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## INTRODUCTION:

This article was written on the Advertiser, the paper of Montgomery, on the 5<sup>th</sup> december of 1955.

The autor is Joe Azbell , who wrote a weekly column for the Montgomery Independent from 1968 until his death in 1995. He published first newspaper account of Montgomery bus boycott.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

The roots of the bus boycott began years before the arrest of Rosa Parks. The Women's Political Council (WPC), an organization (part of the Civil Rights Movement) formed to address the racial issues in the city founded in 1946, had already turned their attention to **Jim Crow laws** (were state and local laws that enforced racial segregation) about the problem of Montgomery city buses. In a meeting in March 1954, the council's members asked for some changes for Montgomery's bus system: no one standing over empty seats; a decree that black individuals not be made to pay at the front of the bus and enter from the rear; and a policy that would require buses to stop at every corner in black residential areas, as they did in white communities. But they didn't get any results. So the WPC president Jo Ann Robinson repeated the council's requests in a 21 May letter to Mayor Gayle, telling him: "There has been talk from twenty-five or more local organizations of planning a city-wide boycott of buses".

After the WPC's meeting with Mayor Gayle, there were many examples of woman who were arrested because they didn't give their seats to the white people. One of them is Rosa Parks who was arrested on the 1st december of 1955

The WPC responded to Parks' arrest by calling for a one-day protest of the city's buses on 5 December 1955. Robinson prepared a series of leaflets at Alabama State College and organized groups to distribute them throughout the black community. Meanwhile the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), began to call local black leaders, including Martin Luther King, to organize a planning meeting. On 2 December, black ministers and leaders met at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and agreed to publicize the 5 December boycott. The planned protest received unexpected publicity in the weekend newspapers and in radio and television reports. One of the article that were written for this event is this article witten by Joe Azbell.

On 5 December, 90 percent of Montgomery's black citizens stayed off the buses. That afternoon, the city's ministers and

# 5,000 At Meeting Outline Boycott; Bullet Clips Bus

By JOE AZBELL,  
Advertiser City Editor

An estimated 5,000 hymn-singing Negroes packed the Holt Street Baptist Church to its outer doors and spilled over into three streets blocking traffic last night as they voted to continue a racial boycott against buses of the Montgomery City Lines Inc.

Meanwhile, J. H. Bagley, manager of the Montgomery City Lines, reported that a bus driven by driver B. S. Johnson, apparently was fired on by a person with a .22 caliber rifle in the Negro Washington Park area.

Bagley said the bullet hit the rear of the bus and Johnson could not determine from where it was fired.

**ENFORCE LAW**

The bus company manager also reiterated a previous statement that his firm would not violate the law on segregation of bus passengers and that he would continue to require all of his drivers to enforce the law. "If they don't, the drivers can be sentenced," he said.

Meanwhile, police reported a unidentified party threw a large stone and struck the front of City Lines bus at the intersection of S. Jeff Davis and S. Holt street late yesterday. No persons injury and only slight damage to the bus resulted, officers said.

In a resolution passed at the meeting by the Negroes with a roaring applause, the emotional group voted to ask "all citizens of Montgomery" to refrain from riding buses of the Montgomery City Lines Inc. until the bus transportation situation is cleared up to the "satisfaction of citizens" who ride and patronize them.

The resolution, among other things, stated that "citizens of Montgomery" have been intimidated, embarrassed and coerced while riding the public conveyances and in view of the humiliation they have endured, the group agreed that they would refrain from using the buses.

It also declared that a "delegation of citizens" was prepared at all times to sit down with officials of the Montgomery City Lines and develop with them a program that the bus lines' patrons would find satisfactory and equitable.

The resolution stated that "no methods of intimidation" would be used or had been used to keep anyone from riding the buses, but it asked that a person's "conscience" be his guide.

**FROM PARKS CASE**

The continuing boycott grew out of the arrest and conviction of Rosa Parks, 42, 634 Cleveland Ave., Negro seamstress at a department store here, on a segregation violation count.

The conviction of the Negro woman may cause a court test on segregation of Negroes and whites on Montgomery buses. The Advertiser learned yesterday.

The Parks woman and Fred Daniel, 19, 1646 Hall St., arrested yesterday for disorderly conduct, were introduced to the large audience and the audience stood applauding loud. They each were described as churchgoers and industrious law abiding citizens.

The Rev. M. L. King, pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, told the crowd that the "tools of justice" must be used to attain the "day of freedom, justice and equality." He urged "unity of Negroes" for "we must stick together and work together if we are to win and we will win in standing for our rights as Americans."

Other speakers on the program said the idea of the boycott of the buses being anything like the "methods of the White Citizens Council" is "ridiculous" for "what we are doing is legal and constitutional."

"It is not like the Ku Klux Klan in going to our homes and taking men out and lynching them. It is not terrorism but democracy, a protest of Americans, in action," one of the speakers declared.

A collection was taken up at the meeting to finance the campaign of the citizens group."

In the several speeches at the meeting which was conducted along the lines of a religious revival service, other remarks included: "We will not relinquish (See 5,000, Page 6A)

Remember we are  
Fighting For ICause  
Do Not Ride A  
Bus Today

**NEGRO BOYCOTT POSTER**

This is one of the posters which city policemen yesterday removed from bus stop posts as Negroes staged a boycott against the Montgomery City Lines over arrest of a Negro woman on a transportation segregation charge. The poster states: "Remember we are fighting for a cause. Do not ride a bus today."

leaders met to discuss the possibility of extending the boycott into a long-term campaign. During this meeting the MIA (**Montgomery Improvement Association**) was formed, and Martin Luther King was elected president.

That evening, at a mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church, the MIA voted to continue the boycott. After unsuccessful talks with city commissioners and bus company officials, on 8 December the MIA issued a formal list of demands: courteous treatment by bus operators; first-come, first-served seating for all, with blacks seating from the rear and whites from the front; and black bus operators on predominately black routes.

The demands were not met, and Montgomery's black residents stayed off the buses through 1956, despite efforts by city officials and white citizens to defeat the boycott.

On 5 June 1956, the federal district court ruled in *Browder v. Gayle* that bus segregation was unconstitutional, and in November 1956 the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed *Browder v. Gayle* and struck down laws requiring segregated seating on public buses.

## ANALYSIS

This article talks about the Montgomery boycott of bus on the 5th december of 1955 for the rights of the black people to seat on the buses like white people.

The article is divided in 2 parts:

### - ENFORCE LAW

The bus company manager said that if one of his drivers breaks the law of the segregation he will be fined or sentenced.

In the mean time a bus of the City Lines was strucked in front of a bus but the stone didn't hurt the driver but only damaged the bus.

In a resolution that passed at the meeting by the Negros they ask to all the citizens to not ride on the bus until the stop of the boycott. But someone believe that the people was obligated to do that but it wasn't true because every person could choose by his conscience.

### - FROM PARKS CASE

Azbell explain that this boicott starts after the arrest of Rosa Parks who was the starter of the protest against the buses.

In this part he also make some citation of the speech of Martin Luther King who told: "he crowd that the "tools of justice" must be used to attain the "day of freedom, justice and equality."

He said that people that fight for the rights are bery important to obtain one day the peace. He want a nonviolent protest to obtain what they want.

In the article there is also an image: a manifest of the boycott that said " Remeber we are fighting for a cause. Do not ride a bus today"

It is a very important historical source to analize what happens in this day and what the black people said and what they want to communicate.

In my opinion this article is very important to understand some of the events that happened in that time, it is concentrated on the fight of black people of Montgomery for their rights. It explains the events in an objective way, there isn't the author's point of view. Through the images we could empathize with the fighters and understand the will to obtain their rights.

I think that this event : the boycott of Montgomery is one of the most important changes for the American History and for the black people rights.

SITOGRAFIA:

<https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/montgomery-bus-boycott>

<https://montgomeryadvertiser.newspapers.com/>

<http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/>