

INTRODUCTION

The civil rights activism of the 1950s and 1960s was in fact a the continuation of the struggle to extend the civil rights existing in the American constitution to African Americans who felt excluded from the benefits of American citizenship until then.

Obviously, the achievement of full citizenship by Americans of African descent was long and often painful, but certainly an inspiring process which culminated with the adoption of decisive anti-discrimination legislations outlawing legal discrimination and segregation irrevocably in the mid-1960s. These laws along with recent supreme court decisions constituted the responses of the American government to the demands civil rights organizations. Their aim was to extend enjoyment of the rights and freedom guaranteed to all Americans by the constitution to African American citizens and to secure their political participation. Beyond what looked like a miracle produced during this tumultuous decade of recent American history, the issue at stake here is to discuss how the socio-historical and political context of the 1950s and 1960s, the role played by the main black actors of the struggle and how the American government's answers served as catalysts for the success of the movement despite lots of obstacles.

1. Socio-historical and political context

The socio-historical contributing factors relate the peculiarity of the American context for African Americans. After more than two centuries and a half of bondage and nearly one century of submission to Jim Crow system, the history of Americans of African descent came to a turning point when president F.D. Roosevelt used an executive order to ban discrimination against blacks in the armament industries.

This policy tending toward the integration of blacks continued though timidly under the administrations of D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson put under pressure by civil rights activism.

1.1. African-Americans and the American Dream

It is amazing that the American context that permitted the enslavement of blacks and their relegation to second class status carried in itself the remedies to the unjust treatment inflicted to them. They are, among other things, the creeds or fundamental values contained in the Declaration of Independence and the American constitution.

As a matter of fact, the Declaration of Independence stated in a revolutionary way for its contemporaries that "All men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." This formulation which does not exclude anybody on the basis of skin color is famous for its universalism. Martin Luther King would be ironical about this aspect when he observed that it did not say all white men, but all men, which included black men as well. According to him, this formulation implied the recognition that each individual had certain basic rights known to be good-given to all human beings. Coming to the constitution, its Bill of Rights is supposed to function as a shield protecting the rights and freedom of all citizens while the RReconstruction

amendments added to it addressed specifically the problems of the freedmen. In addition to affording American citizenship to blacks, the 14th amendment also established the principle of equal protection of the laws stating that all persons in each state were entitled to privileges and immunities, and due process of law provided by each state. The 15th amendment extended voting right to all male citizens regardless of skin color or previous condition of servitude. In other words, it made unconstitutional to deny any male citizen the right to vote on the basis of race.

The American Dream of liberty, justice for all and equality rooted in the American creeds was another aspect of the American context which inspired black activists and their leaders and provided them with the courage needed to face in a resolute way the obstacles on their way to freedom and to their integration into American society. The obstacles included political machinations, white bigotry, police brutality, judicial harassment and both collective and individual acts of violence. This American dream is eloquently expressed by Martin Luther King in an address in Washington DC in July 1962 on behalf of African Americans as follows:

‘we are simply seeking to bring into full realization the American Dream. A dream yet unfulfilled. A dream of equality of opportunity, privilege and property, of a land where every man will respect the dignity and worth of human personality. This is the dream’.

The aim of the civil rights activists was to push the American Government to action for the achievement of the true meaning of the promises contained in the fundamental documents known to be the Declaration of Independence and the constitution two centuries earlier.

Another constitutional provision often mentioned to justify actions in support of civil rights is the first amendment to the constitution enshrining ‘the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for redress of grievances.’

Therefore, it was in conformity with this provision that civil rights organizations conducted non-violent actions such as marches, rallies, sit-ins, pray-ins, boycotts and freedom rides to defend their constitutional right to equal treatment and to full political participation.

1.2. Socio-political context of the struggle

The decade of the 1950s was decisive in the African Americans' struggle for equality in the United States almost ninety years after the Emancipation Proclamation and despite the participation of black soldiers in the two World Wars in defense of national security. In this struggle, African Americans had to rely primarily on their own forces to break the yoke of segregation and discrimination in order to recover human dignity.

Despite some signs of presidential sympathy toward the black population of the country, the 1950s were marked by an upsurge of violence against blacks. Florida NAACP leader, Harry T. Moore, and his wife were killed by a bomb at his home in 1951. Mississippi registration activists, George Lee, was fatally shot. A Chicago youth aged 14, Emmet Till, was brutally lynched in Money, Mississippi in 1954 and his white killers were absolved by an all-white jury.

Herbert Lee and Edgar Mevers were killed in Mississippi in 1961 and 1963. In all of these murders, none of the white killers were sentenced to prison.

It was clear that the effect of the accumulation over decades of injustice, exclusion from political participation and blatant acts of violence specifically directed toward blacks was that African Americans were fed up with that kind of life. They could no longer wait and believed the time to fight for their dignity had come.

By good fortune, the Supreme Court delivered its landmark decision in *Brown V. Board of Education* outlawing segregation in the public school system in 1954. This ruling reversed another court decision in *Plessy V. Ferguson* which had established the doctrine of "separate but equal" accommodation in 1896 used by the southern legislatures to introduce Jim Crow statutes in southern constitutions and city ordinances for the purpose of making segregation and discrimination legal.

The immediate impact of the *Brown* decision was that it encouraged southern blacks to challenge other forms of segregation. Archibald Cox observed that:

“The impact of *Brown* and other desegregation cases on American constitutional law and society extended far beyond matter of race. Propelled by the decision, the courts began to strike down...differences in official treatment based on sex, alienage...”

One year after *Brown*, the arrest of Rosa Parks for refusing to give her seat to a white passenger according to Montgomery laws regulating public transportation ignited a yearlong boycott of the city buses by black riders. The boycott was organized by the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) under the leadership of Martin Luther King until a supreme court order banned the practice of segregation in the public transportation of Montgomery and elsewhere.

Both court decisions rewarded the actions of black activists using two different means: litigation in the *Brown* case and mass non-violent action in the form of boycott in the case of Montgomery, Alabama. These decisions wiped away the aim of the "Separate but equal" facilities meant to impress on black people a stamp of inferiority. They also confirmed the assumption according to which the American constitution helps those who help themselves.

To have an idea of the exclusion of blacks from the political sphere, one must remember that in 1954, there were no black governors, no black senators, only two black representatives, no black mayors of large cities and that black voting was severely restricted especially in the south.

In short, the developments that occurred in the 1950s offered the setting for the protagonists of the struggle for African American civil and civil rights in the early 1960s.

2. African-Americans' commitment to end segregation and discrimination

2.1. The contributions of black lawyers.

Black lawyers made their appearances in courtrooms as the councils of black plaintiffs attacking segregation in schools and in other domains in the 1950s.

The legal struggle against school segregation took a new dimension when several black parents of Clarendon County, south Carolina, filed in the federal court alleging that the dual school system violated the equal protection clause in 1949. Thurgood Marshall and Harold Boulware volunteered to be the attorneys of one of the plaintiffs in the case known as *Briggs V. Elliot*. By 1952, several school segregation cases had reached the supreme court, giving an opportunity to lay the legal work for an attack on the "separate but equal doctrine established in *Plessy V. Ferguson* in 1896.

The most notorious black lawyers were Thurgood Marshall, NAACP General Counsel, Harold Boulware, a South Carolina attorney and Charles Houston, Dean of Howard law school, who dedicated himself to teaching black lawyers willing to fight the legal battles of the civil rights. Together, they planned and carried forward the legal campaign for racial equality.

Black lawyers perceived that the attack on school segregation cases must target the total system to give black children a chance to develop their talents. Their efforts were rewarded when they were able to convince the supreme court to rule in *Brown V. Board of Education* in 1954 by using findings of sociologists and psychologists to decide that segregation of children in public schools created a feeling of inferiority among children and denied them of equal opportunities. In addition, it held that separate educational facilities being inherently unequal, they violated the 14th amendment's guarantee of "equal protection of the laws."

The immediate effect of the *Brown* decision was that it paved the way to further civil rights campaigns and litigations demanding desegregation of other domains of life. The yearlong Montgomery bus boycott, for instance, raised litigations leading to a Supreme Court order to ban segregation in public transportation in 1956. Another supreme court decision later prohibited racial segregation on interstate buses, waiting rooms and restaurants serving passengers. Black lawyers also played an important role in assisting civil rights activists arrested or involved in legal cases brought against them. In this regard, their contribution was vital in winning the legal part of the battle against segregation and discrimination.

2.2. The determination of black communities

Most studies devoted to the civil rights campaign tend to focus more on the leaders and not enough on the determining role of black masses and grass-root militants who constituted the army of the movement. Without their sacrifice, the concept of mass non-violent demonstrations would not have any substance.

For decades, the black population suffered from the repressive and violent measures of Jim Crow system which disfranchised and humiliated them, especially in the south. They knew the inhumanity of segregation and what they needed was to be inspired and taught the most efficient way to fight for justice. Therefore, an aroused black community, willing to risk their lives for freedom offered a fertile soil for the various strategies developed by the civil right organizations.

Various actions, illustrated the determination of black communities. One example is the courage of the South Carolina black parents to challenge school segregation in their area and their stubbornness to persevere in the face of harsh reprisals and economic intimidation through loss

of jobs and opportunities as well as destruction of businesses owned by blacks. These parents and many other plaintiffs in similar cases contributed to the supreme court decision in *Brown V. Board of Education*.

Another example is the boycott of Montgomery buses which lasted 381 days of walk, police harassment and many other threats. The devotion and creativity of local black leaders, the generosity of other blacks who volunteered to give lifts to their fellows or who raised money to finance shuttle services for black riders were also conducive to the success of the boycott of Montgomery buses.

The determination of blacks to organize marches in Birmingham known to be the stronghold of Alabama racists led to confrontations with ‘‘Bull’’ Connor’s policemen who used dogs, fire hoses and clubs against peaceful demonstrators and arrested four thousands of them including about nine hundred children. Pictures of dogs biting black children and that of a white policeman with his knee on the neck of a black woman were revolting.

In the meantime, other courageous actions were needed to obtain the registration of black students in the universities of Arkansas, Mississippi and those of other southern states. The courage of black youths was legendary. They took great risks by participating in freedom rides, sit-ins at lunch counters of ‘‘white only’’ restaurants and in other protests.

The activism of hundreds of ordinary blacks involved in registration actions in Mississippi and Alabama could only be admired. Of equal importance was the mobilization of the 250,000 demonstrators of the March on Washington for jobs and freedom as well as the tenacity of blacks who marched from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama for voting right during which demonstrators were beaten or wounded like John Lewis of SNCC who had his skull fractured.

When reviewing the role played by ordinary black militants, grassroots leaders, and well nationally known leaders one should not forget the contribution of black celebrities like Harry Belafonte and many others who did all they could to raise money in order to pay fines for the freeing of arrested demonstrators, which motivated more people to take part in future demonstrations.

The price of the dream of equality, both social and political, was that many activists lost professional and economic opportunities. Many others were wounded or suffered trauma due to police brutality. Several cases of murder were recorded. Some others who were shot were lucky enough to survive.

2.3. The leading role of civil rights organizations

If the black masses willingly provided the army of civil rights militants because they did not need to be convinced about the evil of segregation, it was important that they were trained and supervised by dedicated organizations under committed leaders with clear ideas about the objectives of the fight. Several civil rights organizations provided the leadership and grassroots support for the success of the struggle for equality in the 1950s and 1960s.

Below are some of them.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded in 1909 from the Niagara Movement set up by W.E.B du Bois. Its aim was to eliminate inequality, dismantle racism and accelerate change in areas like criminal justice. This oldest and largest civil rights organization contributed through its thousands of dedicated workers, organizers leaders and members active in almost all American cities. It was much credited for its legal victories including in *Brown V. Board of Education* banning segregation in public schools, legal support to the Montgomery bus boycott which was ended by a Supreme Court order outlawing segregation in public transportation and in *Boyton V. Virginia* which prohibited racial segregation on interstate buses, waiting rooms and restaurants for passengers.

In addition, the NAACP contributed a lot to the organization of various protest actions such as marches, boycotts and others. The efficiency of its lobbying activities under the leadership of Roy Wilkins was also quite noticeable.

Dedicated to the gaining of civil rights by blacks living in the southern states, the southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was in fact an enlargement of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) set up to monitor the bus boycott in Montgomery. The policy of SCLC was to conduct mass actions in the whole of the south. As SCLC leader, Rev. M.L. King praised NAACP's legal actions, but he believed that African Americans had the "right to protest for right" even if the price would be confrontations with violent police forces.

An advocate of non-violent mass direct action framed according to M. Gandhi's philosophy of passive resistance, he replied to those who criticized his leading role in Birmingham demonstrations in his *Letter from Birmingham city Jail*. He explained that white resistance to black equality had forced blacks to move outside legal channels to express their discontent with the risk of creating crises rather than to wait forever for change. M.L. King's strategy is explained more explicitly in these terms:

"A court order can only declare rights. It cannot deliver them. Only when people themselves begin to act rights which are on the paper given life-blood. Only when people in mass begin to act are they able to make all these laws real and meaningful."

Relying on grassroots civil rights organizations led by religious leaders like Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth's Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, King sought confrontations with police like during the Birmingham campaign. Media coverage of police brutality against young peaceful demonstrators showed to the world that segregation was so evil that it could not be tolerated in a nation that claimed to stand for freedom and justice for all. The ultimate goal of such actions was to shock public opinion, attract the sympathy of northern whites and bring federal intervention to achieve civil rights legislations.

As a matter of fact, when ruling in *Brown V. Board of Education* the supreme court had called for solutions for admission "to public school." But several years after, the legislatures of southern states continued to resist by adopting the doctrine of "interposition" which had the effect of declaring the *Brown* decision "null and void." In view of this challenge to federal

authority, King believed that legal successes were not enough and that mass non-violent demonstrations were needed to oblige the federal government to act.

SCLC actions throughout that tumultuous period illustrated the deep involvement of black churches in the fight for the dignity of southern blacks. This new policy of the black churches owed a lot to the capacity of church men like Rev. M.L. King to bring together the motifs of survival, elevation and liberation inherent to black theology into a multi-dimensional movement that put social, political, economic and religious forces at the service of blacks' struggle for equality. This resolute posture of black churches is according to James H. Cone¹ expressive of the black liberation theology.

Students Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

It is true that the *Brown* decision was a major legal victory. But its implementation required brave youngsters willing to endure the hostility of white mobs when they entered previously white schools. Much courage was also needed to overcome white resistance to the admission of black students to the Little Rock High School in 1957 and that of James Meredith to the University of Mississippi.

The students Non-violent coordinating committee was a community of young black activists and organizers trained in Gandhi's passive resistance. They were the spearheads of protest against segregation in eating places. The sit-ins campaign was launched in February 1960 by black students in Greensboro, North Carolina. More sit-ins took place in more than one hundred towns in the months that followed.

The SNCC provided young militants for peaceful demonstrations like mass rallies and marches like in Birmingham. Other militants were very active in the Mississippi voting rights campaign. Many others participated in the march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, that led to the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The SNCC was chaired by John Lewis and then by Stokely Carmichael who launched the slogan of "black power"

Another civil rights organization of great significance during the campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s was the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) founded in 1942 to improve race relations and end discrimination through direct action projects. In addition to many other actions, the reputation of the CORE was associated with the planning and supervision of the freedom ride of two buses from Washington DC to New Orleans in Louisiana in May 1961. The freedom riders were black and white activists ready to risk their lives in a mission to challenge segregation practices along the way down to the south. In several places the passengers and the two buses were attacked by mobs of white supremacists. Many freedom riders were hurt and one of the buses was fired upon. Their arrival in Birmingham happened in a war-like atmosphere.

Founded in 1911 to provide assistance to African-Americans to further economic and social justice, the National Urban League was chaired by Whitney Young Jr. , during the Civil Rights movement. Its actions centered on overseeing the integrations of blacks in workplaces in order to ensure equal opportunities in industry and government services. Several provisions of the

To quote this paper : NDAMA J.L., 2022, « Factors that contributed to the success of the civil rights movement », in *Annales de l'Université de Bangui*, série A, n° 17, juillet [Online : www.surandara-ub.org/annales/]

Civil Rights Act can be considered in part as responses to its demands. It was also very active in lobbying top federal officials.

In many regards, the methods of struggle advocated by these civil rights organizations were complementary. This plurality of strategies helped produce a maximum of results. By 1963, an estimated 930 public demonstrations had taken place in more than 100 cities.

2.4. A black leadership of exception

A factor of supreme importance was that the civil rights organizations discussed above were chaired by leaders whose courage, pragmatism and vision for American society could only be a source of admiration. Most of them committed themselves to the achievement of equal rights for African Americans and their integration in the mainstream of American society as first class citizens endowed with the exercise of their voting right.

These leaders were notably Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Rev. Martin L. King of the SCLC, James Farmer of the CORE, John Lewis of the SNCC, Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Andrew Young of the National Urban League. In addition, numerous grassroots leaders also risked their lives through their actions in favor of equal rights and voting rights at the local level.

All these leaders of national or local importance were enlightened by their understanding of the peculiar history of African Americans, the pluralist nature of the American government with regard to the management of conflicting interests as well as the effect of media coverage of police brutality on opinions and leaders. As a result of the long struggle for equality, they were clever enough to identify the Democratic Party in the south and municipal governments of large northern cities as the forces working against the advancement the blacks.

Moreover, all of these leaders were familiar with the art of lobbying, that is, how to influence the federal government's management of the tough issues of equal rights and the voting rights of blacks. Martin L. King, Philip Randolph, James Farmer, and Andrew Young had several meetings with President Kennedy and then President Lyndon Johnson, and with many top officials, not only to get information, but certainly to influence the content of the proposition of the Civil Rights bill. One of the pens used by President Johnson for the signature of the Civil Rights Act was given to Rev. King at the White House.

A charismatic leader like Rev. Martin Luther King knew how to speak to specific segments of American society that he addressed. Through his speeches, he inspired thousands of blacks to take stand free of the paralysis of fear without pushing them to the extreme positions advocated by Black Nationalist leaders. In each of his addresses to black audiences, he was preoccupied by how he could make a speech that would be militant enough to keep the people aroused to positive action, and yet moderate enough to keep them within controllable and Christian bonds, knowing that his dedication to non-violence in principle was fundamental to avoid actions that could lead to a suicide of the black population. In other words, his moderation basically referred to the means of non-violence while he was a radical with regard to the ends, that is, equality for blacks.

The American Dream metaphor Rev. M. L. King so often evoked was directed mainly toward the federal government, southern moderates, northern liberals and religious leaders who composed his white audience. He addressed them in this way because he believed that they had the political, economic and moral capacity to create a world based on the principles of equality and freedom that they claimed to live by.

Another black leader of much importance was As Philip Randolph who also embodied the breed of determined black leaders of the era.

A veteran labor and protest leader, he led the Brotherhood of Pullman Sleeping Car Porters for several decades. He gained fame after forcing president F.D. Roosevelt under the threat of a march of one hundred thousand blacks on Washington D.C to issue the Executive Order of June 25, 1941, banning discrimination in war industries and apprenticeship programs. It was followed by another executive order desegregating the military in 1949.

3. The actions of the federal government

3.1. Judicial impetus

The role of the judicial branch of the American government was manifest through the Supreme Court decision in the 1950s and 1960s. They overruled earlier decisions like the 1883 Civil Rights Cases arguing that the 14th amendment applied to states and not to individuals and *Plessy V. Ferguson* of 1896 establishing the doctrine of ‘*separate but equal*’ facilities. Those rulings encouraged southern states to revise their constitution in order to disfranchise black citizens.

The supreme court rulings that smashed the legal bases of segregation included *Brown V. Board of Education* which made separate facilities unconstitutional, the supreme court order that ended the Montgomery bus boycott banning segregation in public transportation and *Boyton V. Virginia* prohibiting segregation in interstate buses, waiting rooms and restaurants serving passengers.

The court decision in *Brown V. Board of Education*, in particular, was a piece of judicial legislation justified by logical and psychological arguments. The court went further by asking lower courts involved in school segregation cases to find solutions for admission “to public schools on a racially non-discrimination basis with all deliberate speed.”

The intention of the Supreme Court in the cases related to segregation was to guarantee the equal protection of the law to everyone. It gave substance to the proposition that all men are born with equal right to dignity and to equal standing in the eyes of government as proclaimed by the Declaration of Independence.

3.2. Presidential initiatives

The duty of the executive branch of government in these heated years should be as Rev. Martin Luther King demanded repeatedly to enforce existing laws in order to protect the rights of all citizens. In 1957, when Arkansas Governor used national guardsmen to bar the access of Little Rock High School to black students, president Dwight Eisenhower sent troops to escort these students. This happened four years after the *Brown* decision.

Upset by the media coverage of the violent repression against peaceful black demonstrations by Birmingham police, President John F. Kennedy declared on television that civil rights raised a moral issue. He pointed out that the heart of question was whether all Americans were to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities. He also announced his intention to ask congress to make a commitment based on the proposition that race had no place in American life. In the midst of the racial tension preceding the assassination of Medgard Evers in Mississippi in June 1963, the President further expressed his preoccupation in these terms:

“One hundred years of delay have passed since President Lincoln freed the slaves, yet their heirs, their grandsons are not fully free. They are not yet freed from the bonds of injustice; they are not yet freed from social and economic oppression.”

When Lyndon Baines Johnson became president after Kennedy's assassination, he pushed Congress to adopt the Civil Rights bill sent by his predecessor in honor of his memory by arguing: ‘we have talked for 100 years or more. Yes, it is time to write the next chapter, and to write it in books of law.’

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned discrimination in public accommodations and sought to eliminate the last vestiges of this policy by authorizing the federal government to sue segregated facilities and mandating nondiscrimination in federal programs. Its title VII devoted to Affirmative Action deals mostly with discrimination against African-Americans. It outlawed discrimination in the employment and education of women and minorities.

The new President also contributed to the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This took place after the violence generated by the Selma-Montgomery march in support of the voting rights for African-Americans.

3.3. Congressional action

The action of the legislative branch of government was up to the presidential propositions heavily based on the demands formulated by civil rights organizations and the expectations of millions of Americans shocked by the media coverage of police brutality against peaceful demonstrators like in Birmingham.

Despite the desperation of many Senators and Representatives to please their white constituencies, congress adopted within a period of four years a package of three acts that caused a legal revolution in the USA:

- The Civil Rights Act of 1964 still regarded as the most far-reaching anti-discrimination legislation, and labor law;
- The Voting Rights Act of 1965 providing means to eliminate the legal barriers and other means invented by southern legislatures to restrict the voting right of black citizens;
- The Fair Housing Act of 1968 meant to fight discrimination practices in the renting and buying of accommodations.

After several years of lawsuits and non-violent mass actions to fight injustice and inequality, the revolution caused by the passing of the three acts echoed somehow the three Reconstruction amendments to the constitution one century earlier, revealing their full meaning at last.

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CONCLUSION

Finally, a combination of social, human and political factors made the dream often deferred of freedom and equality for African Americans become true in the 1960s.

For the black community, the longing for the fulfillment of the American Dream had been too long and had even reached its climax in the 1950s. But thanks to the guidance provided by pragmatic leaders with a good knowledge of the machinery of the American government, black Americans adopted in a large majority and not without difficulty the strategies of lawsuits, peaceful demonstrations and lobbying as the most efficient means at their disposal. They also knew that in this struggle, intelligence, courage and determination were essential in order not to compromise their just cause.

The renewed grievances and expectations expressed over the 1950s and early 1960s finally received substantial judicial gains through supreme court rulings that smashed the legal bases of segregation and discrimination. The indignation that violent police repressions against peaceful protestors caused on American citizens and the understanding of the gravity of the equality issue by Presidents Kennedy and Johnson made them commit congress to adopt the Civil Rights Act to guarantee equal treatment to all citizens and the Voting Rights Act to lift all barriers to black voting in the south providing black political empowerment, and the Fair Housing Act as an effort to fight residential segregation.

Between 1960 and 1965, 38.000 blacks got white collar jobs. But as a result of the revolutionary legislations, the percentage of blacks in this sector increased by 40% by 1980 and continued to grow. Similarly, black registration rose from less than 31% in 1965 to 66% by 1984 while the number of black elected officials rose from 500 in the early 1970s to 8,015 by 1993.

Unfortunately, the achievement of formal equality did not mean a change in the material conditions of blacks confined in ghettos, plagued by poverty, victims of police brutality and of the resentment of some white people against black advances. This other chapter of the history of African Americans is still unfolding and calls for new remedies that could produce black economic empowerment.

NOTES.

1. Archibal Cox. *The Court and The Constitution*. New Delhi: Asian Books, Prt. Ltd, 1989. P.258.
2. M.L. King in an address to a Virginia SCLC audience in 1961.
3. Lyndon Baines Johnson in his State of Union address in 1964.

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