

BROADCASTING TRUTH TO POWER:  
THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE AND THE  
EARLY SOUTHERN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses two gaps in the historical literature on the modern civil rights movement. First, it highlights the contributions of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to the struggle for racial justice in the South. Second, it reveals the importance of radio broadcasting in helping to create a climate in which southern white racial attitudes and discriminatory practices were challenged. It demonstrates how AFSC-sponsored broadcasts reflected Quaker principles, but also how debates over appropriate programme content exposed the tensions between principled and pragmatic considerations, morality and expediency, that shaped the Movement and determined the AFSC's role in it.

KEYWORDS

AFSC, Quakers, radio, civil rights movement, US South

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, historical writing on the origins and development of the southern civil rights movement has become ever more sophisticated and wide-ranging.<sup>1</sup> Inevitably, however, there remain significant gaps in our understanding of the genesis and structure of a social revolution that transformed the region's racial arrangements by destroying statutory segregation and ending the widespread disenfranchisement of African Americans. With no claims to comprehensiveness, this article begins to address two such gaps in the literature. First, it draws attention to the under-appreciated contribution of the Quaker-inspired American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to the struggle for racial justice in the South. Second, by examining the AFSC's efforts to use radio broadcasts to promote racial reconciliation, civil rights, and equality of economic and educational opportunity, it affirms the importance of that medium in shaping the ideological context and the range of acceptable protest strategies for a social movement that grew steadily during the decade after World

War Two and flourished during the late 1950s. By yoking together these two apparently discrete topics, it is possible to illustrate both the elusive potential and the inherent limitations of commercial radio as a vehicle for progressive racial politics in the South and to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the AFSC's distinctive approach to promoting racial justice in the South and nation.

#### THE AFSC AND RACE RELATIONS

In some ways the continued lack of scholarly attention to the role of the AFSC in the civil rights movement is puzzling, since historians have long been interested in the religious coordinates of the southern freedom struggle.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, the role of the AFSC in the civil rights movement and the Committee's relationship to the precepts of the Religious Society of Friends remain largely unknown.<sup>3</sup> Originally founded by Quakers in 1917 to offer conscientious objectors an alternative to military service, the AFSC quickly developed an interest in racial affairs amid its other commitments to peace work and humanitarian relief. In the mid-1920s it established an Interracial Division that was superseded in 1944 by a Race Relations Division and then in 1950 by a Community Relations Division. Through these divisions and via a network of formal and informal links with other progressive groups and individuals, the AFSC played an important part in the emergence of a mass movement for civil rights in the South and in the transformation of racial opinion throughout the nation that enabled the Movement to triumph over statutory discrimination in the region.

By the mid-1950s only one third of the Committee's five hundred-strong permanent staff members were actually members of the Religious Society of Friends. Nonetheless, the AFSC was always in essence a practical expression of Quaker beliefs in the social arena. This dynamic was reflected in the organisational structure of the Committee where administrative control resided with a Quaker executive secretary who reported directly to a wholly Quaker Board of Directors and oversaw the operations of various programme committees dominated by Friends.<sup>4</sup> Certainly, the AFSC's diverse efforts to combat racial discrimination sprang, as Chairman Henry Cadbury wrote in 1956, 'from ideals that have been practiced for 300 years by the Religious Society of Friends'. At the heart of those ideals, Cadbury explained, was a belief in the equality of all human beings before God, a respect for personal dignity that transcended racial, religious and national differences, and a steadfast commitment to the 'free expression of the individual conscience'. Citing Quaker William Penn's aphorism that 'True godliness does not turn men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it, and excites their endeavors to mend it', Cadbury saw the work of the eighty thousand souls who worked for or in collaboration with the AFSC as a collective effort to mend a world torn by war, want, and a lack of brotherly love and compassion. Seeking to 'prevent discord and suffering', the AFSC strove 'to inspire understanding between diverse and suspicious peoples through programs which bring them together informally to exchange ideas'.<sup>5</sup>

In the nineteenth century, similar convictions had placed Quakers at the forefront of antislavery activity in the United States and beyond – a lineage to which the

AFSC frequently alluded as it publicly pledged itself to battle racial prejudice and discrimination in post-World War Two America, especially as it appeared in its most egregious forms in the segregated South.<sup>6</sup> As a 1959 AFSC primer on *Race and Conscience in America* summarised:

For forty years the American Friends Service Committee has labored with problems, domestic and world-wide, which stand between mankind and the achievement of brotherhood among individuals and nations. A considerable part of our recent effort has been exerted toward replacing segregation with freedom, equality, and mutual trust. This has been a natural extension of the historic Quaker concern for the welfare and rights of persons who face prejudice and discrimination. A Quaker belief that 'there is of God in every man' requires living up to the best in one's self and respecting 'that of God' in others.<sup>7</sup>

The AFSC, then, grounded its efforts to promote racial equality in the South deep in the soil of longstanding Quaker values and beliefs. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the Committee's active pursuit of racial justice often placed it at odds with the majority of Religious Society of Friends Meetings in the nation, earning it a reputation as a rather radical, vanguard, group in Quaker circles. An AFSC questionnaire on race relations sent to 700 Friends Meetings in 1961 only elicited 250 responses, a low rate of return that the Committee felt indicated 'less concern for race relations than one would expect from the Society of Friends'. While the great majority of Meetings agreed that 'discrimination should be ended', less than half of respondents accepted the notion that 'Friends should refuse, personally and corporately, to participate in any pattern of racial discrimination and segregation'. Only 45 per cent endorsed the legitimacy of direct action protests such as sit-ins that were designed to dramatise continued racial injustice, although there was greater support for 'organizations designed to bring changes in human relations' and for legislation dedicated to ending segregation. Summarizing the results of the questionnaire Dick Taylor of the AFSC complained that, with some notable exceptions, 'It seems more meetings rate race as a primary concern than treat it as such'. By contrast, the Committee dedicated itself to expose and destroy racial discrimination.<sup>8</sup>

It is far beyond the scope of this article to discuss all of the Committee's many intellectual, moral, practical, personnel, and financial contributions to the early southern civil rights movement in any detail. Nonetheless, it is useful to identify five key philosophical and programmatic aspects of its race relations work in the region. First, underpinning all of the AFSC's practical initiatives was a faith in the idea of 'convincement', or persuasion through the deployment of exemplary models of racial reconciliation and brotherhood to inspire wider changes in racial attitudes and practices: 'The American Friends Service Committee finds that the technique of actually demonstrating the belief to which it wishes people to adhere, is one of the most effective forms of education'.<sup>9</sup> Second, the AFSC was also influenced by the Quaker belief that individuals should always act according to the dictates of their own conscience and it urged people to make a personal witness of their efforts to expose and redress racial injustice wherever they encountered it. Third, in programmatic terms, the AFSC sought to 'improve race relations by securing employment opportunities for Negroes in fields not traditionally open to them' initially in the

North, but from 1953 through an Employment on Merit programme administered by the Committee's Southeastern Regional Office in High Point, North Carolina. Fourth, it supported and worked for the desegregation of southern public schools. Fifth, it promoted nonviolent direct action protest tactics as a means to effect peaceful social change.<sup>10</sup>

In often ambiguous and occasionally uneasy combination, these philosophical imperatives and the practical programmes they generated shaped the AFSC's efforts to broadcast the truth of racial equality and human brotherhood to the power of racial bigotry, intolerance, and discrimination. They also defined the style and content of the AFSC's use of radio to spread a message of interracial goodwill and to stimulate local and national, individual, communal, and federal opposition to the segregation and disenfranchisement at the heart of the South's Jim Crow system.

#### THE AFSC'S EARLY RADIO INITIATIVES

The AFSC made its first serious – and none-too-impressive – attempts to use radio to promote tolerance and reconciliation in the racial arena during the mid-1940s. Some of this early Committee programming was distinctly local both in origin and intended audience. In November 1946, for example, the Southeastern Area office in High Point launched a weekly *Education for Peace* series on nearby WBIG-Greensboro, an unusually progressive southern station with links to Bennett College for black women and various labor groups.<sup>11</sup> The shows covered a typical range of AFSC concerns like relief work and nuclear disarmament, but also included discussions of 'peacemaking in the local community', that addressed the question of racial prejudice and discrimination in North Carolina.<sup>12</sup> Other early AFSC radio programmes that highlighted southern racial inequalities were directed more towards national – and sometimes specifically northern – audiences in an effort to stir popular and ultimately governmental opposition to Jim Crow. In 1947, the Committee prepared a broadcast for the long-running *New World A-Coming* radio series on WMCA-New York that dramatised the events of the Fellowship of Reconciliation's (FOR) Journey of Reconciliation through the upper South to test the region's compliance with the Supreme Court's 1946 *Morgan* ruling that declared racial segregation in interstate transportation unconstitutional.<sup>13</sup>

Many AFSC broadcasts stressed the interracial nature of its own peace, housing, and refugee relief programmes. In the summer of 1947, for example, an AFSC 'Peace Caravan' was broadcast on KRES-St Joseph, Missouri. The show featured whites, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans discussing issues ranging from the United Nations, through disarmament, to the problems of displaced persons and the need for interracial and intercultural dialogue and education.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, among the ten shows produced by the AFSC for WFLN-Philadelphia in 1949 was one on the Committee's 'Applicant Preparation Programme'. Billed as an 'adventure in human relations' this programme was a variant on the AFSC's Employment on Merit scheme in which staff members visited business owners and managers in an effort to persuade them to consider employing African Americans in jobs traditionally

reserved for whites and then worked with black candidates to prepare them for interviews for such posts. Another show described an 'experiment in goodwill' in Georgia where the AFSC ran an integrated work camp.<sup>15</sup>

These 'experiments' were portrayed as a direct challenge to segregated norms and racist assumptions. Every integrated AFSC project, camp, or workshop discussed on air represented an exemplary model of racial amity, 'a living demonstration of interracial living... which breaks down stereotypes and replaces misinformation based on lack of actual experience... This demonstration of interracial harmony is also not lost to the community in which such a group is living and working'.<sup>16</sup> Such interracial programmes and schemes were at the heart of the AFSC's conviction doctrine, whether on or off-air. As the Committee explained in a request to the Lilly Foundation to help fund its public school integration programme in the South, 'one of the most significant activities of our project was that of bringing together in seminars teachers and administrative staff from both the Negro and white divisions of the school system'. As blacks and whites met in these settings, often for the first time, 'it was an eye-opener' for many and a whole range of fears and prejudices began to melt away: 'We combined... representatives of the already convinced on integration, the uncertain, and the opposed. For the most part the already convinced were strengthened in their conviction, the uncertain became convinced, and the opposed either became uncertain in their opposition or were willing to 'go along with the change''.<sup>17</sup> What such a seminar could do to undermine racial bigotry, mistrust, and resistance to integration for dozens of participants, radio could do for tens of thousands of listeners.

Potentially, one of the most significant opportunities to promote the AFSC's racial agenda on air came in November 1949, when the Committee's Radio Director George Loft arranged for Clarence Pickett to appear alongside his AFSC colleague Erroll Elliot on an edition of CBS's popular *Church of the Air* programme. While Elliot explained the historical development of Quakerism, Pickett used the past to emphasise the contemporary relevance of Friends' beliefs to those seeking a more harmonious, just, and tolerant world. '150 years ago John Woolman, one of the most consistent Quakers this country has produced, refused to eat meals in homes where food was prepared by slaves', Pickett told his listeners.

He did what he could to heal the wounds of the slave but he saw the corrosive and hardening results of slaveholding on the slaveholder. And he never rested until he had done all he could to awaken in the man who profited by slave labor a willingness to release his slaves.

The moral for modern Americans was clear enough: it was every right-thinking citizen's duty to shun discriminatory institutions, to condemn racial bigotry and injustice wherever it appeared, and to take steps to educate the bigots as to the errors of their ways. Pickett concluded, 'it is safe to say, based on his success, that if a small percentage of the Christians of his day had followed this course, there would never have been a Civil War. And the Negro minority problem might well have hardly existed'.<sup>18</sup>

This kind of appeal to individual conscience and conviction was absolutely central to the AFSC's approach to the 'race problem' in America. In *Race and Conscience*, the Committee echoed Pickett's words about Woolman by insisting that 'Today there are no innocent bystanders', in the quest for a just society.

The first step starts with you where you are. You are a witness – for right or wrong. You have a choice to make... Since your daily life touches the problems of segregation, you must resolve to separate yourself from discrimination in your personal activities and associations.<sup>19</sup>

In 1949, however, not as many people heard this message on radio as the AFSC had hoped. The *Church of the Air* broadcasts were usually carried by about 75 stations, including 13 southern affiliates, but no southern stations accepted the show when Pickett and Elliot appeared. This silence offered mute testimony to the AFSC's reputation as unequivocal opponents of Jim Crow and other forms of racial discrimination. It also portended the problems the AFSC would encounter in the 1950s as it sought to capitalise on radio's elusive potential to shape attitudes, discourse and practices in the racial arena.<sup>20</sup>

By its own admission, the AFSC's initial 'efforts to reach the widest American public through the medium of radio was restricted to informal spot programs'.<sup>21</sup> This mainly involved grasping occasional guest slots for Committee representatives on established network radio shows like *Church of the Air* and NBC's popular *The University of Chicago's Round Table*, on which the AFSC staff – including 'men and women of color, who feel deeply the upsurge of a new sense of dignity in colonial peoples' – appeared on five successive Sundays in mid-1950.<sup>22</sup> The Committee's first sustained effort to rectify this parlous and rather parasitic *ad hoc* relationship with network radio came during late 1950 and early 1951 when the Committee budgeted US\$10,000 for a six-month experiment in hiring airtime for weekly AFSC news commentaries on KYW-Philadelphia. The station was an NBC affiliate, although after the *Church of the Air* experience there was little optimism that these shows would be picked up by many of the network's southern affiliates. Instead, it was intended that tapes of the broadcasts would be distributed to regional AFSC offices where more intimate local contacts, such as the one the High Point office had cultivated with WBIG, might open up greater opportunities. On 2 February 1951, the management of KYW agreed to broadcast the shows, providing that the AFSC agreed to warn the station management in advance of any potentially controversial subject matter.<sup>23</sup>

This proviso was merely the first of a whole series of escalating demands and caveats introduced by KYW and its owners, the Westinghouse Corporation, based in Washington, DC. First, KYW insisted that the show should be transferred from a paid time slot to a free public service slot. On one level this meant that the AFSC would save money, since it did not need to buy airtime. On another level, however, it made the shows far more vulnerable to being dropped or shunted around the schedules. While KYW assured the AFSC that the shows would not be moved without 'good cause' this was of little comfort since 'good cause' could include the sale of the allotted 'free' time slot to a paying customer, the scheduling of network

sustaining programmes, or simply the airing of local programmes considered by KYW to be of greater interest. Even more alarming to the AFSC, and indicative of KYW's increasing nervousness about the whole project, was the station's insistence that the time immediately following a Committee broadcast should be left free for an instant rebuttal of anything that AFSC commentators had said. The station also required the AFSC to submit a summary of its programme script on the Monday before the scheduled Sunday broadcast so that it could be vetted for content.<sup>24</sup>

On 16 February 1951 the AFSC Board's executive committee decided that there were simply too many strings attached to the KYW deal and put the idea of a regular programme on hold while it made further inquiries about broadcasting protocols and possibilities. The Committee approached the Federal Communications Commission to see if this degree of content control was actually legal, but the Commission upheld the legitimacy of KYW's rules. Desperate to find another, less demanding and less timorous partner, the AFSC also talked to three other Philadelphia stations – WIP, WFIL, and WCAU. These facilities proved equally reluctant to associate with an organisation that was not only committed to attacking racial discrimination, but that also advocated reconciliation with the Soviet Union and nuclear disarmament at the height of the Cold War and anticommunist zealotry in America. On 8 March 1951, the AFSC abandoned its hopes of finding a permanent home for its programmes with any individual station.<sup>25</sup> Deeply frustrated, it slashed its radio budget from US\$10,000 to US\$2500 and reassigned Radio Director George Loft to other Committee business. By the time of the Board's finance committee meeting in October 1951, radio was ranked last among the budgetary items up for negotiation, while Public Relations Director James Kavanaugh was compelled to admit that 'We have been trying to "get off the ground" in this field for the last three years, but haven't gotten very far'.<sup>26</sup>

#### EDWIN T. RANDALL AND FRIENDLY WORLD BROADCASTING

It was in the midst of the AFSC's growing disillusionment with its efforts in radio that salvation of a sort appeared in the person of Edwin T. Randall. For the best part of a decade, the story of the AFSC's efforts to use radio to promote civil rights was inextricably linked to the efforts of Randall and his 'Friendly World Broadcasting' project. Randall, son of a Methodist minister and educator, was born in Leavenworth, Kansas on 30 June 1896. After a lengthy period accompanying his peripatetic father around the country and a stint in the Aviation Section of the Signals Corps during World War One, he secured a degree from Northwestern University, worked for a while as a newspaper journalist and as a probation officer before embarking on a career in radio. Randall was able to combine his technical training from the military with his strong social and religious convictions to become the national Radio Director of the Christian Rural Overseas Programme. He also hosted popular commercial programmes on stations in Minneapolis-St Paul, Philadelphia, and Worthington, near Columbus, in Ohio, which was where he was working in 1950 when he approached the AFSC about making some programmes on its behalf.<sup>27</sup>

Ohio Quaker, George A. Patterson, advised the Committee to take seriously Randall's overtures about 'the possibility for radio work in publicity for the Service Committee'. Patterson explained that Randall had 'developed a large listening public' on WFRD-Worthington and was very good at interviewing people. Moreover, he vouched for Randall's special interest in civil rights and peace issues, noting that influential Gandhian strategist and sometime AFSC worker Bayard Rustin was among those interviewed. 'He has considerable knowledge of the AFSC and what it has done and what it is trying to do', Patterson continued. 'He has discussed on air the FOR and the F[ederal] E[mployment] P[ractices] C[ommission] work of the AFSC and [is] fearless of controversial subjects if a principle is involved'.<sup>28</sup>

From the AFSC's perspective Randall's approach was especially timely given the sorry state of its own efforts to use radio. Not only did it approve of Randall's attachment to the nonviolent protest tactics propounded and practiced by Rustin and FOR, but it appreciated the fact that costs to the AFSC would be minimal. Randall's productions were initially funded in part by a small Ford Foundation grant to the AFSC, but much of the money came out of his own pocket. Working on a shoe-string budget, but driven by a fierce commitment to social justice, Randall produced literally thousands of five-to-seven minute taped radio slots during the 1950s (419 between October 1954 and September 1955 alone) on all manner of topics central to the AFSC's mission, including many devoted to developments in southern race relations.<sup>29</sup>

One of his earliest successes was a series of five short reports by the AFSC's Irene Osborne on the desegregation of schools and other public accommodations in Washington, DC, which had taken place with seemingly little opposition prior to the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision on school desegregation in May 1954. Osborne, however, stressed the fact that this triumph was no overnight occurrence, but the result of a long, painstaking exercise in grassroots community mobilisation and dialogue with the school authorities and other municipal and federal leaders. She noted that AFSC organisers had been patiently working 'for more than a year before the desegregation programme began'. Although they told a dramatic story, these radio shows were clearly envisaged as more than mere reportage. The programmes were designed to be educational and inspirational. Offering a typically AFSC variant on the conviction doctrine, they were designed to show other southern communities how peaceful integration could be achieved. 'We feel that a great deal has been learned that might be helpful and encouraging to others facing the same problems', Randall wrote in his blurb encouraging stations to consider airing the shows.<sup>30</sup>

Given their subject matter, it was little surprise that few southern stations accepted the chance to broadcast Osborne's accounts of how black activism had helped to secure the pre-emptory desegregation of Washington's public schools. Of the 21 stations airing the reports, only four were based in the South: WTSP-St Petersburg, Florida; WGAP-Maryville, Tennessee; WDVA-Danville, Virginia; and KFYO-Lubbock, Texas. While this was a modest beginning, Randall was far from disheartened. Over the next few years, as the campaign against segregation gathered momentum, as white Massive Resistance to that campaign hardened, and as southern white racial

moderates often struggled to cope with racial changes that were developing much more quickly and radically than their gradualism could accommodate, Randall's brief radio slots found ever wider exposure in the South.

By early 1957, Randall was able to report that in the previous two years a total of 77 southern stations had requested at least one tape from him – and 59 had asked for more than one. Moreover, while these clients included many tiny local outlets, 12 were powerful 50,000-watt stations with enormous reach. Not all of the tapes these southern facilities requested pertained to race relations. Yet even on this most fraught of subjects, there was a steady increase in demand. For example, 20 stations in the South took Clarence Pickett's February 1956 report from Montgomery on the bus boycott that had brought Martin Luther King to public notice, including three Alabama stations and black-oriented WDIA in Memphis.<sup>31</sup> In late 1958, broadcasts applauding the efforts of 2000 citizens to persuade the governor of Virginia to reopen the public school system in Norfolk – which local authorities had closed down rather than comply with a court order to integrate – proved even more popular. 'The Norfolk tape seems to have started a kind of brush fire', Randall wrote excitedly to Harold Fleming, executive director of the Southern Regional Council (SRC), the region's leading bi-racial Liberal organisation.<sup>32</sup>

It is easy to detect the imprint of a distinctively Quaker attitude towards conflict resolution and social justice on these broadcasts. This, in turn, helps to explain why Randall's productions managed to find a berth on southern radio even as the forces of white segregationist resistance were gathering strength and the policing of racial orthodoxy became more stringent. Amid growing militancy on both sides of the racial divide, Randall's programmes consistently focused on stories of individual redemption and community reconciliation. They threw the spotlight on calm, responsible leaders, both black and white, who eschewed violence and coercion and favoured dialogue, education, and moral suasion in order to resolve the South's racial crisis. Thus, in early 1956, when Clarence Pickett reported on the Quaker mission to Montgomery to support the bus boycott, it was 'to commend responsible parties on both sides for avoidance of violence in the real and very serious conflict, to talk to both sides and to discover the human values involved'. Revealingly, Randall was at pains to assure those southern stations contemplating airing the Montgomery broadcast that, 'It very definitely does not represent the approach of a group of northerners undertaking to tell people what to do, but of a group of Christian people seeking to understand a situation in which people on both sides are trying to work out baffling problems in terms of the Christian way of life'.<sup>33</sup>

In this respect, Randall displayed great sensitivity to the mores of the white South as it confronted the desegregation crisis. His broadcasts carefully echoed a traditional southern white emphasis on indigenous efforts to propagate interracial goodwill as the key to maintaining civic order and social harmony. It was because Randall's messages seemed so reassuringly familiar and relatively moderate in the heart of a maelstrom of protest activity and social disorder, that at least some southern broadcasters saw fit to use them. Moreover, by stressing the moral coordinates of the quest to abolish racial discrimination, the programmes also had the capacity to prick the religious consciences of white southerners: consciences that were a potential weak

link in the white struggle to preserve Jim Crow. Ultimately, as historian David Chappell has argued, most devout white southerners failed to find in their religious beliefs the same scriptural justification and spiritual inspiration for the fight to maintain segregation at all costs that black southerners – and many of their white allies – found for their fight to destroy it.<sup>34</sup>

Randall's success in gaining access to at least some southern stations had much to do with the way in which his broadcasts replicated a rhetoric of moderation, home rule, and interracial understanding familiar to many southern whites – and some of the region's African Americans, too. Nevertheless, there were important differences between Randall and the AFSC and most southern-based white racial progressives who still favoured a gradual process of racial change, the pace and trajectory of which was to be determined largely by folks much like themselves. The AFSC may have preferred dialogue and consensus, but it was unequivocal in its public support for the immediate end to segregation and disenfranchisement. Moreover, unlike most white southern racial progressives, the AFSC had few problems with the idea of using federal authority to help realise this goal.

While Quakers have often been wary about the coercive dimensions of state power and cautious about political – or personal – lobbying for many of the same philosophical reasons, the popular notion that they have been disinterested in, or somehow above, the world of politics and legislation, is misleading. In June 1943, the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), with AFSC veteran E. Raymond Wilson as its first executive secretary, had been founded on the conviction that 'We as Friends have a responsibility to contribute as best we may to the shaping of wise and right legislation in those areas in which our principles and the causes we believe in are closely affected'. Racial justice was one such cause and among the FCNL's earliest campaigns were those against the poll-tax and other undemocratic impediments to voting rights in the South and for a federal anti-lynching bill.<sup>35</sup>

In June 1955, a month after the Supreme Court's second *Brown* ruling raised segregationist anxieties by calling for school desegregation with 'all deliberate speed', a secret memo from Dick Bennett, secretary of the AFSC's Community Relations Program, affirmed the importance of federal civil rights legislation in hastening the transformation of southern race relations. Just as the FCNL had eschewed the traditional 'political pressure methods of lobbies maintained by groups working in their own narrow interests' in order to 'work in the manner and spirit of Friends, presenting our point of view to individual members of the House and Senate... endeavoring to win the assent of reasonable minds and enlist sympathies with the objectives sought', so Bennett proposed working behind the scenes to encourage reluctant congressmen and senators to support a bill 'which would forbid any Government from discriminating against people on the basis of race, creed, national origin, etc'. He acknowledged that by focussing merely on discrimination by government agencies and federally funded entities, this kind of civil rights bill fell short of the comprehensive legislation being sought by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which would also protect against discrimination by individuals and private organisations. Nevertheless, while applauding the NAACP for its determination to 'settle for nothing less than the

perfect law', Bennett urged the AFSC to take a more pragmatic approach and initially pursue a limited bill that would end racial discrimination in governmental agencies and practices. 'This is', he argued, 'perhaps, the first opportunity since the 30s of moving the Civil Rights Legislative story off dead center'. Incremental progress here, Bennett felt, could break the logjam of congressional inaction and serve as an exemplary model for comprehensive legislation in the future.<sup>36</sup> The palpable tension in Bennett's memo between the practical demands of politics – getting the best legislation that was available – and the moral imperative to seek broader legislation that would outlaw discrimination at all levels of society, was reflected in many of the AFSC's internal debates on its approach to promoting meaningful racial change in the South. It also animated the AFSC's debates about the appropriate content of Ed Randall's radio work in the late 1950s.

Another factor that distinguished the AFSC from most white southern racial progressive organisations was its support for mass black direct action campaigns to hasten the end of Jim Crow practices providing that the demonstrators – like those Clarence Pickett had lauded on-air from Montgomery – used nonviolence. From their inception, Ed Randall's radio programmes had frequently promoted the righteousness, as well as the effectiveness, of nonviolent direct action tactics. By doing so, they had helped to extend public awareness and a good deal of popular approval for the use of radical, Gandhian, civil disobedience in the pursuit of quintessentially American democratic rights. In 1956, for example, one programme had featured English Gandhian Reginald Reynolds; a year later James Bristol, the AFSC's director of Peace Education, had talked about 'the meaning of non-violence as a means of bringing about social change' drawing examples from Montgomery and South Africa.<sup>37</sup>

One of the most attractive features of nonviolent protest for those associated with the AFSC was its potential for bringing about an end to racial discrimination not by compulsion, but by redeeming and converting southern white hearts and minds. This is one reason why Randall liked to feature southern converts, even grudging and equivocal ones like Omar Carmichael, the superintendent of schools in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1957, nine southern stations, including the 50,000-watt WSB in Atlanta, took a show featuring Carmichael's account of school desegregation in Louisville. Although an avowed supporter of segregation, Carmichael had reluctantly accepted the implications of the *Brown* decisions and dutifully begun the integration of the Louisville school system, thereby providing leadership in what Randall gushed was 'one of the most remarkable demonstrations of racial democracy in our history'. On air, Carmichael freely confessed his own surprise at the smoothness with which a substantial amount of school integration had already taken place and at the fact that black children had not been a disruptive influence in the classroom.<sup>38</sup> With the Ku Klux Klan resurgent and the White Citizens Councils blossoming, Randall seized upon any such indications that beyond the ranks of diehard segregationists southern white racial attitudes might be thawing. In keeping with the idea of convincement, he then conspicuously aired such stories for others to learn from and emulate. Thus, in June 1957, Dr Carl Hansen, the assistant superintendent of schools in Washington, DC, was invited to express his own sense of wonderment at the success of the school

desegregation programme in that city, insisting that 'what has happened constitutes a social miracle'.<sup>39</sup>

The effectiveness of Randall's broadcasts depended chiefly on their capacity to demonstrate to white southerners the possibility of peaceful social change by showing examples of where this had already happened. Randall hoped to use radio to persuade the mass of white southerners to recognise the basic humanity of African Americans, the righteousness of the black struggle, and the disfiguring effects of an immoral Jim Crow system on the lives of both races. However, this agenda meant that Randall sometimes featured influential southern white racial moderates who, for a variety of tactical, personal, and political reasons, were still unwilling to embrace the cause of immediate integration and frequently rejected the legitimacy of mass protest or federal intervention in the racial arena. A good example was the South Carolina gentleman-farmer and English professor James McBride Dabbs. Introduced by Randall as a 'dyed-in-the cotton six-generation Southerner', in the 1940s Dabbs became convinced that segregation would have to end and joined the SRC, eventually becoming its president in 1957. Nonetheless, Dabbs had serious reservations about the wisdom of trying to effect immediate desegregation under the banner of the federal government. Instead he maintained an unflappable belief that ordinary God-fearing southerners could be persuaded, rather than compelled, to see the errors of segregation and therefore to participate willingly in dismantling Jim Crow. According to historian John Egerton, Dabbs' 'faith was that the rank and file of decent southerners were the real majority, and his aim was to touch them gently, to appeal to their innate sense of fair play'. In 1957, Dabbs appeared on one of Randall's productions, denouncing the racist hotheads of the Massive Resistance movement and appealing to the mass of white southerners to obey what he saw as their better moral instincts and extend the region's reputation for 'courtesy, good manners, and a sense of real values' into the racial arena.<sup>40</sup>

While many Quakers in the AFSC were very sympathetic to the idea that it was far better to persuade, rather than coerce white southerners to accept racial integration, to other activists inside the Committee and beyond, Dabbs' endlessly patient gradualism seemed woefully anachronistic in 1957. He seemed to represent a brand of temporising white moderation that was increasingly viewed as part of the South's racial problem, rather than a means to securing black genuine equality anytime soon. As such, his appearance on Randall's radio programme, along with appearances by other whites whose progressive credentials were even more dubious, spurred a series of pointed exchanges between Randall and staff in the AFSC's Community Relations Division. That dialogue dramatically revealed the complex interplay of pragmatism and principle in the AFSC's approach to the freedom struggle.

Aside from Ed Randall, the key players in this debate were Olcott Sanders, Alex Morisey and Barbara Moffett. Sanders was greatly impressed with Randall's efforts. Moreover, he appreciated the logistical problems Randall faced in trying to get supporters of immediate desegregation any kind of hearing on southern stations. With this in mind, Sanders wrote to Morisey in January 1957 listing five categories of speakers who 'under almost any circumstances...would not likely be generally acceptable' on southern radio:

1. Negroes, 2. people identified with integrationist organizations like the NAACP and the Southern Regional Council, 3. people connected with any presently integrated enterprises... 4. people who have come into prominence primarily because they have expressed themselves as whole heartedly in favor of or willing to accept complete integration, 5. people who would be identified as 'carpet baggers'.

This, Sanders admitted, left a 'pretty narrow [field] in which we must look for persons who would be useable in the South'.<sup>41</sup>

Despite these limitations, Sanders still felt that Randall's radio slots served a useful purpose by featuring southerners like Dabbs and journalists Hodding Carter and Jonathan Daniels 'who have stuck their necks out, even a little way'. He even provided a list of nine themes that would resonate with southern social and religious traditions and which might therefore pass through the mesh of radio censorship if introduced by respected white southern moderates. Acceptable themes included statements to the effect that 'The Supreme Court decision is the law of the land and we might as well get used to it'; that 'the decision is in harmony not only with law but with Christian conscience in an issue which is fundamentally a religious problem and which permits of only one solution in Christian terms'; and 'that distinctions of race in educational, economic, and social life, should be made as inoperative as color of hair and eyes'.<sup>42</sup>

If there was nothing much to alarm any AFSC staff members in this schema, more problematic was the fact that Sanders, like Randall, was also willing to feature guests who did not actually support integration at all, providing that they would publicly 'deplore violence and intimidation in any form against the securing by Negroes of the rights which have been declared theirs by law'. Sanders and Randall both felt that, at a time when 'even the slightest suggestion of an exception to segregation will be inflammatory', broadcasts along these lines were still a realistic possibility and would offer access to southern white 'homes and hearts closed to almost any other approach' on the racial issue. This situation might not be ideal, but in their minds the choice was between reaching southern whites with radio messages that urged calm obedience to the law and stressed the moral obligation to pursue better race relations, or not reaching southern whites at all.<sup>43</sup>

Barbara Moffett and Alex Morisey took a rather different view of things. Both fundamentally objected to the presence on AFSC-sponsored radio slots of anyone who, in Sanders' phrase, still took 'a position short of full, immediate, and outright integration'. In a lengthy memorandum to Sanders following an AFSC staff meeting at Guildford College, Morisey simply stated, 'We see no valid reason to help those who would admit on our programs that they do not favor integration even though they deplore violence and intimidation against Negroes'. Invoking the name of John Kaspar, who was then making a name for himself by stirring up racial violence in the South in an effort to prevent desegregation, he concluded that 'If we can in conscience support the pro-segregationists then, to carry the idea to an extreme, we would be obligated to provide a forum for John Kaspar or some equally despicable characters'.<sup>44</sup>

Morisey and Barbara Moffett both felt that Randall and Sanders were too pessimistic in assuming that certain groups or individuals would always be 'unacceptable'

on southern radio. To hold such a view, Morisey argued, was tantamount to accepting that white southern racial attitudes might never change. 'The situation in the South is not static', he insisted, 'and those who work in the South or close to the problems of the region do not grant this. If they did then they would be foolhardily to extend themselves on such a hopeless task'. Barbara Moffett conveyed similar sentiments from the AFSC staff who had met at Guildford College. The feeling there was that 'Perhaps we did not need to set our sights too low and that there was real possibility for getting a rather forthright message on some stations'. For both Morisey and Moffett, the real task confronting those involved in the AFSC's radio work was to try to expand the range of voices deemed acceptable on the southern airways to include those who supported the immediate end of Jim Crow.<sup>45</sup>

Not content with urging Randall to feature more radical white southerners, Morisey and Moffett also felt that the broadcasts should pay more attention to the African Americans at the heart of the struggle for their own freedom. Morisey pointed out that an increasingly mobilised black community was unlikely to take kindly to having cautious southern white moderates with a penchant for prevarication and tokenism paraded as the best hope for racial justice in the region. Indeed, Morisey contended that southern white moderates like journalists Hodding Carter and Jonathan Daniels, both of whom Sanders had suggested would make ideal radio spokespersons on AFSC-sponsored shows, 'may not serve our purpose, rather, they may help defeat it'. Daniels, he explained, 'has taken a moderate stand but he asks Negroes to 'voluntary [*sic*] segregate' themselves. This no self-respecting Negro can stomach'.<sup>46</sup>

Notwithstanding Olcott Sanders' realistic assessment that African Americans advocating integration would be unacceptable to most southern broadcasters, Morisey insisted that the AFSC should seek more black representatives for its radio shows. 'One of the grave deficiencies we face is the fact that too little opportunity has been given for Negroes to be heard on the subject of their own aspiration', he complained to Sanders. 'The major media of mass communications, controlled almost exclusively by white persons, still effectively denies them this opportunity. Surely the Service Committee can make an effort to right this wrong?' Barbara Moffett agreed. The AFSC, she explained, considered helping the South to understand the 'aims and methods of the NAACP...an educational job of highest priority' and she urged Randall and Sanders to try to get NAACP executive secretary Roy Wilkins on a programme to describe 'exactly what the processes are that are used by the NAACP and what its goals are'. She also recommended that they approach Martin Luther King offering him airtime to 'get his message before more people in the South', and more particularly to publicise the potential of the nonviolent tactics he had learned to deploy so effectively during the Montgomery bus boycott.<sup>47</sup>

Ultimately, Alex Morisey and Barbara Moffett's primary concern was that Randall's broadcasts should accord with the AFSC's best principles concerning the pursuit of racial justice. As Moffett put it, 'our role in the South [*is*] that of a "stirrer of conscience and advocate", not primarily that of a reconciler – at least not in the sense of not taking a position... Given this role it would seem that any radio efforts in the South should follow that general concept'.<sup>48</sup> Although not a Quaker herself,

Moffett recognised that the AFSC was built foursquare upon the principle of following the dictates of conscience. This was the source of the AFSC's strength and conviction and Moffett and Morisey would not allow that to be negotiated, even if restricting its radio guests to avowed integrationists substantially reduced the Committee's access to the southern airways and, therefore, undermined its capacity to influence the process of peaceful racial change at all. 'Must we compromise a firm position on race relations to guarantee use of our material on southern stations?' Morisey asked rhetorically. 'I think there is a general agreement in the Service Committee that, as much as we regret it, there are certain avenues of communications not open to us because of the ideals we hold'.<sup>49</sup>

The AFSC's staunch adherence to these ideals made it a formidable ally in the southern freedom struggle. But it also threatened to make life impossible for Edwin Randall and Olcott Sanders, who complained that the Community Relations Division's principles on who should and should not be featured on AFSC-sponsored radio was in danger of becoming 'so uncompromisingly absolutist that they cannot encompass anyone who would really be acceptable on southern stations'.<sup>50</sup> Alvin Gaines, a southern Quaker educator who had worked extensively in radio, wrote to the AFSC's Executive Secretary, Lewis Hoskins supporting this view. In an environment where 'no representative of the NAACP is likely to breach the wall of rejection built up against that organization in the South', Gaines argued that Randall had little alternative but to turn to those southerners who might actually get a hearing on the region's airways. 'True', Gaines admitted, 'they might not reflect the finest of Friends' principles', but 'they would be southern, carrying their passports in their voices', and 'they would be planting doubts in the minds of the segregationist [*sic*] as to the validity and rightness of segregation, the unworthiness of the Negro, etc'. Such overtures, he argued, might be especially effective in reaching 'the exploited, duped, so-called poor white trash who is the backbone of the segregation forces' and who was therefore most in need of education and enlightenment. 'Proper doubt', Gaines insisted, 'can often, "like the fear of the Lord", be the beginning of wisdom'. Radio broadcasts by even the most prevaricating and cautious of southern white moderates might sow such seeds of doubt in the minds of poor whites and, Gaines insisted, this was not only important, but realistically the best Randall and the AFSC could hope for in the present racial climate.<sup>51</sup>

By the end of 1957, the tensions between the AFSC's idealism and the practical concerns faced by Ed Randall had become almost intolerable. When it became apparent that the Ford Foundation would not be renewing the grant from which the AFSC had subsidised Randall's work, the Committee decided to redefine its links with the broadcaster. In October 1957, Olcott Sanders issued a press release 'to announce a changed relation to radio programs being produced by Ed Randall'. Sanders explained that, 'because of AFSC financial limitations – and to give Ed the greater flexibility that he feels his radio work requires – his programs will continue as his personal undertaking'.<sup>52</sup> The split was partial and more or less amicable. Although the Committee no longer funded Randall or participated in his programme production in any direct capacity, Randall continued to accept AFSC ideas for programmes and guests and regularly put his recording facilities at the Committee's disposal.



Periodically, Randall would also approach the Committee for funding, although that hardly made it unique. In dire financial straits after the suspension of AFSC funds, Randall initially bankrolled his newly incorporated Friendly World Broadcasting project from his own savings and a modest contribution from the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF). Thereafter, his most important benefactor and most important organisational contact until the mid-1960s was the SRC.

Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, Ed Randall continued to make hundreds of short programmes each year. In terms of the content of his signature five-to-seven minute radio spots there was little change from the kinds of programmes about southern racial reconciliation that he had been making since the early 1950s. The main difference was that once freed from the AFSC's exacting scrutiny Randall did not need to agonise quite so much about whether his participants and subject matter were unimpeachable advertisements for immediate desegregation. In one extreme example of this new latitude, in 1961 Randall even allowed notorious segregationist Lester Maddox, then chairman of GUTS (Georgians Unwilling to Surrender), to participate in an discussion with Dr Heywood Hill, an Atlanta physician and educator deeply committed to desegregating the city, arguing that this would produce 'a fair and impartial presentation of the issues'. Shortly afterwards, however, Randall showed where his sympathies lay. In 'A City Changes Its Mind' he proudly reported '“The Queen City of the South”, has firmly determined to open its schools with the degree of desegregation required by law – and without violence!’ Again, here was an example intended to encourage other cities to follow suit with Randall explaining, somewhat prematurely, how 'the die-hard segregationists are a defeated and considerable minority, who are not likely to offer any effective resistance to the orderly process of education in Atlanta'.<sup>53</sup>

In 1963, Randall speculated on the ways that radio shows could influence their audiences. 'People listening to a well designed radio programme somehow feel themselves not only listeners but also, in some odd way, participants. This is the element in this gift we have from God which we have never really understood or used with more than marginal adequacy'.<sup>54</sup> The fact that Randall, by this time already a veteran of two decades of socially engaged, religiously rooted broadcasting, was still trying to understand the complex ways in which his broadcasts could affect listeners, says much about the difficulties of evaluating the nature and extent of the medium's power and influence. It raises the vexing question of how effective Randall's radio work was in promoting Quaker ideas, AFSC strategies, and generally furthering the cause of racial equality in the South. Inevitably, perhaps, the evidence here is fragmentary and largely anecdotal. Randall himself recognised that 'this is a question to which there is no conclusive answer. It is all guess work'.<sup>55</sup>

More substantively, Randall drew encouragement from those stations that did use his programmes and from activists engaged in the struggle. In August 1956, Joe Long, news director at WNOX-Knoxville, wrote to say that comments on the broadcast about the Montgomery bus boycott had 'varied', but that he was generally surprised by its 'unusual acceptance in our listening area (six states) and practically all comment has been favorable'. Long tacitly endorsed the efficacy of Randall and the AFSC's faith in convincement by welcoming any further material on desegregation

that Randall might be able to supply, since it would 'be an effective tool in implementing [sic] this transition with a minimum of fuss'.<sup>56</sup> Similar encomiums appeared throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. WFAI-Fayetteville, North Carolina, considered the 'interviews with James Dabbs most extraordinary and timely', and urged that, 'they should be distributed more widely' to promote peaceful racial change. Randall himself believed that the broadcast on the campaign to reopen Norfolk's public schools had significantly influenced events in nearby Richmond, explaining to the SRC's Harold Fleming that the show 'was used elsewhere, notably by WRVA, the 50,000-watt CBS station at Richmond, where, within a week after its broadcast, both newspapers reversed their positions on massive resistance'. If the causal connection here was less simple than Randall implied, at least he had synchronicity on his side.<sup>57</sup>

The fact that cash-strapped groups like the AFSC and later SCEF and the SRC endorsed and financially supported Randall's work, also indicates that these organisations felt there was some practical value in progressive radio broadcasting. Indeed, SCEF's Don Stephens could not believe that Barbara Moffett and the AFSC had ever withdrawn backing for Randall's work. 'That lady has never appreciated the important role radio can play in reaching millions of folk with important messages which printed matter and personal contacts can never do', Stephens wrote testily to Harold Fleming.<sup>58</sup> Fleming himself became a regular correspondent with Randall, even suggesting subjects for Friendly World programmes. 'The work of FWB generally has been very helpful', Fleming wrote, 'we are convinced the service makes a real contribution'.<sup>59</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, there seem to be two major and interlocking lessons to be drawn from the story of the AFSC's early experiments in radio. The first involves a recognition that one of the most remarkable aspects of this story is that the AFSC managed to get so much news about gathering black protest, federal legislation and judicial rulings, and the steady erosion of Jim Crow's practices onto southern radio at all, not that it could not do more. Whites still owned all but three of the nation's radio stations in 1960, occupied virtually all the important management and sales positions in the industry, and made up a vast majority of sponsors and advertisers on most outlets. Given this racial configuration of capital and executive power in radio, harnessing radio's latent potential as a tool of racial enlightenment or a vehicle of mass mobilisation was never an easy task. This was especially true in the South, where there were grave risks of economic and terroristic reprisals for any broadcasters who allowed challenges to the racial *status quo* on air. Consequently, there was always a tension between the best hopes of reformers, who sought to use the medium to promote racial justice, and the practical and logistical limitations placed upon those hopes by the realities of the industry. Finding exposure on southern radio stations created precisely this kind of dilemma for the AFSC in the 1950s. As Ed Randall and Olcott Sanders appreciated, getting onto the southern airways at all sometimes meant

tempering the bold condemnations of discrimination and calls for integration and racial brotherhood to which the Committee was dedicated. Not all AFSC members were willing to accept this compromise.

The second lesson concerns the ways in which those same tensions, between the doable and the desirable, also circumscribed the AFSC's broader relationship to the burgeoning struggle for racial justice in the South. Indeed, while author-activist Gerald Jonas was absolutely correct to assert that, 'among the principles affirmed by the AFSC is the fundamental Quaker notion that there is no necessary conflict between idealism and practicality', the fact remains that there were frequent tensions between the demands of moral conviction and expediency that took time to work through and resolve. It was the Quaker commitment to the inviolability of individual conscience and their confidence that consensus on all matters of social discord could be achieved that made the AFSC such a positive force for racial change. Paradoxically, however, those same empowering convictions could sometimes hamstring the organisation, leaving it embroiled in lengthy, occasionally highly abstracted and surprisingly fractious debates over principles and tactics. Even Jonas conceded that, 'The Quaker approach to decision-making may break down entirely when opinion is so evenly divided on matters of conscience that neither side can feel comfortable with a compromise'. Furthermore, he added, 'at best, the consensus process is time-consuming and exhausting'.<sup>60</sup>

One consequence of this *modus operandi* was that non-Quakers associated with the AFSC often found themselves simultaneously impressed and frustrated by the patient contemplations of their Quaker colleagues about the correct course of action, fearing that it could often result in no, or unacceptably tardy, action on important issues. During the 1960s, as the AFSC became even more deeply engaged in the civil rights movement, this complex relationship between principle and programmatic demands, between Quakers and non-Quakers, reappeared in many forms. Even Barbara Moffett seems to have reconceptualised her sense of the proper relationship between principle and practicalities in her work as head of the Community Relations Division. As Jonas summarised, by the early 1970s Moffett had established a marked preference for concrete, specific, viable programmes over 'grandiose strategical concepts or sweeping manifestoes'. In a phrase that offered an elusive but telling blend of admiration and disapproval for this 'tough-minded administrator', Jonas argued that if Moffett 'can be said to have an operational philosophy, it is that the quicker a dispute over social priorities and moral principles can be reduced to the programme level, the greater the chance for a satisfactory resolution'.<sup>61</sup>

This, of course, was some way removed from the kind of principled absolutism that Moffett had demonstrated in her dealings with Ed Randall and his radio initiatives in the late 1950s. Ultimately, however, the challenge for historians of the AFSC is not to become too obsessed by the urge to weigh the relative importance of idealism and realism in assessing the Committee's work in southern race relations. Rather, what is needed is a more flexible approach; one that acknowledges that it was the simultaneity of these impulses towards principle and practicalities, the complex interaction of these sometimes competing, often complimentary imperatives, and the dynamic between Quaker and non-Quaker personnel, that always

defined the scope, timing, and nature of the AFSC's contribution to various movements for social justice in American and beyond.

## NOTES

1. For good overviews of this historiography see Lawson, S., 'Freedom Then, Freedom Now', in Lawson, S., *Civil Rights Crossroads*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003, pp. 3-30; Eagles, C., 'Towards New Histories of the Civil Rights Era', *Journal of Southern History* 66, 2000, pp. 815-48.

2. The first serious studies of African-American protest and its most conspicuous leaders quickly placed the southern black church and its ministers at the organisational, ideological, and emotional center of the early Movement. Although subsequent scholarship has refined that picture by highlighting more secular sources and vehicles for black resistance in the South – and by reminding us that not all black ministers or churches were supporters of or active in the Movement – the church remains close to the heart of most analyses of the early southern civil rights campaign and there has been a recent slew of studies dealing with the diverse responses of individual denominations and religiously-rooted organisations like the National Council of Churches and the Delta Ministry to the quest for black freedom and equality. See, for example, Alvis, J., *Religion & Race: Southern Presbyterians, 1946-1983*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994; Chappell, D.L., *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004; Collins, D.E., *When the Church Bell Rang Racist: The Methodist Church and the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998; Findlay, J.F., Jr., *Church People in the Struggle: The National Council of Churches and the Black Freedom Movement, 1950-1970*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993; Newman, M., *Getting Right With God: Southern Baptists and Desegregation, 1945-1995*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001; *idem*, *Divine Agitators: The Delta Ministry and Civil Rights in Mississippi*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004; Webb, C., *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001.

3. While the coverage is decidedly patchy, it would be wrong to imply total neglect of the AFSC's civil rights work in the South. For example, William Chafe discusses the AFSC's general concern for desegregation and its 'Merit on Employment' programmes in his study of the Movement in Greensboro in *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, NC, and the Black Struggle for Freedom*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980; Susan Lynn mentions the Committee's race relations work as part of her study of women's social activism in the period after World War Two in *Progressive Women in Conservative Times: Racial Justice, Peace and Feminism, 1945 to the 1960s*, Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992; former AFSC staffer Connie Curry notes the Committee's support for the efforts of Mae Bertha Carter and her family to desegregate Mississippi's schools in her memoir-cum-history, *Silver Rights*, Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Press, 1995.

4. Jonas, G., *On Doing Good*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971, pp. 87-88.

5. Cadbury, H., *The Sources of Hope: AFSC Condensed Annual Report 1956, January 1957*, Philadelphia: American Friends Service Committee Archives (hereafter, AFSC).

6. For more on the Quakers and slavery, see Drake, T., *Quakers and Slavery in America*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950; Hilty, H., *By Land and By Sea: Quakers Confront Slavery and its Aftermath in North Carolina*, Greensboro: North Carolina Friends Historical Society, 1993; Soderland, J., *Quakers and Slavery: A Divided Spirit*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

7. *Race and Conscience in America: A Review Prepared for the American Friends Service Committee*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959, p. iii.

8. 'A Summary of Race Relations Questionnaires', folder: Administration, Conference on Race Relations, box: Community Relations: Southern Program, 1961, AFSC.

9. Memo to Sydney Bailey, Non-Governmental Organizations Conference, 6 January 1955, folder: General, box: Community Relations Division, 1955, AFSC.
10. AFSC, Race Relations Committee, Annual Report, 1945, folder: AFSC Race Relations Committee, Annual Report for 1945, box: Race Relations File 1944 (A-Z), 1945 (A-Z). See also, Sarah Herbin, memo: 'In Retrospect to Southern Staff and Southern Programs Committee', 23 August 1963, folder: High Point Employment on Merit, box: Community Relations Division, 1963, Rights of Conscience, Southern Program; Jean Fairfax, memo to Sub-Committee on Southern Programs, 8 November 1960, folder: Program Priorities, box: Community Relations Division, 1960, all references, AFSC. There were many other dimensions of the AFSC's race relations work in the South that warrant further attention from scholars, not least its work to eradicate discrimination in housing practices, although this efforts was focused more in northern cities during the period covered in this article.
11. For more on WBIG see, Ward, B., *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004, pp. 78-79, 87-88, 214.
12. *Southeastern Area News*, December 1946, North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The significance of radio to the civil rights struggle is a relatively unexplored field. See Savage, B.D., *Broadcasting Freedom: Radio, War, and the Politics of Race*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999; Walsh, S., 'Black-oriented Radio and the Civil Rights Movement', in Ward, B., (ed.), *Media, Culture, and the Modern African American Freedom Struggle*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001, pp. 67-81; Ward, *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights*.
13. *New World A'Coming*, November 18, 1947, WMCA, Program Areas: Race Relations, Series E, folder: FOR Projects & Co-Sponsorship Journey of Reconciliation, 1947, box: 20, Fellowship of Reconciliation Papers, Swathmore College Peace Collection.
14. *AFSC Annual Report*, 1947, p. 22, AFSC.
15. George Loft, memo to Henry Beerits, WFLN Broadcasts, 23 September 1949, folder: Radio, WFLN AFSC Series, box: General Administration, 1949: Central Services, Publicity Department, AFSC.
16. Memo to Bailey.
17. 'Community Relations Program Request to the Lilly Endowment for Support of a Program of Public School Integration in the Southeast', 10 January 1955, folder: Foundations-Lilly Endowment, box: Administrative Section, 1955, AFSC.
18. C. Pickett, 'The Quaker Faith: It Current Significance', Radio Address on CBS's *Church of the Air*, 20 November 1949, folder: Radio Church of the Air Program, box: General Administration, 1949: Central Services, Publicity Department, AFSC.
19. *Race and Conscience*, p. 42.
20. See, George Loft, memo to Anne Hatifeld, 31 October 1949, and George Bliss, letter to Dear Friend, 1 November 1949, folder: Radio Church of the Air Program, box: General Administration, 1949: Central Services, Publicity Department, AFSC. The southern stations regularly taking *Church of the Air* were: KLOU-Lake Charles, WWL-New Orleans, and KWKH-Shreveport, all Louisiana; WFOY-St. Augustine and WGBS-Miami, both Florida; WGWC-Selma, Alabama; WTOC-Savannah and WGPC-Albany, both Georgia; WKIX-Columbia, South Carolina; WWNC-Ashville, North Carolina; KR0D-El Paso, Texas; WJQS-Jackson, Mississippi, and WRVA-Richmond, Virginia.
21. *AFSC Annual Report*, 1947, p. 21, AFSC.
22. Pickett, C., 'AFSC on the Air', *AFSC Bulletin* (October 1950), p. 6, AFSC.
23. George Loft, memo to Clarence Pickett, 'AFSC Radio Commentator Project', 3 April 1951, folder: Radio/Television - Radio Commentator Project, box: General Administration, 1951: Central Services, Publicity Department, AFSC.
24. Loft, memo to Pickett, *AFSC Bulletin* (June 1951), p. 9, AFSC.
25. Loft, memo to Pickett, *AFSC Bulletin* (June 1951), p. 9, AFSC.

26. Lewis Hoskins, memo to Finance Committee, 'Recommendations of Program Evaluation Committee', 22 October 1951; John Kavanaugh, letter to Lucy G. Morgan, 17 October 1951, both references, folder: Radio/Television - General, box: General Administration, 1951: Central Services, Publicity Department, AFSC.
27. Edwin T. Randall, 'Who in the World is Edwin T. Randall?', n.d., reel 2, Southern Region Council Papers Microfilm Collection, George M. Smathers Library, University of Florida, Gainesville (hereafter, SRC).
28. George A. Patterson, letter to Ray Newton of AFSC, n.d., folder: Radio/ Television - General, box: General Administration, 1950: Central Services, Publicity Department, AFSC.
29. 'Report on Radio and TV Activity, October 1954-September 1955', 20 October 20 1955, folder: Information Service, Audio Visual, Radio and Television, box: General Administration, 1955: Information Service (American Section) to Publications, AFSC.
30. 'Radio Programs Available on Tape, 5 to 7 Minute Conversations, 1955-, List B', folder: Information Service, Audio Visual, Radio and Television, box: General Administration, 1955: Information Service (American Section) to Publications, AFSC.
31. 'Summary of Programs Requested by Southern Stations', 1957, folder: Information Service, Audio Visual, Radio and Television, box: General Administration, 1955: Information Service (American Section) to Publications, AFSC.
32. Edwin T. Randall, letter to Harold Fleming, 10 November 1958, reel 2, SRC.
33. 'Clarence Pickett, Visit of Quaker Team to Montgomery, Alabama', folder: Information Services, Radio/Television Work, box: General Administration, 1956: Information Service (News Releases) to International Affairs Seminars of Washington (Seminar Meetings - 'Next Steps in US Development Programs'), AFSC.
34. Chappell, *A Stone of Hope*.
35. Wilson, R.E., *Uphill for Peace*, Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1975, pp. 15-17, 145-47 (quote on p. 16).
36. FCNL Policy Statement (1943) quoted in Wilson, *Uphill for Peace*, p. 18. Dick Bennett, confidential memo 'Civil Rights Legislation', 30 June 1955, folder: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights, Non-Project, box: Community Relations, 1955: Projects, Non-Projects, Educational Materials for Children, AFSC.
37. 'Radio Programs Available on Tape - 1956 - List M: Reginald Reynolds, 5 Spots', folder: Information Services, Radio/Television Work, box: General Administration, 1956: Information Service (News Releases) to International Affairs Seminars of Washington (Seminar Meetings - 'Next Steps in US Development Programs'), AFSC. 'Radio Programs Available on Tape - 1957 - List A - 5 to 6 Minute Spots: James Bristol', folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television - 'Friendly World Series', box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars to Washington, AFSC.
38. 'Summary of Programs Requested by Southern Stations', 1957, folder: Information Service, Audio Visual, Radio and Television, box: General Administration, 1955: Information Service (American Section) to Publications, AFSC. 'Radio Programs Available on Tape - 1956 - List O', folder: Information Service, Audio Visual, Radio and Television, box: General Administration, 1955: Information Service (American Section) to Publications, AFSC.
39. 'Radio Programs Available on Tape - 1957 - List D - 5 to 6 Minutes Spots: Dr Carl Hansen', folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television - 'Friendly World Series', box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars to Washington, AFSC.
40. 'Radio Programs Available on Tape - 1957 - List D - 5 to 6 Minutes Spots': James M. Dabbs, folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television - 'Friendly World Series', box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars to Washington, AFSC. Egerton, J., *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation before the Civil Rights Movement in the South*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994, p. 552.

41. Olcott Sanders, memo to Alex Morisey, 31 January 1957, folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television – Correspondence, box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars of Washington, AFSC.
42. Sanders, memo to Morisey.
43. Sanders, memo to Morisey.
44. Alex Morisey, memo 'Radio Programs' to Olcott Sanders, 8 February 1957, folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television – Correspondence, box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars of Washington, AFSC.
45. Morisey, memo 'Radio Programs' to Sanders.
46. Morisey, memo 'Radio Programs' to Sanders.
47. Morisey, memo 'Radio Programs' to Sanders.
48. Barbara Moffett, memo 'Radio Programs' to Olcott Sanders, 8 February 1957, folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television – Correspondence, box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars of Washington, AFSC.
49. Morisey, memo 'Radio Programs' to Sanders.
50. Sanders, memo to Morisey.
51. Alvin Gaines, letter to Lewis Hoskins, 4 March 1957, folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television – Correspondence, box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars of Washington, AFSC.
52. Olcott Sanders, 'Proposed Arrangements with Ed Randall', 2 October 1957, folder: Information Services, Audio Visual Aids, Radio & Television – Correspondence, box: General Administration, 1957: Information Services to International Affairs Seminars of Washington, AFSC.
53. 'Radio Programs Available on Tape – 1961 – List W', 'Radio Programs Available on Tape – 1961 – List X', both reel 2, SRC.
54. E.T. Randall, 'The Exciting Story of "A Yankee in the Heart of Dixie"', n.d.; Edwin Randall, letter to Paul Rilling, 26 September 1962, both, reel 2, SRC.
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56. Joe B. Long, letter to Edwin Randall, 21 August 1956, folder: Information Services, Radio/Television Work, box: General Administration 1956: Information Service (News Releases) to International Affairs Seminars in Washington (Seminar Meetings – 'Next Steps in US Development Programs'), AFSC.
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