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**Cornelius L. Bynum.** *A. Philip Randolph and the Struggle for Civil Rights.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010. xix + 244 pp. $75.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-252-03575-3; $25.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-252-07764-7.

**Reviewed by** William H. Adams (Chicago State University)

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**Commissioned by** Ian Rocksborough-Smith (University of Toronto / University of the Fraser Valley)

In the history of the modern civil rights movement, such individuals and organizations as Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) are commonly viewed as the vanguard organizers and organizations. However, in *A. Phillip Randolph and the Struggle for Civil Rights*, Purdue Universityâs Professor Cornelius L. Bynum argues that one needs to look further back to the activism represented by figures like A. Philip Randolph to see where much of the movement began. According to Bynum, Randolph was a pioneer in advocating nonviolent resistance against Americaâs racial policies, specifically from the 1920s through the late 1960s. Randolphâs work set the standard and model for leaders in the modern civil rights movement. Although there have been numerous books written about Randolph, Bynumâs book presents nuances about his spiritual and intellectual growth as Randolph became an iconoclastic leader during the mid-twentieth century. This unique book is divided into four sections and nine chapters and provides a holistic portrait of who Randolph was as a man, an American patriot, and a civil rights leader.

Part 1 explores Randolphâs early life with his family and religion. Bynum focuses on Randolphâs childhood and adolescent years growing up in Florida. He provides intriguing biographical information about Randolphâs parents, Reverend James Randolph and Elizabeth Randolph, and his older brother, James Randolph Jr., and their roles in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. Bynum describes how each family member and the church assisted in developing Randolphâs consciousness, specifically how to deal with personal and racial adversity through nonviolence while still fighting for social justice. Chapter 2 explores the effect the AME Church had on Randolph's development as a child and adolescent, especially his spirituality and social thinking in respect to his racial identity and the plight of African Americans. According to Bynum, important black church figures, such as Benjamin Tucker, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, and James Randolph Sr. (his father), exhibited racial pride and illustrated how black liberation was transmitted through both intellectual discourse and political action. The writings of such figures as well as their political stands on issues like self-defense for African American communities played a profound role in the development of Randolphâs own identity.

In part 2, Bynum expands on Randolphâs emergence as a civil rights leader when he moved to Harlem, New York, in 1911, several years after graduating from Cookman Institute in Florida. When he arrived in Harlem, Randolph experienced firsthand the black autonomy he had heard about as a youth in the A.M.E. Church. According to Bynum, Randolphâs move to Harlem was a transitional period for him from adolescence to manhood. Moreover, this phase of Randolphâs life presented him an opportunity to learn black radicalism, resistance against racial discrimination, and how to become a race leader. In the process, Randolph became enthralled by intellects like Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois and James Weldon Johnson and sought to emulate their styles. Other individuals, such as Morris Hillquit, Eugene Debs, and Hubert Harrison, were also influential to Randolphâs intellec-

tual and political thinking. The socialist politics of these men helped nurture Randolphâs resolve to engage deeply with issues of racial discrimination and also inspired him to join the American Socialist Party. As a member of the party, he worked alongside individuals like Frank R. Crosswaith, Cyril Briggs, and Richard B. Moore. Bynum describes how they were able to spread the message about the problems caused by capitalism in black communities by using media outlets throughout the United States, including the *New York Amsterdam News* and the *Messenger* to make their argument. Chapter 4 focuses on Randolph and his future wife Lucille E. Green. Bynum provides a short, superb description of their relationship and argues that Green was vital to Randolphâs radical politics and commitment to addressing the class and race problem in America. For example, she introduced Randolph to Debs who inspired him to push for interracial cooperation between African American and white workers.[1] This characterization of Green contrasts with Andre E. Kerstenâs book, *A. Philip Randolph: A Life in the Vanguard*, which describes Green as more of a capitalist and her support for Randolph as more financial than political. Although information about Randolphâs wife is limited, it would be nice to see further research on the role Green had within the Socialist Party and her other activities with Randolph.

Bynum also further expands on Randolphâs tense often malicious rivalry with Marcus Garvey of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). According to Bynum, Randolph as well as other African American leaders, such as Moore, thought that Garvey would undermine the idea of an interracial alliance between African Americans and white workers. The book expands on the idea of Garvey being a foreigner infringing on African American affairs. Thus, Randolph insinuated that only African Americans knew what was best for blacks who were citizens of the United States. Moreover, there were questions about Garveyâs relationship with white supremacy groups, like the Ku Klux Klan. Bynum illustrates this controversy by relating that Garvey admitted in 1922 to having a secret meeting with Edward Young Clarke, Imperial Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. The impact of Garveyâs secret meeting sparked a âGarvey must goâ campaign lead primarily by Randolph (p. 76).

Part 3 of Bynumâs work explores Randolphâs journey as a civil rights advocate for African Americans during World War I and in the postwar era. In this section, Bynum expands on the importance of Randolphâs and Chandler Owensâs newspaper, the *Messenger*, and shows how it was used to disseminate the idea of the New Negro to the masses. Chapter 4 demonstrates that the *Messenger* was a freethinking and independent media outlet that had a popular base with African American and white Socialist thinkers. However, the liberal newspaper also encountered challenges within the African American community more broadly. For example, the *Messenger* questioned and challenged the morals of the Headwaiter and Side Waiters Union. This criticism led to a separation between the paper and the unionâs leadership. Despite such rifts, the *Messenger* proved to be an effective tool amplifying black militancy in its time.

Chapter 6 describes Randolphâs vision of African Americans and white workers forming a multiracial union. Bynum notes that Randolph believed that African Americans and white workers shared a common interest under the vagaries caused by capitalism. Randolph used the *Messenger* as a platform to call for a third political party, and to present his claim that capitalism supported racial violence to divide and conquer along class lines. According to Bynum, Randolph believed that the best way to attack the structure of capitalism was through nonviolent protest and civil disobedience. Thus, one can see Randolphâs strategies as a blueprint and precursor to those used by organizations in the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. Ironically, as Randolph continued to emphasize African Americansâ inclusion in predominately white labor unions, such as the American Federation of Labor (AFL), his own affiliation with the interracial Communist Party became strained due to the partyâs criticism of African American culture. According to Bynum, in the aftermath of the Socialist Party split in 1919, the American Communist Party gained strength and wanted to have more influence in the African American community and to impose their ideas on African Americans. Despite the Communist Partyâs rhetoric to advocate for the rights of African Americans, some elements within the party had disdain toward African American thinking and self-reliance. The impact of this caused Randolph to have apprehension toward the party–an apprehension that eventually led him to have strong and vocal anti-Communist sentiments.

Part 4 explores the evolution of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and its struggle to be recognized as a part of the labor force. In chapter 7, Bynum expands on Randolphâs thoughts on race and their connection to class dynamics in the United States. This issue was an important component in creating an all-African American porterâs union. However, an African American union was not new; precursors included the Protec-

tive Union and Railway Menâs International Benevolent Industrial Association. Nonetheless, Bynum notes that these unions did not give African Americans protection from racial discrimination or threats of being fired. He elaborates that past agreements with the Pullman Company favored the company with the help of the federal governmentâs Transportation Act of 1920. Another issue that chapter 7 examines is the gender disparities that affected African American women who were maids in the Pullman Company. Bynum notes that women were paid less than their male counterparts and were more unlikely to earn tips. Other instances of gender inequality included the fact that maids were not provided with sleeping space on long distance trips and received shorter rest periods compared to male porters. Although Bynum provides insight into the gender disparities in the Pullman Company, he does not expand on who the women were on the forefront in demanding fair pay, better conditions, and equality for themselves. For example, it would be interesting to learn more about the role maids had during labor negotiations.

In chapter 8, Bynum states that Randolph continued to experience obstacles in negotiating contracts and getting the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters included in the AFL union. One tactic Bynum expands on was how the Pullman Company used stalling to prevent the Brotherhood from appealing to the Mediation Board. Another challenge Randolph encountered were laws created by Congress that failed to give the Brotherhood power to pressure Pullman and the AFL. As a result, Randolph countered with various tactics, such as submitting complaints to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC); striking; and talking with AFL president, William Green. Although the Brotherhood received recognition as a federal chapter, it was not recognized as a full member in the union due to continued resistance from members of the AFL. The Pullman Company and the AFLâs decades-long resistance to including the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters ended when the AFL merged with the Congress of Industrial Organization (CIO). After this occurred, the Brotherhood finally became a full-fledge member of the AFL-CIO and Randolph became vice president of this organization in 1955. A limitation of Bynumâs work is that he does not further delve into Randolphâs involvement in the AFL-CIO, such as how he used his position to encourage the organization to fight for civil rights both within labor and outside of the industry.

Chapter 9 provides information on Randolphâs fight for equality against the U.S. government because of its history of hindering the rights of African Americans seeking employment and citizenship. Randolph focused his energy on pressuring the federal government to open jobs in the civilian and the military sectors. According to Bynum, Randolph anticipated that by applying political pressure on the federal sector to end racially based employment discrimination, the private sector would follow. Randolph was an advocate of the first March on Washington, where one of the aims was to compel the Roosevelt administration to support equality in employment and full citizenship for African Americans. Although supporters of Randolph, such as Eleanor Roosevelt and the mayor of New York City, Fiorello La Guardia, applied pressure to stop the March on Washington, the idea of the march made the Roosevelt administration uneasy about the threat of international embarrassment and domestic race riots. The impact of these concerns pressured President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1943 to sign the Fair Employment Practice Commission (FEPC). However, due to obstruction by southern white congressmen, the full possibility of the bill was not realized. In exhorting the issue of equality in employment using the rhetoric of patriotism and through criticizing the hypocrisies of American democratic promises on this issue, Randolph was successful in getting mainstream newspapers to challenge the Roosevelt administrationâs diluted federal employment policies.

The book concludes with Randolphâs continued activism to increase the number of African Americans in federal positions and to end military segregation. Bynum elaborates on the importance of the declining influence of southern white congressmen, the growing numbers of African American voters, and the Cold War. These elements may have provided Randolph the leverage to bring the issues of ending job discrimination and segregation to the forefront of American consciousness. Randolph continued his social and political work during the Truman administration, such as when he encouraged young men of all backgrounds to refuse to serve in the armed forces. As a result of Randolphâs and othersâ vigorous stand against the militaryâs racial policy, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, ending Jim Crow in the U.S. military.

Overall, Bynumâs book is lucid and an excellent work that can be used for both academic research and casual reading. Bynumâs use of a variety of resources, such as government documents, manuscripts, Pullman Company collections and records, newspaper articles, and photographs is extensive. These items are located at the Library of Congress in Washington DC, the Newberry Li-

brary in Chicago, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the New York Public Library.

From my perspective, the book provides a humanistic approach to Randolph, which allows one to see him as a complex historical figure and an American patriot and not just as a civil rights leader. Despite the obstacles he faced, Randolphâs foundational leadership skills, and political and social philosophy which he gained from his involvement in the AME Church as well as from his family and his activism in New York City prepared him for the long struggle to gain equality in employment and to end legalized segregation in the United States. Bynumâs work places Randolph in conversation with the leaders from the 1950s and 1960s in order to acknowledge that Randolph set the standards for civil disobedience through nonviolence, which many civil rights leaders and organizations employed during the mid-twentieth century. Bynumâs research has opened a window to new scholarship on Randolphâs thinking, his role in the civil rights movement, and his demands for accountability from the U.S. government.

Note

[1]. Andrew E. Kersten, *A. Philip Randolph: A Life in the Vanguard* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 71.