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Giving 'Substance to Freedom and Democracy': Black Woman Intellectual Vicki Garvin

ABSTRACT: This paper explores labor organizer Vicki Garvin's life and ideas as an instantiation of Black feminism and as characterized by features central to contemporary Black feminist thought. Garvin's philosophy and practice of feminism come forth in her research and activism in worker's rights, African American's rights, and women's rights. Garvin came of age in a post-WWII era of politics that was shaped by social movements toward liberation. As a demonstration of how to resist domination and oppression while remaining committed to the practice of democracy, Garvin's lifework deserves attention.

INTRODUCTION

According to Patricia Hill Collins, one distinguishing feature of Black feminist thought is that there is a dialectical relationship between oppression and activism, and there is a dialogical relationship between Black women's collective experiences of oppression and their group knowledge.¹ Because of their unique position within the matrix of domination, defined as the social organization in which intersecting oppressions are developed, maintained, and maneuvered, African American women have a special knowledge about the interlocking nature of race, gender, and class oppression.² Therefore, they must be a part of any effective effort to critique and overcome oppression. As Collins explains, this insight was known and practiced well before contemporary feminist thinkers such as herself conceptualized Black feminist thought as a particular field of scholarship. The research and activism of labor organizer Vicki Garvin demonstrates an understanding of the specific and important role that African American women (as one of many historically marginalized/oppressed groups) have to play within the

institutional contexts that create and perpetuate their oppression. She emerges as a Black woman intellectual whose work transformed consciousness and cultivated resistance. Garvin wrote a Master's thesis that problematized labor unions as institutional contexts that privileged the liberal pro-capitalist perspectives of white males over the needs and views of the diverse labor force. While serving as a national staff member of a labor union organization, she used her position and the platform it provided to give voice to the experiences and needs of African American laborers who had been silenced within or excluded from labor union decision making processes. In furthering this effort, she similarly used her position as a writer at the *Freedom* newspaper to bring attention to the specific circumstance of African American women workers. Finally, as a founding member and leader of the National Negro Labor Council, Garvin developed a philosophy and institutional structure for a labor organization that would put the experiences and needs of African American women at its center.

This paper explores Garvin's development as a labor union organizer as an instantiation of Black feminism that would later be conceptualized as distinguishing features of Black feminist thought. Garvin was born in 1915 as Victoria Holmes in Richmond, Virginia. Her childhood was shaped by several experiences of education, activism, and leadership. In 1926, she migrated to Harlem, NYC, the artistic and political hub for progressive African American thinkers, which provided the space for her political activism to take root.³ Attendance at street conversations in Harlem, leadership in an African American history club in high school, participation in youth programs at her church, and experiencing her own family's painful economic struggle formed a lens for seeing the interlocking oppressions of race, gender, and labor. In addition to these experiences, her education at Hunter College and Smith College allowed her to refine her research skills. In 1942 and during WWII, after finishing her Master's

degree and thesis at Smith, Garvin moved back to New York City and immediately threw herself into trade union work with the National War Labor Board as a wage rate analyst. She simultaneously held a position with the National Negro Congress. She began working for the United Office and Professional Workers of America (UOPWA) in 1945 and two years later joined the Communist Party.

GARVIN: THE ACTIVIST-INTELLECTUAL

Garvin's Master's thesis challenged the elitism of white male leadership that dominated labor politics of the early twentieth century at the cost of the labor constituents. She did this by exposing the conflict of interest at stake in the quiet but close relationship between national labor union leadership and the dominant organization representing business interests. For Garvin, this conflict of interest was morally problematic because it undermined the very commitments to workers that the labor unions proclaimed as a fundamental matter of principle and praxis.

Authored in her former name of Victoria Holmes Best, the 1942 thesis is entitled "The American Federation of Labor and Social Security Legislation: Changing Policy towards Old Age Pensions and Unemployment Insurance, 1900-1932." It provides an institutional analysis of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and why the federation's Executive Committee was reluctant to support old-age protection legislation even as local trade union constituencies buttressed it. As the first record of Garvin's critical thinking, research, and analytic skills, it reveals her serious interest in labor politics and the conflicts that arise within organizations as political institutions. In a sophisticated analysis of the friction between AFL leadership and constituency, Garvin highlights two of her first political insights. The first is how unpopular ideological party labels can be used to block change demanded by broad populations. The second

insight is on the nature of alliances that form among men holding power positions that are claimed to be oppositional, but which are united in controlling specific groups of people.

Garvin details the complex layers of the leadership's resistance to the proposed advocacy project in order to reveal the true reasons for the conflict. The AFL erred in its claim of being apolitical and uninvolved in political parties or legislation. Its founder and president, Samuel Gompers, was known for his aversion to Socialism, and this continued to influence the leadership's decisions. Garvin's thesis conveys a critical perspective of their proclaimed obligation and affinity to skilled labor, which did not represent all workers. According to Garvin's investigation of the men of the AFL Executive Committee, the weakness of their advocacy for protective legislation and unemployment benefits was a consequence of their distrust of federal-level legislation. They feared regulation by a centralized government. For this reason, they would not support laws granting compulsory insurance to workers or pensions for the old. However, Garvin also shows how the AFL pinned their failures of advocacy on the "Socialists" who were fighting for federal-level legislation. As she explains, the strategy of those in the AFL who opposed legislation establishing insurance and pension support "was an attempt to discredit social insurance by attaching to it the label of socialism."⁴

Garvin's thesis goes on to analyze the employer view of worker protection legislation, which shares the AFL's position that social security legislation would be un-American and would denigrate the American capitalist tradition and work ethic. Although these two organizations were historically and properly opposed to each other, Garvin reveals their shared concerns about the political implications of social insurance. The power of a large government emerges as a prominent fear connecting labor leadership and labor employers. This should come as no surprise since Gompers, the president and founder of the AFL, also served as the vice

president of the National Civic Federation, which included leaders of big business and industry who, according to Garvin and her research, “pursued labor policies hostile to trade unionism.”⁵ Garvin’s investigation of these two organizations is one that shames the AFL for shaping the discourse around protective legislation based on philosophies that were not grounded in many individual workers’ realities. Speaking of the constituent labor unions, Garvin deduces “these unions were more sensitive to and responsive to the pressure of their material conditions than to philosophical considerations.”⁶

While Garvin’s thesis documents important obstructions to democracy, both the text and focus of analysis reveal her belief in local activism and a philosophy that is rooted in lived realities. Collins asserts that in the creation of Black feminist thought “the primary responsibility for defining one’s own reality lies with the people who live that reality, who actually have those experiences.”⁷ An essential function of Black feminist thought is empowerment through self-definition that supports acts of resistance or activism. It does not diminish Garvin’s developing insight that she was using this argument for the working class in general while Collins writes for African American women in particular. Garvin concludes that it is because of the continued organizing by local and state chapters of AFL organizations that the AFL leadership effectively advocated for protective legislation. She draws on this case to argue that institutional leadership can be corrupt when it has opportunities to collude with powerful special interests and fails to remain actively engaged in incorporating the voices and needs of its constituency. Yet the power of workers within unions is an important counter-force that must remain organized and active in order to accomplish progressive change. These themes were developed further in the research Garvin carried out while at the UOPWA, which revealed a similar set of conflicting interests underlying relationships between corporations, the U.S. government, and the military.

During WWII, women gained more jobs within the labor force, which consequently transformed the demographic of the Coalition of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions and gave Garvin access to a leadership role within the UOPWA. As Research Director of the UOPWA, Garvin supervised a 1948 report entitled “The Facts of Life: An Economic Report,” which draws conclusions that mirror C. Wright Mills’ 1956 *The Power Elite* on elite theory. In this study, she identifies and names what she and Mills refer to as “inter-locking directorates.” Interlocking directorates is the term used to explain the revolving door of directors or leaders of different powerful institutions, usually between economic actors, government officials, and the military. The research shows the multiple links connecting men who make government policy, including the Cabinet secretaries, directors, partners, and chairmen of businesses. It also shows how people in high ranks of military have access to high-level government jobs, including ambassadors to other countries, advisors to President Truman, and UN delegate seats. Drawing on research showing the growth of corporate investments abroad, Garvin highlights the problematic relationship between increasing wages, increasing prices, and rising corporate profits. As she explains, “I call your special attention to the graph which refutes the lie that prices must increase if workers are given raises. You will see that the wage increases which have been granted could have been absorbed out of profits without any rise in prices and still have left business profits greater than those earned in pre-war years.”⁸ In this way, Garvin questions the political and economic ties that drive U.S. government decisions and connects them to corporate interests and other actions taken abroad. As a union organizer, her concern for the worker is paramount, and the study therefore reveals multiple ways in which various political and economic institutions exploit workers.⁹ In this respect, Garvin’s research foreshadows transnational and international relationships of power, which become a focus later on in her life in Ghana and China.

While making a powerful critique of corporate-military-government relations that undermine worker protections, Garvin also draws attention to problems faced by women in particular. Within the report, she uses the budget created by the 1946 Heller Committee for Research at the University of California, which takes into account the needs for food, living, clothing, rent, house operations, furnishings, and income and payroll taxes, to conclude that a white collar family of four cannot survive with the rising prices and non-comparable rising wages. At the seventh annual Convention of UOPWA, Garvin critiques the budget itself, stating that it does not reflect the needs of the female office worker who is usually working for herself and one or more dependent. When she states that women workers do not always have the same needs as men, Garvin is demanding that the Convention recognize difference.

Garvin's early research offers a window into her developing political philosophy and analysis of difference as an activist and intellectual. She continued to use her position within union organizations to voice the needs of not only women, but also African Americans.

GARVIN GIVES VOICE TO EXCLUDED AFRICAN AMERICANS

At the 1949 CIO Constitutional Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, Garvin used her national staff position to support Resolution no. 16, which addressed the obstacles faced by minority groups within the union. She pushed the Convention to be even more expansive in acknowledging and addressing such obstacles. She began by expressing her pride in being a part of the CIO, but went on to convey her disappointment that the organization had not addressed the rights of African Americans. This was partly because CIO leadership feared it would alienate whites in the South who might be a part of the KKK. She therefore pushed the CIO to continue fighting for placement of African Americans in all jobs. Another delegate responded by dismissing her and asserting that she did not know the policies in the South. This event

symbolizes Garvin's challenges to the white male power structure that dominated the CIO and the structure's ability to dismiss her voice due to its institutional power. In a November 1949 letter, Thomas Richardson of the United Public Workers of America (UPWA) responded by thanking Garvin for her "courageous leadership" in challenging Murray, the president of CIO. Two other men also did not get up, and they both expressed feeling disappointed in themselves.¹⁰ In the next meeting, Delegate Richardson articulated the connections between the African American population and unemployment, asserting that it is crucial for the CIO to be working on African American issues. He stated that it should be on the CIO's agenda to call on Truman to stop Jim Crow practices because they deny economic benefit to black workers. In these ways, Garvin's actions transformed the scope of what is considered a labor issue by working to include African American voices.

Garvin's push for organizations to be more diverse was a direct challenge to the idea that one demographic should control policy or decision-making processes. She understood that decisions were not being made in favor of black workers because those who decided what concerns were legitimate came from homogenous perspectives and standpoints. She critiques the elitist perspective within the AFL in her thesis, and again as she challenges Resolution no. 6 in not doing enough for the conditions of diverse workers. Through the assertion of her voice, Garvin shows that more must be done to include the voices of the minorities that policies are intended to support within the policy-making process.

The Red Scare and McCarthyism shaped the way bureaucratic organizations practiced unity and loyalty. The fear of communism changing the ideology of a liberal capitalist democracy, which was held together through the strong ties Garvin exposed, sparked legislation such as the Truman Doctrine of 1947 and McCarran Act of 1950. The McCarran Act and FBI

surveillance, and intimidation made labor unions hypersensitive to criticism, which was driven by their fear of exclusion from vital organizational networks and resources. The semblance of unity, especially among unions, was desirable and necessary under Cold War political repression in the U.S. Connections to the Communist Party (CP) posed threats to liberal capitalism and thus powerful business interests. Strict loyalty to an organizations' values and the U.S.'s broader pro-capitalist culture created an atmosphere of unwavering submission and unity to the bureaucracy's goals, which was furthered by fears of reprimand. Thus, the president of the CIO, Philip Murray, responded to Richardson's praise for Garvin by accusing him of attempting to "create division" in the CIO.¹¹ Actions threatening hegemonic forms of economic and political power were considered a threat to the iconology of unity. As one writer of *The Worker Magazine* noted, Murray was venerated because of his ability to keep unity within the CIO during a time when labor was being politically attacked: "The whole question of leadership has been built up in the CIO on a false basis... the concept that one person becomes supreme and is above criticism."¹² Here, a leader becomes valued for his ability to shut down disagreement and keep those below him subordinate. This domination within an organization suppresses and rids itself of difference. This worked against many African Americans who began their activism within the CP due to the party's commitment to building coalitions with marginalized groups.

Eventually, in 1949, the UOPWA was eliminated from the CIO, which corresponded to other efforts that used Cold War legislation to dismantle movements for racial equality.¹³ Like the eleven other organizations that were removed from CIO, the UPWA was also eliminated, which reflected the political climate Garvin confronted, since the UPWA also had a record of opposing racial discrimination as one of two unions with the highest percentage of African American women in leadership.

INSTITUTIONALIZING AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S VOICES

Given the non-responsiveness of unions to the needs of African American workers, Garvin continued to work for *Freedom* newspaper while organizing the National Negro Labor Council (NNLC). Their work throughout the founding allowed her and other African American women to make their needs part of the foundation of the organization. These women called for a labor movement that could account for and respond to the intersecting oppressions of race, gender, class, and region. It was this community that made it possible for Garvin to sustain the movement's more radical politics amidst a hostile and repressive political environment.¹⁴ Clearly, Garvin's politics and calls for change were not welcome in the older labor union institutions. With more calls from the community for a space that would be concerned with black workers' rights, the NNLC was able to emerge as an organization with a representation of unity distinct from and oppositional to the teaching and practices of the CIO or U.S. government.

Between 1950 and 1952, Garvin used her position with the *Freedom* newspaper to shine a spotlight on the needs of African American women workers. In a 1951 interview with Jane Gilbert, Garvin plainly explained that "in many ways the status of Negro women has not yet changed since the days of slavery, you know." African American women were relegated to the worst jobs in the North and the South while still responsible for managing their families and homes. Garvin framed this struggle as one that is closely connected with the broader fight for African Americans' economic status.¹⁵ She argued for employment for black women where white women work "at equal pay and condition" and claimed that "Negro women are militant and willing to fight for this right."¹⁶ In this way, Garvin served as a leader who transforms the consciousness of African American women by standing strong in challenging the root of their social problems in media. This included her own interminable challenge to the unjust powers that

oppressed African American women. As she proved in her stance at the CIO convention a few years earlier, Garvin's work embodied a refusal to capitulate to white male power relations.

Activism within unions is how African American women workers created the space and momentum to organize for their rights. In an article in *Freedom* newspaper, Garvin points out that African American women are the first to be fired during a slack season in the national economy, have the worst jobs, and are absolutely "co-breadwinners" due to "white men [having] virtual monopoly on the best paying jobs available in the U.S." While bringing attention to the fact that African American men and women were relegated to unskilled labor and tasks, Garvin also emphasizes that unorganized African American women were especially subject to control by their employers. Thus, turning to solutions, she writes, "It is a matter of record that where given the opportunity to enter industry and become a part of the trade union movement, Negro women have demonstrated their loyalty and ability to fight for the best interests of all workers. Despite tremendous handicaps, Negro women have fought their way to the top in many unions." For Garvin, it is African American women who "give substance to freedom and democracy." She calls for permanent jobs for African American women in industry, the provision of opportunities for training, up-grading and employment in all categories of work, elimination of wage differentials, and an extension of coverage of social welfare legislation to industries and occupations not yet included. Garvin also wanted to see the promotion of African American women in leadership positions at all levels of trade union activity.¹⁷

When Garvin and her collaborators, such as Ferdinand Smith, Ewart Guinier, and Pearl Laws, created the NNLC, they created a space in which they could work together to struggle and fight for the diverse needs of a diverse labor force. The NNLC was a "movement" in the words of Garvin at its founding convention, which took place in a Cincinnati community that was doing

its best to keep them out. Specifically, the Cincinnati City Council passed a resolution disapproving of the convention events, and the F.B.I. was rumored to be paying close attention to them. When African Americans first arrived, they were refused by hotels, so convention participants turned to local families who were willing to host them. Because the hotels finally yielded, Garvin's convention speech emphasized the importance of the NNLC convention as part of an underlying movement that resisted government abuse.

The composition of the convention was diverse, drawing whites as well as African Americans, and Garvin knew that finding *unity at the intersection of these differences* would provide the strength to overcome the power of the "coalition of bosses, bankers and Klu Klux politicians."¹⁸ Unity across race was thus an important part of the NNLC. While the organization was dedicated to having African Americans lead this movement, whites were welcomed. There were 1,000 people at the opening convention, and Garvin estimated 10% of those there were white. They found they shared a "common enemy." Garvin saw it as crucial that there be a white-Black united approach in order for "all to benefit."

By refraining from an exclusionary politics, Garvin and the NNLC were furthering the Black feminist mission. "Black women intellectuals are central in the production of Black feminist thought because [they] alone can foster the group autonomy that fosters effective coalitions with other groups... Although Black feminist thought originates within Black women's communities, it cannot flourish isolated from the experiences and ideas of other groups."¹⁹ Garvin, acting as one of the Black feminist intellectuals of this time, skillfully used her position once again. In the past, Garvin spoke up as an African American woman to demand recognition of a difference in labor. Within this movement, she went a step further, creatively

using this difference to build coalitions with other groups that similarly faced oppression or worked for justice.

By gathering diverse thinkers, the NNLC was able to establish connections between oppressions and exhume the roots of dominating ideologies underlying fanciful philosophies and mainstream economic debates. Perspectives that NNLC convention participants presented were progressive, complex, and challenged accepted meanings of freedom. Speakers acknowledged that freedom abroad cannot happen without freedom at home. The foreign policy of “freedom-building” was exposed as hypocrisy. The group discussed the deep ties of the military to corporations that make money off of the rhetoric used to incite war. The organization finally had the space to investigate and openly theorize about the interconnected injustices around the world and their relation to the injustice each worker experienced. This played a crucial role in the convention’s development of a liberating vision of inclusive freedom and allowed for an intersectional agenda. Included in their goals were establishing and protecting the rights of Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and other minority groups, engaging in peace negotiations with Korea, and pushing for the development of housing programs.²⁰

Coming from positions of intersecting oppressions, African American workers, and especially African American women workers, were appropriate leaders for this movement. “Objectively speaking, our inferior status and long years of better oppression and exploitation in the U.S., where we have been ruthlessly accused, abused and misused, qualify us to provide militant, decisive leadership to all workers.”²¹ Garvin saw it as African Americans’ necessity to be leaders because of their knowledge of oppression and resistance at the intersections of class, race, and in some cases gender. Furthermore, Collins explains that Black women intellectuals are less likely to abandon social justice projects because the issues effect their daily lives and

realities.²² Nonetheless, the NNLC was not closed off to those who were different from them. The NNLC maintained that their work served all workers.

Once created, the NNLC produced leaflets and postcards, established picket lines, and organized community street meetings and protests with local unions serving African American women. Obstacles for agricultural workers were important to the organization and led to its calls for unity with the South. Solidarity among unions was displayed in NNLC's continued effort to work with labor unions under the AFL and CIO. Despite their history and differences, the NNLC organizers remained willing to work with those who had similar goals and visions of justice. The broader commitment to working for African American's needs through political action included fights for representation in city government, attendance to hearings on NYS housing legislation and policy brutality, and participation in conferences demanding a repeal of the McCarran Act.²³ As the NNLC's second annual convention approached, it had secured jobs for African American women in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, Milwaukee, New York, Chicago, and Flint, and job training in Cleveland. It had developed ordinances to end Jim Crow education in Louisville. The NNLC was able to get 20,000 white workers to sign a petition to restore power to the 1941 Executive Order 8802 Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), which prohibited "discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin."²⁴ Funding had been revoked from the committee under Southern leadership in Congressional committees in 1945.²⁵

As the Executive Secretary of the Greater New York chapter of the NNLC and the National Vice President of NNLC, Garvin understood that the unity required for the organization's work was nothing like a repressive, forced loyalty to institutions serving powerful interests. In the 1972 Black Workers' Freedom Convention, Garvin recalled her experiences with

the NNLC, commenting on the political atmosphere and how it shaped the organization's goals. The NNLC was born out of McCarthyism and anti-communism at a time when any dissent in current government policies was considered a threat to be suppressed.²⁶ In reaction, the NNLC emerged with a commitment to hearing the voices of many, rather than succumb to the practice of allowing one voice to dictate and dominate discussions about how to conceive of and address problems. For Garvin, freedom and democracy were and should continue to be a struggle. Garvin helped create the NNLC as a place where people could argue ideologically and, in this, have friendship and comradery.²⁷ It was coming together from a place of solidarity and equality to find justice, especially in argument and debate, that foments effective democracy.

After five years of work, the NNLC dissolved in 1956 under political pressure from the U.S. government. This powerful movement, with many of its leaders sharing membership in the CP, was deemed unrepresentative of American ideals. Attorney General Brownell made the call to request that the NNLC be reviewed by the Subversive Activities Control Board. Ultimately, the NNLC decided to disband rather than be found guilty for fighting for freedom. In 1972, Garvin commented that the goals of NNLC were carried forth by Student Non-Violence Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party. She said she could see the work coming to fruition in the coalitions forming the Women's Liberation and the Anti-war movements, which the NNLC had planted the seeds.

CONCLUSION

Garvin's intellectualism and activism problematized and sought to address many of the same concerns that drive contemporary intersectional theory. Her early work focused on the class-based dynamics that corrupt corporate capitalism and the labor organizations that must find a way to operate within those political-economic dynamics. She furthered an understanding of

these complex dynamics by introducing the failure of labor unions to take the voice of African American laborers into consideration. Her final project to centralize the voices emerging from the special circumstances faced by African American working women in particular fully reveals an early modern thinker who understood the interlocking nature of race, class, and gender that has become central to contemporary intersectional thinking. Vicki Garvin continued to uproot the interconnected oppression of people and groups in her years spent living in Nigeria, Ghana, and China. Her lifework, as well as the work of countless Black women throughout history, provides a gateway to true practices of democracy and freedom.

June 12, 1952 telegrams honoring Vicki Garvin's appointment as Executive Secretary to the Greater New York Negro Labor Council

"Valiant fighter and wise and effective leader whose impressive record in the fight for human rights must for long continue to inspire us all"

William H. Chester, West Coast Regional Vice President of NLC²⁸

"...fearless leadership in the struggle for liberation... selfless courage and uncompromising determination..."

Sojourners for Truth and Justice²⁹

"Leader in the struggle to break asunder now, in our time, the thrice weighted bonds shackling Negro Womanhood—her leg chain as a worker, her wrist chain as a woman, and her galling, biting neck chain as a Negro"

Edward W. Robinson Jr. Publicity Chairman, Philadelphia NLC³⁰

¹ Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 32-33.

² *Ibid.*, 246.

³ Dayo Gore, "From Communist Politics to Black Power," in *Want to Start a Revolution?: radical women in the Black freedom struggle* (New York: New York University Press), 75.

⁴ Victoria Holmes Best, "The American Federation of Labor and social security legislation: changing policy towards old age pensions and unemployment insurance, 1900-1932" (MA diss, Smith College, 1942), 47-48.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁷ Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 39.

⁸ Vicki Garvin, "7th annual Convention of UOPWA proceedings booklet," in *Vicki Garvin Papers* Box 2, Folder 9, 42.

⁹ Vicki Garvin, "The Facts of Life: An Economic Document," in *Vicki Garvin papers* Box 2, Folder 8.

¹⁰ Vicki Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Folder 3.

¹¹ Vicki Garvin, "CIO Proceedings Constitutional Convention 1949 Cleveland, Ohio," in *Vicki Garvin Papers* Box 2, Folder 10.

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- ¹² George Morris, "World of Labor: Replacement of Murray Quite a Problem for CIO," in *The Worker Magazine* November 23, 1952, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 13.
- ¹³ Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*.
- ¹⁴ Dayo Gore, *Radicalism at the Crossroads: African American women activists in the Cold War* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 102-103.
- ¹⁵ Jane Gilbert, "The Negro woman and jobs," in *Daily People's World* December 24, 1951, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 13.
- ¹⁶ Vicki Garvin, "Negro Women Workers: Union Leader Challenges Progressive America," in *Freedom* November 1950, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 13.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Vicki Garvin, "Proceedings of the Founding Convention of the NNLC October 27 and 28, 1951," in *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 11.
- ¹⁹ Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 40-41.
- ²⁰ Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 11.
- ²¹ Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 12.
- ²² Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 40.
- ²³ Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 15.
- ²⁴ William Allan, "Winning Job Rights for Negroes," in *The Worker Magazine* November 23, 1952, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 13.
- ²⁵ "Fair Employment Practices Committee," Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified September 10, 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Fair-Employment-Practices-Committee>.
- ²⁶ Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 12.
- ²⁷ Gore, *Radicalism at the Crossroads*, 128.
- ²⁸ Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 17.
- ²⁹ Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 3.
- ³⁰ Garvin, *Vicki Garvin Papers*, Box 2, Folder 17.