

# ***Negroes Hold Rally On Rights in Capital***

**By JAY WALZ**

Special to The New York Times.

**WASHINGTON, May 17—**

Thousands of civil rights advocates met at the Lincoln Memorial today in a three-hour demonstration. The rally was sponsored by Negro organizations.

The Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom, which drew large numbers of Negroes from thirty states, observed the third anniversary of the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in public schools.

The pitch and pace of the ceremony rose as Negro leaders called on President Eisenhower to "speak out more firmly" for

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**The New York Times**

Published: May 18, 1957

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# RIGHTS BACKERS MASS IN CAPITAL

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civil rights, and on Congress to act.

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. of Montgomery, Ala., told the assembly that the judicial branch of the Government had shown "strong, aggressive leadership" on civil rights issues.

As the crowd shouted loud "amens" in approval, the 28-year-old preacher asserted that the executive branch was "all too silent and apathetic," and the legislative branch "too stagnant and hypocritical."

Representative Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Democrat of Manhattan, called for an American third force to fight for civil rights.

"We meet here in front of the Lincoln Memorial," he said, "because we are getting more from a dead Republican than we are getting from live Democrats and live Republicans."

The assembly, which gathered under cloudy skies, overflowed the memorial steps, spread over Memorial Circle and occupied the greensward around the end of the reflecting pool. A few white persons attended the rally.

Melvin Leach, Park Police inspector, estimated the crowd at 15,000. But pilgrimage leaders said this figure was much too low. The Rev. Thomas Kilgore Jr., pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in New York, who was national director of the pilgrimage, said at least 27,000 persons were present.

## Throng Called Orderly

The metropolitan police, anticipating a traffic jam, had canceled all leaves for the day. But afterward the police said the crowd had moved in and out of the memorial area in a most orderly way.

Prayers, musical selections and scripture readings interlarded the speaking program, and the printed program asked that applause be withheld because of the religious nature of the ceremony.

However, A. Philip Randolph, a co-chairman of the rally, relaxed this request as the program got under way by suggesting that listeners might show approval by waving handkerchiefs and saying "Amens." They did.

Mr. Randolph, who is president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, had been applauded when in opening remarks he warned against the acceptance of Communist help.

"We know that Communists have no genuine interest in the solution of problems of racial discrimination," Mr. Randolph said, "but seek only to use this issue to strengthen the foreign policy of the Soviet Union."

Mr. Randolph praised President Eisenhower for his "high sense of humanity," but called on him to "speak out" against the "lawlessness, terror and fears that hang like a pall over the hearts of citizens of color in the South."

The House Rules Committee, which has had the civil rights bill under parliamentary consideration for several weeks, ended hearings today. It plans to vote Tuesday on reporting the bill out for floor action.

In the Senate, the Judiciary Committee is considering amendments attached to its civil rights bill by Southern Senators.

Roy Wilkins, executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said Senator James O. Eastland of Mississippi had "buried" the civil rights bill since February. Mr. Eastland, a Democrat, is chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. King, who led the Negro boycott on buses in Montgomery in a fight to end segregation on public conveyances, appeared a hero to the pilgrims. He received the biggest ovation of the afternoon when he declared both

major political parties had "betrayed the cause of justice."

Mr. King said the Supreme Court ruling three years ago had come as "a joyous daybreak to end the long night of enforced segregation."

"It came as a reaffirmation of the good old American doctrine of freedom and equality for all people," he said.