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**Freedom Budget for all Americans and Economic
Equality**

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Abstract. The *Freedom Budget for All Americans*, written under the supervision of Bayard Rustin and released in 1966 by the A. Philip Randolph Institute, was a well developed policy program to secure full economic citizenship for all Americans thanks to an unprecedented government investment. The program challenged the classic definition of civil rights and linked increased government spending to economic justice. It never earned traction and remained at the margins of historical memory by the end of the Johnson Presidency. The recent literature on the *Freedom Budget* focuses on its ideological milieu and political implications and identifies the strategic errors in coalition building as the main cause of the *Freedom Budget* defeat. This paper concentrates on a specific element of the plan, the notion of economic equality, and states that the disagreement between radicals and liberals on such a notion ultimately caused the undoing of the coalition.

Keywords. Freedom Budget, Philip Randolph, Johnson administration, Economic equality.
JEL. B29, B31, B59.

1. Introduction

The *Freedom Budget for All Americans: Budgeting Our Resources, 1966-1975, To Achieve Freedom from Want* (also, *Freedom Budget* or simply *Budget*), a policy program issued by the A. Philip Randolph Institute in fall 1966 under the supervision of A. Philip Randolph himself and Bayard Rustin, was created to eradicate unemployment and poverty in the United States.ⁱ Despite the endorsement of more than 200 prominent public figures, from John Kenneth Galbraith to Stokely Carmichael, and support from leaders of the NAACP, CORE, SNCC, Urban League and SCLC, commitment from President Johnson and Congress never materialized, and the plan failed to be transformed into a concrete legislative proposal (Randolph Institute, 1966).ⁱⁱ Almost completely neglected by scholars, and thus removed from collective memory, the policy program has been recently rediscovered by Paul Le Blanc and Michael D. Yates. These authors publish their *A Freedom Budget for All Americans: Recapturing the Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in the Struggle for Economic Justice Today*, writing about the origins and legacy of the program and rescuing it from an unjustified historical obscurity (Le Blanc & Yates, 2013).ⁱⁱⁱ When it comes to a retrospective view to the *Freedom Budget*, the core of Le Blanc's and Yates's message is that, if approved, a modest investment of \$20 billion a year for a period of ten years would have "fundamentally changed the course of U.S. history" (Le Blanc, 2013).^{iv} For the authors, the program was *economically* feasible; unfortunately, it was *politically* non feasible. They identify in the political dynamics of that age – black radicalism, peace movement, new right – the source of the disaggregating forces that impaired

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the efforts of Randolph and Rustin to build a progressive coalition around the *Freedom Budget*.

This paper takes a different approach. It focuses on the main goal of the *Budget*, full employment, and its underlying notion of economic equality, that is, equality of result. This paper states that it was the inherent idea of equality of result that was rejected by President Johnson and his administration, rendering the *Freedom Budget* unacceptable and ultimately causing the undoing of the coalition. First, this paper addresses the recent scholarly work that has uncovered the largely forgotten history of the *Freedom Budget*, focusing on its ideological milieu and political implications and identifying the strategic errors in coalition building as the main cause of the *Freedom Budget* defeat. Second, this paper locates the ambitious goal of full employment at the heart of the *Freedom Budget* in the context of the intellectual debate on equality of opportunity v. equality of result of those times. Finally, this paper addresses the perplexities of President Johnson, and liberals in his administration, to the “socialist” notion of equality of result.

2. The *Freedom Budget*

After achieving monumental fame in the civil rights movement as the organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, at the time the largest nonviolent protest ever held in the United States, Bayard Rustin joined the AFL-CIO’s A. Phillip Randolph Institute – a black trade unionist center funded to facilitate convergence between labor and civil rights. He became Executive Director in 1965, seeking to realize the vision of universal economic rights articulated in his article “From Protest to Politics” (Rustin, 1966).^v The article became the ideological foundation of the *Freedom Budget*, an articulated plan aimed primarily at eradicating poverty and joblessness and significantly expanding the boundaries of Johnson’s *Great Society*. The plan, a collective project of economists, labor unions, and civil rights leaders, was coordinated by Rustin, although Leon H. Keyserling wrote it almost single-handedly; it was finally presented at a press conference in Harlem’s Salem Methodist Church in October 1966 as an 84-page document, complete with statistics, charts, graphs, and a discussion of methodology.^{vi} It called on the federal government to spend \$185 billion over a ten-year period to restore and maintain full employment, guaranteeing an adequate income for all employed and a minimum adequate income to all who could not be so employed.

The *Freedom Budget*, at least in the minds of its authors, was an ambitious civil rights proposal at the intersection of racial justice and economic justice for all Americans. It projected “the practical liquidation of poverty in the U.S. by 1975” while it left “no room for discrimination in any form” (Randolph Institute, 1966).^{vii} Ideally supported by a progressive coalition of civil rights movement and labor unions, African Americans and other minorities, young liberals, students, and progressive-minded religious communities, the *Freedom Budget* would have the magnitude, if successfully implemented, to “radically alter the relationship of government to the economy, and establish a commitment to democratic planning.”^{viii} The plan was a remarkable piece of public policy, a list of social priorities that involved housing, education, and employment, as well as guaranteed annual income and expansions of medical care, and social insurance. The plan would also engage the poor in rebuilding their own cities and ghettos, with the federal government financing the construction of homes, schools, mass transit, and hospitals, as well as providing useful services such as healthcare and teachers’ aides.

The *Freedom Budget* occupies a special place in the history of the civil rights movement. First, the program belongs to the second wave of civil rights activism, when the movement went well beyond overturning Jim Crow segregation laws in the South and regaining voting rights and full citizenship rights for African Americans. Civil rights leaders instead focused on transforming America to bring economic justice to all unemployed and poor people, regardless of race. Second, the plan set the bar incredibly high: the goal of the project was to end poverty and

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unemployment throughout the United States within a ten-year period, that is, by 1975, just in time for the bicentennial. Third, the project was actually an economic plan, worked out by New Deal Keynesian economists such as Leon H. Keyserling, former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Truman Administration, with detailed charts, graphs, and statistics. It was an economic plan, a formal statement of a set of business goals, including full employment and minimum wage, the reasons the goals were believed attainable, and the action steps for reaching those goals. The *Freedom Budget* also contained the numbers and terms reflective of the financial resources necessary to achieve the plan's goals (\$185 billion over a ten-year period) and the sources of funding (a so-called "growth dividend").^{ix} Finally, the *Freedom Budget* was conceived to be adopted by a progressive coalition of liberal and student activists, trade unionists, and religious and civil rights leaders and then transformed into legislative activity with the commitment of mainstream liberalism and the endorsement of the Johnson administration. Despite a popularized 20-page summary (which contained an introduction by Martin Luther King), prepared and distributed through a grass-roots mobilization, and a vast and prestigious network, the *Freedom Budget* never earned traction and was entirely off of the radar by 1967 (King, 1967).^x

Two reasons are typically blamed for the failure (Le Blanc & Yates, 2013; D'Emilio, 2003).^{xi} The expected progressive coalition envisioned by Randolph and Rustin never materialized due to the realignment to the right of the American electorate during the 1966 midterm elections. On the left, the sharper polarization over Black Power enlarged the gulf between radicals and liberals that Rustin aimed to fill. Reacting to a changed political environment, Rustin pointedly contrasted his vision with what many Black Power activists had come to perceive as the separatist strategy of Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael, alienating their support and hurting his reputation.^{xii} Moreover, the rise of the protest against the Vietnam War made inevitable the choice between guns and butter – a choice that Randolph and Rustin were unable to make, because they were unwilling to break with the Johnson administration. This refusal to confront military spending is explicit in the official summary of the *Freedom Budget*, which says, "No skimping on national defense." Although the statement protected the plan from the criticism of mainstream liberals increasingly entrapped in the spending priorities associated with the Vietnam War, it left *Freedom Budget*-fighters vulnerable to the denunciation of the anti-war protesters. Moreover, the plan's architects isolated themselves from the growing antiwar movement, which was attracting the same army of supporters that Rustin and Randolph considered the *Budget's* natural constituency. In other words, the *Freedom Budget* evaded the biggest issue facing the country in the mid- to late-1960s, the Vietnam War, and did not address the implication of the growing military spending to the goals of full employment and economic justice. Despite Rustin's and Randolph's policy of appeasement, the Johnson administration and the liberal Congressional leadership remained noncommittal on the *Freedom Budget* (Le Blanc & Yates, 2013).^{xiii} Ultimately, Randolph and Rustin never reached the level of political relevance for which they aimed.

3. Equality of Opportunity v. Equality of Results

The economic growth and the rising expectation of economic justice in the 1960s instigated a profound shift in American culture that spurred workplace integration like never before. As a practical solution to job discrimination, civil rights leaders envisioned a mix of policies of *fair employment* and *preferential treatment* thanks to government's expanded role. Accordingly, both strategies, fair employment and quotas, equality of opportunity and equality of result, became interchangeable and were pursued simultaneously. On one side, there was a concentrated effort on the part of civil rights leaders, labor unions, federal government, and some employers to integrate the nation's workplaces. They were supportive of, sometimes advocates for, fair employment practices legislations

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through coalitions of interests, legal actions, and moral suasion. On the other side, often the same civil rights leaders, alone or in cooperation with the black clergy or black nationalists, socialists and radicals, were promoting grass-roots protests and pursuing preferential treatment strategies through a widespread use of boycotts to force employers to hire, promote, and advance African Americans. A case in point is the S.C.L.C., which lobbied for civil rights legislation and fair employment practices and a color-blind legislation while simultaneously seeking to establish Operation Breadbasket, a color-conscious campaign. S.C.L.C. also promoted vibrant boycott campaigns and mass protests to secure more, and better, jobs for African Americans by leveraging the economic power of their community.

In 1963, the idea that some sort of “affirmative action” might be implemented was elaborated on by civil rights and labor leaders. In his book *Why We Can't Wait*, King pointed out:

The nation must not only radically readjust its attitude toward [African Americans] in the compelling present, but must incorporate in its planning some compensatory consideration for the handicaps [African Americans have] inherited from the past. It is impossible to create a formula for the future, which does not take into account that our society has done something special against [African Americans] for hundreds of years. How then can [African Americans] be absorbed into the mainstream of American life if we do not do something special for [them] now, in order to balance the equation and equip [them] to compete on a just and equal basis? Whenever this issue of compensatory or preferential treatment for [African Americans] is raised, some of our friends recoil in horror. [African Americans] should be granted equality, they agree; but [they] should ask nothing more. On the surface, this appears reasonable, but it is not realistic. For it is obvious that if a [person] entered at the starting line in a race three hundred years after another [person], the [latter] would have to perform some impossible feat in order to catch up with his fellow runner (Chappell, 2014).^{xiv}

Rather than “compensatory treatment,” Randolph argued in the same period that “special and preferential treatment, in the form of preparation in training and education to enable it (Negro labor) effectively to move forward.” The point also resonated with the New York Commission on Human Rights that included the option of “preferential treatment” of “qualified” blacks “for a limited period.” An editor of *Fortune* magazine, Charles E. Silberman, considered it, “Inevitable in 1963 that Negro organizations would use their power to increase job opportunities for Negroes. Indeed, Negroes are not content with equal opportunity anymore; they are demanding preference, or ‘positive discrimination’ in their favor” (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1997).^{xv} He was correct. The statement that detailed the compromise that ended protests in Birmingham (“The Birmingham Truce Agreement,” 10 May 1963) explicitly mentioned an ongoing “program of upgrading Negro employment,” which meant awarding set numbers of jobs to eligible black applicants (Carson, 1954).^{xvi}

Job discrimination, according to the labor unions and civil rights leaders that focused their attention on the economic problems of working-class and unemployed African Americans, was a part of a ubiquitous, systematic, devastating economic inequality. That inequality began at home, where black children were trapped in segregated neighborhoods with little access to medical care and high rates of illness; the situation extended to school, where black students received an education inferior to their white counterparts. Black students were denied access to advanced education and training and ultimately marginalized from the intellectual milieu; in this regard, the National Urban League stressed “the damaging effects of generations of deprivation and denial” on blacks. The main barrier to defeating economic inequality was whites’ perception that equality had been already achieved. As reported by historian MacLean, in 1963, half of Southern whites and 45 percent of Northern whites stated that blacks already had “as good a chance” as whites “to get any kind of job for which they are qualified” (MacLean, 2006).^{xvii} A black-excluding job system was perpetuating itself and creating the false

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perception that it was the natural order of things. The complexity and the magnitude of the job discrimination phenomenon created space for more extensive remedies. What was needed to overcome the preferential system that had benefited whites for generations was a “special effort.” Whitney Young, the national director of the National Urban League, conceded that “the concept of special effort for Negro citizens may be difficult for the majority of white citizens to accept” (Young, 1964).^{xviii} The notion of “special effort” (or Domestic Marshall Plan) gained consensus mostly because in the United States, the post-World War II period was one of economic prosperity (King, 1964).^{xix} Randolph adopted this expression, “Fair employment and full employment,” which allowed the two options – “fair” and “full” -- as contradictory as they may be, to be considered as complementary (Randolph, 1959).^{xx} The vision of full employment backed by the government, which labor union and civil right leaders shared in the first part of the Sixties, would eventually emerge as the unifying proposal between the two options of fair employment and quotas.

4. Equality of Results and Liberals

The *Budget's* promoters concern about the economics of full employment and other features of economic justice is well documented in Le Blanc and Yates's book, and elsewhere. In reviewing Randolph's speech at the Conference on the Civil Rights Revolution, held in Washington, D.C. for two days following the 1963 March on Washington and sponsored by the Socialist Party, independent journalist I. F. Stone noted that

The direction in which full emancipation lies was indicated when Mr. Randolph spoke of the need to extend the public sector of the economy. His brilliant assistant on the March, Bayard Rustin, urged an economic master plan to deal with the technological unemployment that weighs so heavily on the Negro and threatens to create a permanently depressed class of whites and blacks living precariously on the edges of an otherwise affluent society. It was clear from the discussion that neither tax cuts nor public works nor job training (for what jobs?) would solve the problem while automation with giant steps made so many workers obsolete. The civil rights movement, Mr. Rustin said, could not get beyond a certain level unless it merged into a broader plan for social change (Stone, 2006).^{xxi}

Facing the prospective of structural unemployment, a type of unemployment due to structural and technological change, which can hardly be resolved through the usual Keynesian fiscal stimulus to the private sector, Rustin was adamant in advocating “massive public work investment,” a move that would go beyond the private sector being pumped up by government expenditure. He asked the government to provide jobs directly to those whom the private sector could no longer employ. “We should be demanding immediate passage of an accelerated public works program,” Rustin stated in 1965 (Rustin, 1965).^{xxii}

The *Freedom Budget* was a byproduct of Rustin's strategic shift. Legal equality and political freedom were only the premises of economic justice; the final purpose of racial justice for African-Americans and, at greater scale, of economic justice for all Americans, required nothing short of institutional change. This change depended on whether “a coalition of progressive forces ... becomes the *effective* political majority” (Rustin, 1965).^{xxiii} Rustin recognized that the progressive coalition he envisioned was linked to a double transformation, the transformation of mainstream liberalism – say, the Democratic Party – in an intransigent advocate of economic justice, and the transformation of the civil rights movement in a disciplined and reliable partner of the establishment. It was the best of both worlds (the power of the liberal institutions and the energy of the grass-roots mobilization) converging in a unified effort to obliterate poverty and to eradicate racism. In preparing the *Freedom Budget*, Rustin had these two streams of activity in mind: attracting support from liberal institutions and pressuring those institutions through a populist campaign. Accordingly, Rustin called upon the activist wing of the civil rights movement to walk the line and become part of the system, while playing the

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role of the outsider by pressing the institutions. The anti-system stance had to be left to radicals and nationalists. His formula for protesters was that they join mainstream politics without leaving the streets; that way, they would influence policy and yet maintain an “outsider” identity. It was an interesting evolution in his political vision, although an inherent contradiction that became a source of the plan’s ultimate failure.

The political coalition that was supposed to emerge around the *Freedom Budget* never materialized. The economic plan attracted the support not only of the “activist” civil rights groups – SCLC, SNCC and CORE – but from the more moderate NAACP and Urban League and a broad range of labor and liberal organizations (including George Meany, the conservative head of the AFL-CIO) and individuals (economists and intellectuals, labor and civil rights leaders) who identified themselves as reformers (King, 1966).^{xxiv} For a short time between October 1966 and September 1967, the *Freedom Budget* became the pinnacle of the civil rights movement, a “Marshall Plan” to eradicate poverty and discrimination in America, before it ran out of steam and pushed to the margins of historical memory by the end of the 1960s. One main reason of this irrelevance lies in President Johnson’s understanding of “economic equality.” The economic views and priorities of his administration diverged from those of the *Freedom Budget* as far as the very meaning of “civil rights.” In September 1964, Johnson gave Randolph a Medal of Freedom, but later he remained silent on the *Freedom Budget*. For several reasons, Johnson was unhappy with the plan and its proponents. First, he was hurt that at the planning session of the White House conference on civil rights entitled “To Fulfill These Rights,” held on November 17, 1965, Randolph tried to steal the show. The conference was originally conceived as a path toward acknowledging President Johnson’s contributions to the case of racial justice, but Randolph seized the opportunity to instead challenge the limitations of Johnson’s Poverty Program and to propose the remedy as “the creation of a vast ‘freedom budget,’ a nationwide plan for the abolition of the ghetto jungles in every city, even at the cost of a hundred billion dollars.” The president was incensed (Randolph, 1965).^{xxv} Second, Johnson’s attitude was that all black leaders, including activists such as Martin Luther King, Jr., should praise him for all he had done rather than asking what the President was going to do next for them or reprimanding him about the Vietnam War. From Johnson’s point of view, the black leaders (with the exception of Whitney Young) were simply ungrateful. Third, Johnson and his administration were outraged by the idea of a \$185 billion *Freedom Budget* and admittedly confused about its target. On the latter point, Abram, who coordinated part of the preparatory work for the conference together with Bill Coleman, remembers that

Interestingly enough, A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin never asked for a hundred billion dollars for blacks. They asked for a freedom budget for all who needed it. It was not a quota, it was not a subsidy [?], it was to lift the tide of the poor and on that rising tide all men would come in. It was not racially oriented.

Rustin and Randolph had hoped that the shift from race to civil rights would soften Johnson, as the program addressed the economic problems of all Americans. Abram reveals that the White House understood perfectly the purpose of the *Budget*, but that the administration remained puzzled by the fact that the black leaders were asking for funds to finance an economic program not racially oriented. Why are they speaking about the poverty *tout court*, rather than focusing on civil rights for blacks? The answer for Abram was that the black leaders were not talking as such, but as socialists (Abram, 1984).^{xxvi}

A point of disagreement between the liberal administration and the *Freedom Budget*’s proponents was on the notion of “equality.” The general premises of the *Great Society* and the *Freedom Budget* were the same: economic growth was sufficient to bring prosperity to all. Growth finances social programs to advance those left behind by prosperity; however, civil rights leaders believed that

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American society needed radical change and that capitalism was unable to deliver economic justice: the problems of poverty and minority unemployment might be solved – in King’s words - with “public service employment for those less able to compete in the labor market” and income guarantees for those unable to “participate in the job economy” (King, 1966).^{xxvii} In contrast, liberals strongly believed that capitalism was fundamentally sound and only in need of specific reforms and adjustments in order to provide opportunity to everyone. The *Great Society* was essentially a liberal plan in which government had the competence and the resources to help people help themselves. It sought to advance equality of opportunity, not to establish equality of social condition (Patterson, 1996).^{xxviii} The government was in place to guarantee the minority and poor population the right to have the same opportunities as anyone else-- to be hired, promoted, and to obtain a better salary; the system was not in place to provide equality of result. The fact is, most mainstream liberals clearly saw the *Freedom Budget* as too radical because it supported equality of result.

Herein lies Johnson’s understanding of the *Freedom Budget* as a socialist program repackaged as civil right advancement. Abram is adamant – and here he seems to speak for the President – that the *Freedom Budget* was not civil rights. Abram notes that Johnson was unhappy with Rustin “who wanted to convert the Civil Rights Movement into a socialist experiment. That is, not necessarily make the country socialist, but a vast expenditure program” (Abram, 1984).^{xxix} He was probably right. The *Freedom Budget* was basically a socialist program created by the socialist “ideological orientation” of its promoters (in particular Randolph, Rustin, and King, Jr.), while the *Budget’s* political goal was the redirection of the civil rights movement to act as a catalyst of a progressive coalition. The *Budget’s* economic assumption was the very notion of public service employment, a government that complements the private sector in achieving and maintaining full employment (Le Blanc & Yates, 2013).^{xxx} The promoters of the *Budget* specifically framed the plan as a vehicle to shift the center of gravity of American politics. The idea was to go well beyond Johnson’s maneuvering and the limitations of the President’s War on Poverty and Great Society and to ignite a fundamental change of the power structures in U.S. politics and in the economy. In fashioning their economic plan message, Bayard and his colleagues expected a coalition of Democratic left-liberals and socialists to converge on the basic principles of full employment, end of poverty, and universal access to adequate education and health care. A left-leaning Democratic majority was at that point supposed to emerge in the political landscape to isolate the moderate wing of the Democratic party to one side and the third-party supporters and racial radicals to the other.

5. Conclusion

Scholars have recently offered a political interpretation of the *Freedom Budget’s* demise. They closely identify its defeat with strategic mistakes within the U.S. left liberalism and reformism. This paper, however, makes it clear that other factors were at stake. First, when Randolph and Rustin introduced the *Budget* in the political conversation, they discovered the limits of their strategy: a progressive coalition could be built only by avoiding divisive issues. But the very idea at the core of the *Budget*—that of full employment - was divisive. The whole notion of a massive economic program, promoted by socialists in the efforts to reach equality of results, was divisive. The *Budget’s* proponents misunderstood Johnson’s basic conviction and the liberal establishment’s commitment to promote equality of result. The bottom line is that the same notion of equality of result, which was the *Budget’s* platform, undermined it.

Notes

- ⁱ A preliminary partial version of this article was delivered as a paper at the Society for the Study of Social Problems 64th Annual Meeting August 15-17, 2014, San Francisco. I am grateful to the organizers of the conference for the invitation to speak and to the participants for their feedback.
- ⁱⁱ A. Philip Randolph Institute, *A "Freedom Budget" for All Americans: Budgeting Our Resources, 1966-1975, to Achieve Freedom from Want* (New York: A. Philip Randolph Institute, 1966). The *Freedom Budget* has been mentioned primarily in books of economic history, such as: Molly C. Michelmore, *Tax and Spend. The Welfare State, Tax Politics, and the Limits of American Liberalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). Johnson does not mention the *Freedom Budget* in his memoir, Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Vintage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971). Biographers and Presidential historians such as Robert Dallek and Doris Kearns Goodwin do not mention the Budget. Nick Kotz, the author of the best history of the working relationship between Johnson and King, does not mention the Budget. See Robert Dallek, *Flawed Giant: Lyndon Johnson and His Times, 1961-1973* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream* (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 1991 (1st edition 1976)); Nick Kotz, *Judgment Days: Lyndon Baines Johnson, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Laws That Changed America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005). Eventually the fifth volume of the *Years of Lyndon Johnson*, a biography of Lyndon B. Johnson by American writer Robert Caro, will address the subject, as it will deal with the bulk of Johnson's presidency. The volume is expected to be published soon.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Le Blanc & Yates, *A Freedom Budget for All Americans: Recapturing the Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in the Struggle for Economic Justice Today* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2013).
- ^{iv} For the quote on "fundamentally changed ...", see Paul Le Blanc, "Freedom Budget: The Promise of the Civil Rights Movement for Economic Justice", *Working USA: The Journal of Labor and Society*, Vol. 16 No. 3, 2013, pp. 43-58, p. 44. Le Blanc thinks that, if the *Freedom Budget* had been successfully adopted and implemented in its time, "a majority of voters would not have responded positively to candidate Ronald Reagan's challenge to Democratic incumbent Jimmy Carter where the conservative hopeful asked the American people.... Are you better off than you were four years ago?" Le Blanc and Yates, *A Freedom Budget for All Americans*, p.10.
- ^v Bayard Rustin, "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement," *Commentary*, Vol. 39 No. 2, 1966, pp. 25-31.
- ^{vi} Correspondence between Keyserling and Rustin throughout 1966 suggests that the former completed the original almost single-handedly. Source: Letter Keyserling and Rustin, February 9, 1966, Bayard Rustin Papers, 1942-1987, box 20, the Library of Congress. As for the *Freedom Budget*, see A. Philip Randolph Institute, *A Freedom Budget for All Americans. Budgeting Our Resources, 1966-1975, To Achieve Freedom from Want* (New York: A. Philip Randolph Institute, 1966). As for the collective work, the plan received input from a number of individuals, including Gerhart Colm, Herbert J. Gans, Woodrow Ginsburg, Nathaniel Goldfinger, Vivian Henderson, Tom Kahn, and Leon Keyserling.
- ^{vii} Quotes from A. Philip Randolph's Introduction to *A Freedom Budget for All Americans*.
- ^{viii} Quote from a letter dated November 17, 1967, to the Editors of *The Harvard Crimson*, in anticipation of the weekend's Conference of Rustin at Harvard on the *Freedom Budget*. See [Retrieved from]. Accessed June 30, 2014.
- ^{ix} Estimate and quote from *A Freedom Budget for All Americans*, pp. 5-10.
- ^x For King's Introduction, see M. L. King, Jr., "Foreword," in *A "Freedom Budget" for all Americans, A Summary*, ed. A. Philip Randolph Institute (New York: A. Philip Randolph Institute, 1967), p. 5.
- ^{xi} Two analyses of the *Freedom Budget's* failure are Le Blanc and Yates, *A Freedom Budget for All Americans*, and see John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (New York: Free Press, 2003), see in particular pp. 429-439.
- ^{xii} Abram Morris has a different opinion on this topic. He thinks that it was the integrationist character of the *Freedom Budget*, and not the political strategy, which attracted the bias of the Black Power and color-conscious fraction of the civil right movement. See Morris Abram, "Oral History Interview II," 5/3/84, by Michael L. Gillette, Lyndon B Johnson Library, Austin, for content beyond this excerpt: "A. Philip Randolph was a great man. He didn't ask for a hundred billion dollars for blacks or any part of it for blacks. He asked for a hundred billion dollars for the needy. He, too, was an integrationist [...] The separationists, who are now going to become the persons who are for preferential treatment and quotas, they attacked Randolph. They viciously attacked the freedom budget. They called it an integrationist operation or ploy, and Bayard Rustin attacked them."
- ^{xiii} In their book, Le Blanc & Yates make the important note that even if it was economically feasible to finance both the *Freedom Budget* and the Vietnam War (as Randolph, Rustin, many of their Socialist Party allies believed), it was not politically feasible.
- ^{xiv} Chappell makes the important point that the later affirmative action, as well as the constitutional justification, the coalition of beneficiaries, and the cultural appeal of affirmative action are radically different from the affirmative action that King supported. David L. Chappell, "Waking from the Dream," presented at the Historical Society Annual Meeting, June 5-8, 2008, Baltimore, Maryland. For an extended discussion of this topic, see: David L. Chappell, *Waking from the Dream: the Battle over Martin Luther King's Legacy* (New York: Random House, 2014).
- ^{xv} Quotes from: Dona Hamilton, Charles V. Hamilton, *Dual Agenda: Race and Social Welfare Policies of Civil Rights Organizations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 133; City Commission on Human Rights of New York, "Policy Statement on the State of the Negro Today," Oct. 23, 1963, box 4, Houghton Papers; "Draft: The Question of Morality," reel 24, CORE; Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in Black and White* (New York: Random House, 1964), pp. 237, 241.
- ^{xvi} The Birmingham Truce Agreement states: "1. Within 3 days after close of demonstrations, fitting rooms will be desegregated. 2. Within 30 days after the city government is established by court order, signs on

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- wash rooms, rest rooms and drinking fountains will be removed. 3. Within 60 days after the city government is established by court order, a program of lunchroom counter desegregation will be commenced. 4. When the city government is established by court order, a program of upgrading Negro employment will be continued and there will be meetings with responsible local leadership to consider further steps.” “The Birmingham Truce Agreement,” 10 May 1963, in Carson, Clayborne. *The Eyes on the Prize: Civil Rights Reader: Documents, Speeches, and Firsthand Accounts from the Black Freedom Struggle, 1954-1990* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991).
- ^{xvii} National Urban League, “A Statement . . . Urging a Crash Program of Special Effort to Close the Gap between the Conditions of Negro and White Citizens,” series 3, box 56, NUL; Nancy MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Work Place* (New York and Cambridge, MA.: Russell Sage Foundation and Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 54.
- ^{xviii} Whitney Young, *To Be Equal* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 32. See also: Martin Luther King, Jr., “Foreword.” From: *A Freedom Budget For All Americans*. New York: A Philip Randolph Institute, January 1967. (PDS) 1 p. (Reprint of 10/26/66 statement.) Roy Wilkins Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C Box 66. 670100-000.
- ^{xix} In 1961, the new president of the National Urban League, Whitney Young, proposed a Domestic Marshall Plan. In 1964, Martin Luther King, Jr., suggested a GI Bill of Rights. Short of policy details, the two plans set the stage for the *Freedom Budget*.
- ^{xx} A. Philip Randolph, “The Civil Rights Revolution and Labor,” address delivered before the NAACP convention, July 15, 1959, p. 7.
- ^{xxi} Isidor F. Stone, “The March on Washington,” in *The Best of I. F. Stone*, ed. K. Weber (Washington, DC: Public Affairs, 2006), pp. 189–190. Quoted in Le Blanc, *Freedom Budget: The Promise of the Civil Rights Movement for Economic Justice*, p. 50.
- ^{xxii} For the quote on “massive public . . .”, see Memorandum to Lee White, Assistant to President Johnson. From Bayard Rustin. October 7, 1965, A. Philip Randolph Papers, 1909-1979, The Library of Congress. For the quote on “we should . . .”, see Bayard Rustin, “The Influence of the Left and Right in the Civil Rights Movement,” paper prepared for the Negro Leadership Conference, January 30-31, 1965, reprinted in *Down the Line: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), p. 130.
- ^{xxiii} For the quote “a coalition . . .” see Rustin, *From Protest to Politics*.
- ^{xxiv} Martin Luther King Jr. can be also added to the list. Although he was hardly in a position to openly advocate revolution, he expressed the idea that some form of democratic socialism might be necessary to achieve a more just society. See for example: “There must be a better distribution of wealth . . . And maybe America must move toward a democratic socialism.” Source: Martin Luther King Jr., speech to the SCLC staff, Frogmore, S.C., November 14, 1966, p. 19. SCLC papers, box 19, Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Social Change, Atlanta. At that point of the speech, King was rhetorically dialoguing with Hosea Williams, who was called “a capitalist.”
- ^{xxv} Planning Conference, A. Phillip Randolph, Address, November 17, 1965. 9pp. (microfilm) Civil Rights During The Johnson Administration, 1963-1969 Part IV: Records of the White House Conference on Civil Rights, 1965-1966, A Collection of The Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Austin.
- ^{xxvi} Reasons of Johnson’s unhappiness and quote are from Morris Abram, “Oral History Interview I,” 3/20/84, by Michael L. Gillette, Internet Copy, Lyndon B. Johnson Library. As for quote and understanding, see Morris Abram, “Oral History Interview I, 3/20/84, by Michael L. Gillette, Lyndon B. Johnson Library: “It was something like a Marshall Plan. I don’t recall the rubrics of it, but it was to improve the status, the infrastructure of America, job training, employment. I guess it had to be Bayard’s way, as a socialist, of trying to improve the lot of the least advantaged people in society by all kinds of programs.”
- ^{xxvii} Martin Luther King, Jr. “Statement on Resolutions Passed at Annual Southern Christian Leadership Conference Board Meeting.” 4/14/66. Miami, FL. 3 pp. Martin Luther King Center: box 118. 660414-001. Also, Thomas F. Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p. 270. This is an important point: the differences between King and Johnson in terms of economic policy. As for Johnson, see for example, James E. Anderson and Jared Hazleton, *Managing Macroeconomic Policy: The Johnson Presidency* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1986).
- ^{xxviii} James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 590.
- ^{xxix} See Morris Abram, “Oral History Interview I,” 3/20/84, by Michael L. Gillette, Lyndon B. Johnson Library for this the excerpt: “You see, at that moment there was erupting [...] the dichotomy between civil rights as I know it, which everyone ought to salute like the flag no matter whether you’re a Democrat or a Republican or rich or poor, and civil rights as it has come to be, I think, understood by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, which is an economic and social program. Now that began to conflict with LBJ, because he was engaged in the war, he had deficits, and I remember he was determined to keep the budget in 1969, I believe it was, under a hundred billion [...] It came out around ninety-nine billion, I believe. And at this conference, a centerpiece proposed by old man A. Philip Randolph, who was a great friend of the President’s and supported by Bayard [Rustin], who was a great friend of the President’s, was for a hundred billion-dollar freedom budget. Well, you can imagine how the President felt about that. Here [after] all he had done, he had laid the cornerstone, he had built the edifice. Nobody could think of any further civil rights legislation. He did it. No one else had. And what were these people doing, hammering at him about a freedom budget of a hundred billion dollars? That’s not civil rights. That’s something else.”
- ^{xxx} Le Blanc and Yates argue that the Budget was “explicitly not a program for socialism” but was “developed and advanced most effectively by socialists.” Le Blanc and Yates, *A Freedom Budget for All Americans*, p. 15. As for the quote on “ideological orientation,” see Le Blanc, “Freedom Budget: The

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Promise of the Civil Rights Movement for Economic Justice,” *Working USA: The Journal of Labor and Society*, Vol. 16 No. 3, 2013, pp. 43–58, p. 43. Le Blanc and Yates point out that “The Freedom Budget arose organically out of the activist wing of the civil rights movement: activists associated with Black trade union leader A. Philip Randolph and those involved in the Southern Leadership Conference (SCLC), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Often glossed over, however, is that these men and women were influenced by conscious and organized forces that favored a socially owned and democratically controlled economy, one in which production would be for the benefit of all — in a word, socialism.” See Le Blanc and Yates, *A Freedom Budget for All Americans*, p. 21.

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