one said."[68]

The day after Brown spoke, roughly thirty African Americans "shouting Black Power slogans" went to the offices of the *Metro East Journal* to issue a statement concerning the shooting of Roosevelt Young. This statement attacked the police department and asserted that Young was the victim of police brutality. No violence occurred, no arrests were made, and no charges were filed during this protest.[69]

Brown's speech in East St. Louis was attacked not only for allegedly inciting a riot, but Brown, Carmichael, Hutchings, and others who spoke in St. Louis were also attacked for their promotion of Black Power. Such criticism illustrates the larger ideological debate concerning the meaning and utility of Black Power as a concept for liberation. For example, an editorial in the *Argus* entitled "Genocide" asserted that Black Power and its advocates did nothing more than spout empty, exaggerated rhetoric which ultimately did damage to the African American liberation movement. The editorial states, "most Negroes have paid little attention to the cries of such violent talkers as Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael of the SNICKS. As a branch president of the NAACP told me: 'Rap Brown came here and called on Negroes to burn the town because of race discrimination. But he didn't light any matches. He collected a big fee for his talk and took the next plane out of town. People here thought he was a joke, except that he got big headline in the paper . . . Every time these over-heated orators call on Negroes to get guns to stop this nonexistent genocide plot by whites, about ten whites go out and buy guns to protect themselves against a nonexistent Negro 'revolution' for every Negro who buys a gun. So their call for guns is both stupid and provocative. The only way these wild orators can claim a following is by falsely upgrading arsonists and looters into revolutionaries. But people who loot liquor stores and television stores are not revolutionaries trying to change society for the better. They are just out to get something for themselves."[70]

This editorial illustrates the debate within the Black liberation movement as to the meaning and utility of Black Power. It also points to the larger public's inability to see beyond rhetoric to acknowledge and understand Brown's point when he "attacked U.S. policy in Vietnam, American capitalism, the white press, and the government system."[71] While Brown's promotion of violence as a strategy for liberation was not endorsed by all African Americans seeking justice and equality, it is nonetheless necessary to understand Brown's remarks. It is also important to recognize that Brown's remarks were calculated and specifically chosen with full understanding of the results they could potentially produce. The fact that

we can only surmise as to the intended results of Black Power's rhetoric, whether Brown and Carmichael's speeches were specifically designed to incite violence or merely embarrass the federal government, illustrates the flexibility and fluidity of Black Power that allowed anyone to infuse the concept with their own meaning to promote their own agenda.

Another incident in East St. Louis occurred on April 26, 1968, when a hand grenade exploded in a local bar. Three additional undetonated grenades were also found in undisclosed areas throughout the city. Furthermore, on April 28, 1968, East St. Louis police, in collaboration with the FBI, raided "the apartment of one of the militant Negro leaders" and found three more grenades and bullets along with "stacks of what police called 'plans for terrorism.'"[72] According to East St. Louis police officials, the planned attacks were the result of "an apparent new unity among Black radicals, and the emergence in the Black Nationalist groups of something approaching a common philosophy."[73]

The result of this episode, as noted by the *Metro East Journal,* was "a hardening of attitudes on both sides."[74] Put simply, many whites in East St. Louis endorsed increased police repression of Black Power groups and organized their own vigilante patrols. On the other hand, among Black Power advocates, including members of East St. Louis's Black Economic Union, this event encouraged and inspired greater militancy and talk of "revolution and warfare."[75]

These episodes demonstrate the use of violence as a strategy for Black liberation. While the use of violence was by and large rare in St. Louis, primarily limited to its counterpart across the river, these incidents inspired concern and fear in the larger public, concern and fear that, as previously discussed, brought harsh government reaction. Violence was a strategy for Black liberation because elements of the larger concept of Black Power endorsed the kind of revolutionary structural change that has been and always will be resisted at any cost by the dominant group. Decolonization efforts in Africa, South America, Cuba, Asia, and even in North America, proved that liberation by a colonized, oppressed, and exploited people would be resisted at any cost by individuals, groups, and nations that stand to be on the losing end of these efforts. History and current events proved that the collision of liberation efforts and resistance to these efforts often resulted in violence. Floyd McKissick articulated this point when he stated, "Black people cannot wait for white America to act. For their own self preservation, Black people must take steps to free themselves. If white America does not respond to peaceful protest, if it does not respond to limited rebellion, Black people will be forced to work for their liberation through violent revolution. There will be no other way . . . Black people alone cannot

peacefully alter the system. But they can destroy it. Perhaps the threat of this destruction will force the American people to seek justice."[76] In addition, although Black Power advocates often looked beyond U.S. borders for models for liberation, according to McKissick, one simply had to open an American history textbook to find a model of violent revolution. McKissick asserted, "American society is not founded upon nonviolence. There is little in the American heritage that is conducive to its teachings. The legends of the West, cowboys and Indians, and the American Revolution, Minutemen and Redcoats, America is rich with a history of violence. Passivity and acquiescence are invariably interpreted as weakness."[77]

The potential for additional violence was revealed in early 1970, when St. Louis police raided the headquarters of the Black Nationalists at 5585 Pershing Ave. During the raid, thirty individuals were arrested and seven rifles, three shotguns, four hand guns, three knives, and a "large" supply of ammunition were confiscated.[78] Among those arrested were the leaders of the Black Nationalists, Yusuf Shabazz, Sadjene Dumas, and Jose P. Renteria.[79] The three were charged with "suspected violation of the Federal Firearms Act and of possession of stolen property."[80] Both the *Globe Democrat* and *Post Dispatch* implied that the weapons were to be used by the Black Nationalists in a turf war against the Black Liberators. The *Globe Democrat* suggested that the Black Nationalists were attempting to establish themselves in the St. Louis area as a rival to the already entrenched Black Liberators. Specifically, the Nationalists established themselves in the West End, while the Liberators defined the Pruitt-Igoe area as their territory. As stated in the *Globe Democrat*, "police said the Nationalists 'moved in on Liberator territory,' to assist with the distribution of food and clothing in a power move that Liberators found offensive."[81] In addition, the *Post Dispatch* reported, "the two groups clashed recently over the distribution of food and relief supplies to residents of Pruitt-Igoe after frozen water pipes burst and flooded many of the apartments, driving families from their homes. The Black Nationalists, who assisted in the distribution in an area formerly reserved to the Liberators, reportedly thought some of the supplies should have been given to destitute West End families."[82] It was also suggested that tension between the two organizations was aggravated when Black Nationalists attempted to establish a community patrol in the Pruitt-Igoe area, the area traditionally considered Liberator "turf."[83]

As these examples make clear, despite the fact that St. Louis had avoided urban rebellions, violent episodes did nonetheless occur. Preoccupation with the absence of urban rebellion blinded many in St. Louis to the reality that individual and often covert acts of violence did occur. By the late 1960s the avoidance of a riot became a source of pride in St. Louis and for many, a

testament to good race relations. In other words, urban rebellions became the barometer by which to measure race relations. For many, the fact that St. Louis avoided a rebellion in the 1960s confirmed that race relations were good. As a result of this reasoning, the city developed a vested interest not only in celebrating the absence of violence, thus confirming good race relations, but also ignoring or obscuring any facts to the contrary. Therefore, this preoccupation and ultimate celebration of the absence of violence in St. Louis has obscured the fact that violence did occur and that race relations were not as good as the city would like to have believed. Put simply, a city need not have a race riot to confirm that race relations are bad. Nor does the absence of a riot confirm that race relations are good. That St. Louis was preoccupied with the avoidance of violence in the 1960s and had already begun to celebrate its absence is evidenced in numerous articles examining how the city was able to avoid a riot, and articles praising and celebrating local race relations.

For example, the *Globe Democrat* celebrated the absence of a riot in St. Louis following the King assassination, again, taking this as a testament to good race relations in the city. The *Globe* stated, "the tranquility of the observance denoted a far deeper sadness than could possibly be read into the ugly tumult and lawlessness that gripped so many cities. It was evidence of decades of close interest and effort to remedy the plight and shore up the rights of Negroes on the part of metropolitan St. Louis."[84] The *Globe Democrat* went on to optimistically remark, "there are reasons why St. Louis has not been touched, and let us devoutly trust won't be hurt, by the radicalism that amounts to open insurrection in so many of the country's metropolitan ghettos . . . Basically good racial relations here stem from a widespread, universal purpose of the community to deal compassionately and intelligently with the racial issue. Not only is this a design clear and growing, it has been genuinely implemented in many ways."[85] The article continued its celebration of peace and optimism stating, "certainly much still needs to be done. But the willingness is evident, efforts moving steadily. In almost every area various private and official programs are under way to meet the challenge of inequality long suffered by the Negro minority. No longer is causal tokenism made as a gesture and realism swept under the rug. Nor has this been the case for some years." In addition, the *Globe* reported, "we believe St. Louis is in the van of forward-looking cities, possibly in a class by itself in race problems. Private charities have for years been contributing funds for social and educational needs among the disadvantaged. Maximum possible federal monies available for hard core relief and schools have been solicited and obtained . . . Big and little business have organized to provide jobs and job training for the Negro

unemployed, who presently haven't the ability or opportunity to get jobs . . . St. Louis has virtually all the needed laws for ameliorating racial tensions and contributing to advance of the minority. No other city has more, most not as many."[86] Such remarks confirm that the absence of riots had already become part of the city's folklore, to be celebrated and protected.

Because riots were used as a barometer to measure race relations, the absence of violence in St. Louis confirmed for many that local race relations were good. The *Globe* contributed to this naïve optimism in reporting, "the school problem is unresolved, but the Board of Education is striving mightily to obtain adequate schools and, more important, the best teachers for ghetto classrooms . . . St. Louis has an open housing law. It doesn't work too well yet, but it eventually will, with greater efforts and greater understanding. Moves are underway for more and improved low cost housing, and we shall get it . . . we know of no other urban concentration that has a wider representation of Negroes in public office, in the Board of Aldermen, on the Police Board, in top municipal posts and in the School Board. A Negro is now president of the Board of Education."[87]

Another article in the *Globe Democrat* attributed the absence of a riot to the police. Specifically, the *Globe* commented, "the department has moved in on numerous occasions and prevented problems which would have grown into acute situations in other cities. The police community relations program also has done much in settling racial tensions."[88] Moreover, Edward L. Dowd, former president of the St. Louis Police Commissioners, asserted, "racial troubles have been held to a minimum in St. Louis because of the efficient work of the police department . . . basically, it is that the men of the St. Louis Police Department are highly trained, experienced, dedicated, and know how to do their job."[89]

Evidence of the city's preoccupation with the absence of violence as proof of good race relations was further demonstrated when the Human Development Corporation in St. Louis sponsored a panel discussion in early 1968 to discuss how St. Louis had avoided a race riot. The discussion, "Why Hasn't St. Louis Experienced a Long Hot Summer?" included James H. Rollins, Co-Chairman of the National Conference on New Politics; Marian Oldham; Morris Hatchett, President of St. Louis NAACP; William Bailey, Vice Chairman of CORE; and Robert J. Barton, Director of the Police Community Relations Program.[90] Rollins blamed violence on "militants" and suggested that violence was avoided in St. Louis specifically because of the absence of militants in St. Louis. In particular he stated, "you just don't have the militant groups that are with the people to get them in motion."[91] Rollins added, "the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the

Black Muslims were not active in St. Louis, 'CORE hasn't been particularly active recently . . . and the NAACP has never done anything.'"[92] In addition, Rollins contended that "the apathy of the Negro community and the aggressiveness of the Police Department" were additional "factors in preventing disorders."[93] Interestingly, while Rollins did not explain what he meant by police aggressiveness, police aggressiveness, harassment or brutality has typically been defined as one of the primary causes of racial "disorders." Rollins's remarks reinforce the point that by the late 1960s St. Louis had a vested interest in denying the existence of "militants" in the city as well as denying the fact that violent incidents did occur. Rollins denies this for fear that such evidence would tarnish the city's reputation and prove that race relations in St. Louis were not as good as most people wanted to believe. The HDC also took credit for the absence of a riot, suggesting that their anti-poverty work improved conditions responsible for rioting.[94] Another factor the panelists attributed to prevention of a riot in St. Louis included "fairly good," "lines of communication with the power structure."[95] On the other hand, panelists did recognize that conditions were ripe in St. Louis for violence. Specifically, Marian Oldham "cited underemployment, poor health care, inadequate welfare, police brutality, poor housing, poor education, and high food prices as seven factors that could contribute to unrest."[96] William Bailey of CORE also stated, "the police had done more to encourage riots than discourage them. He was critical also of religious leaders and politicians for not dealing with genuine community problems."[97] While these last remarks note that community leaders recognized the potential for a riot in St. Louis, their remarks also point out that they failed to recognize that violence had already occurred in the city, it simply took a different form than they expected.

St. Louisans used the absence of rioting as testament to good race relations. That the city of St. Louis avoided a riot while so many other cities did not, was and is celebrated and has become a source of pride. The absence of a riot has not only become a source of pride for St. Louisans, but part of the city's larger folklore and mystique. The city's use of a riot as the barometer by which to measure race relations and subsequent conclusion that the absence of riots equated to good race relations obscures and hides the fact that violence did in fact occur. Yet as this discussion explains, rather than occurring on a massive scale, violence often occurred on an individual level, was isolated, and at times covert. In addition, as this discussion demonstrates, the threat and potential for violence was always present, just below the surface. Yet because St. Louisans celebrate the absence of a riot as a source of pride contributing to the mystique and legend of the city and as testament to good race relations, St. Louisans have

a vested interest in denying that these individual acts of violence occurred and that violence was always a potential. At this point in the early twenty first century, the city has a vested interest in preserving this myth while burying any evidence that violence did occur. St. Louis denies that violence did occur and was an ever present threat because it proves that race relations in St. Louis were not as good as people wanted to believe. It does not take a riot to prove that race relations are bad. Finally, the use and threat of violence was a tactic for Black liberation and symbolized the redefinition of the civil rights movement from a movement of protest and struggle for civil rights, to a revolution for African American liberation. Violence took on greater importance and became the defining characteristic of the movement that the larger public focused on and reacted to at the cost of ignoring the fundamental goals which violence, in addition to other tactics, could be used to achieve.

Black Power was an ambiguous, often perplexing, and contradictory concept that meant different things to different people at different times and in different locations. As a result, the meaning of Black Power was often at the mercy of any capricious agenda. Failure to look beyond the sights and sounds of its surface has too often resulted in, at best, a simple dismissal, and at worst, violent reaction. Years after the sights and sounds of Black Power no longer evoke the same intense reaction from law enforcement, the meaning and utility of Black Power, as well as its impact, is and will be debated. It is the hope that this work will add a new dimension to such debates, raising new questions about the location of Black liberation that have previously not entered into the discussion.

Notes

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6. Grenz. 55.
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8. Ibid. 57.
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10. Ibid. 62.
11. Ibid. 62.
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13. Ibid. 63.
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27. *The Missouri Republican*. "Explanation of Segregation Plan, which will be Law in Ten Days." March 1, 1916.
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