

and in our home. You were a real inspiration to the whole community in our struggle.

24 May
1956

I am looking forward with great anticipation to receiving the "Lovejoy Award." Let me again express my appreciation to you and the members of the committee for choosing me for this great honor. I will accept it with great humility and profound gratitude. Please feel free to contact me concerning further details.

Very sincerely yours,
M. L. King, Jr.,
President

MLK:b

TlC. MLKP-MBU: Box 16.

"Recommendations to MIA Executive Board"

24 May 1956
[Montgomery, Ala.]

Recognizing that the bus boycott might continue indefinitely, King makes recommendations for restructuring the MIA to "prepare ourselves for a long struggle." These include reducing the number of mass meetings from two to one each week, streamlining the MIA decision-making process and financial management, and creating newsletter and history committees. To increase economic and political power, King emphasizes the need for voter registration and an MIA-sponsored savings and loan association. On 31 May King presented these recommendations to the executive board, which accepted his suggestions.

1. In order to lessen the pressure that we have worked under for several months and prepare ourselves for a long struggle which might possibly last several more months, our mass meetings will be reduced to once a week beginning the first week in June. This meeting will be held each Monday at 7:00 P.M., and the program committee shall be urged to limit the program to one hour and a half. If necessary situations arise special mass meetings will be called.

2. In order to valuably utilize the present relaxed phase of the bus situation and capitalize on the prevailing enthusiasm and amazing togetherness of the people, a strong emphasis shall be placed on increasing our political power through voting and increasing our economic power through the establishment of a bank. The committee on registration and voting shall seek to implement its program immediately. This committee shall meet weekly to discuss methods, findings and results. The Montgomery Improvement Association shall provide every avenue necessary to make the work of this committee successful. The Banking Committee shall meet immediately and make application for a charter through the Federal Home Loan Bank in Greensboro, North Carolina. If the

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charter is denied at this level a committee shall be immediately sent to Washington to appeal for a charter through the head office of all savings and loan banks.¹ The program committee shall be requested to allot more time in the mass meetings to the voting and banking committees for purposes of getting the idea over to the people.

3. In order to give our numerous friends over the nation and the various newspapers an accurate account of developments in the bus situation, a bi-monthly newsletter shall be released. The letter shall be edited by Mrs. Jo Ann Robinson, assisted by persons of her choice. Before the letter is released it shall be read and approved by the president, the vice-presidents, and the secretary of the Montgomery Improvement Association. Since the job of editor entails such a tremendous responsibility plus certain technical skills, a reasonable salary, recommended by the finance committee and approved by the Executive Board, shall be offered. It is hoped that this newsletter will very soon be expanded into a newspaper with an official staff, which will become the official organ of the Montgomery Improvement Association.²

4. In order that there may be a reliable and orderly record of the bus protest plus an accurate record of the origin, growth and future development of the Montgomery Improvement Association, a History Committee shall be organized consisting of the following persons: Dr. L. D. Reddick, Chairman; Mr. N. W. Walton, Mr. J. E. Pierce, and Mrs. Jo Ann Robinson.³

5. That an executive committee be established consisting of all officers of the association and all committee heads. The function of this committee shall be to make decisions on minor matters of policy when it is not possible to call the whole executive board. Also this committee shall from time to time make recommendations to the executive board concerning vital matters of policy.

6. In order to maintain good public relations and keep the executive board

1. Late in 1956 the MIA abandoned the idea of a charter after learning of the requirement for \$400,000 in deposits. MIA leaders decided instead to establish a credit union, but in 1959 the federal government denied the group a charter for such an entity because they lacked a defined membership.

2. The *MIA Newsletter* first appeared in June 1956. It was initially published biweekly, then monthly, and became a quarterly in 1957. It included reports of meetings, educational workshops, fund-raising appeals, and "recent happenings" in the Montgomery struggle and was sent to supporters throughout the country.

3. Lawrence Dunbar Reddick (1910–1995), born in Jacksonville, Florida, received his B.A. (1932) from Fisk University and his Ph.D. (1939) in history from the University of Chicago. Reddick taught at New York City College, the New School for Social Research, and Atlanta University before joining the faculty of Alabama State College in 1956. In 1960 Reddick was fired for his support of student civil rights activists. He helped King draft and edit *Stride Toward Freedom* and accompanied the Kings on their trip to India in 1959. His publications include an article on the boycott in the Spring 1956 issue of *Dissent* and *Crusader Without Violence* (1959), the first biography of King.

Norman W. Walton (1921–) received B.A. (1947) and M.A. (1949) degrees from Tennessee A&I University. At the time of the boycott Walton was a professor in the history and political science department at Alabama State College, which he eventually chaired. Walton wrote a five-part series for the *Negro History Bulletin* in 1956 and 1957 chronicling "The Walking City, a History of the Montgomery Boycott." In 1958 Walton produced *A Short History of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, in the Eightieth Anniversary of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church* (Montgomery: Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, 1958).

well informed on the financial standing of the organization, a financial report of all receipts and disbursements shall be presented bi-monthly by the finance committee to the Executive Board.

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TD. HG-GAMK.

To Lillian Eugenia Smith

24 May 1956
Montgomery, Ala.

King belatedly responds to Smith's letters of 10 March and 3 April, thanking the novelist and activist for her encouragement and financial support. Acknowledging her three-year battle with cancer, King accepts her \$50 contribution "with more humility and gratitude than any other contribution that I can recall."

Miss Lillian Smith
P. O. Box 352
Neptune Beach, Florida

Dear Miss Smith:

I have written you a thousand times in my mind, but I am just getting to the point of putting it on paper. Absence from the city on several occasions and the accumulation of a flood of mail account for the slowness of my reply.

Both of your letters came as a great consolation to me. For many years I have had the opportunity of knowing you through your books, and now I am happy to know you in a more directly personal sense. I only hope that it will be possible to meet you in person in the near future. We are still in the midst of our non-violence protest against injustice here in Montgomery. It has been gratifying to know how the idea of non-violence has gradually seeped into the hearts and souls of the people. There has been an amazing amount of discipline and wise restraint on the part of our people. I feel that the whole struggle here has given the Negro a new sense of dignity and destiny.

This whole struggle has given me a new awareness of the transforming power of love. I am convinced now more than ever before that we as a race must never succumb to the temptation of becoming bitter or of retaliating with hate. So in our struggle I advocate passive resistance as the instrument and love as the regulating ideal. From this you can see why your very sincere words on the power of love came as such an encouragement to me.

I will long remember your coming to our aid in this struggle for justice. We always accept financial contributions with deep humility and profound gratitude, but knowing your condition the fifty dollars (\$50.00) which you sent was accepted with more humility and gratitude than any other contribution that I can recall. You can never know what this meant to us. You will remain in our thoughts so long as the cords of memory shall lengthen.