



# QUESTION VI

- Analyze the changes that occurred during the 1960s in the goals, strategies, and support of the movement for African-American civil rights.

# GOALS

- The goals of the civil rights movement were to end segregation, discrimination based on "race, color, religion, or national origin" in employment practices and public accommodations, to ban discrimination in the sale or rental of housing, as seen in the Fair Housing Act of 1968, and to protect and restore voting rights, as seen in the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

# STRATEGIES

- African Americans adopted a combined strategy of direct action with nonviolent resistance known as civil disobedience, giving rise to the African-American Civil Rights Movement from 1955–68.
- The strategy of public education, legislative lobbying, and litigation that had typified the Civil Rights Movement during the first half of the 20th Century broadened to a strategy that emphasized "direct action"—primarily boycotts, sit-ins, Freedom Rides, marches and similar tactics that relied on mass mobilization, nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience. This mass action approach characterized the movement.

- Things like churches, fraternal societies, and black-owned businesses mobilized volunteers to participate in these broad-based actions. This was a more direct and potentially more rapid means of creating change than the traditional approach of mounting court challenges.
- Example of non-violence resistance: On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus to make room for a white passenger. She was secretary of the Montgomery NAACP chapter and had recently returned from a meeting at the Highlander Center in Tennessee where nonviolent civil disobedience as a strategy had been discussed. Parks was arrested, tried, and convicted for disorderly conduct and violating a local ordinance. After word of this incident reached the black community, 50 African-American leaders gathered and organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott to demand a change in the bus transportation system.

# SUPPORT

- The movement was supported and spearheaded by Martin Luther King Jr., an American clergyman who led the Montgomery Bus Boycott, helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and gave the famous "I Have A Dream" speech
- Dwight D. Eisenhower's support for the civil rights movement is somewhat underappreciated. Not only did he desegregate the military, but also he ordered federal troops to escort the little rock nine in order to integrate Central High School.
- John F. Kennedy supported the movement as well. Although he was reluctant to lose southern support for legislation by pushing too hard on civil rights legislation, he did appoint an unprecedented number of Blacks to positions in the administrations. And he spoke out in favor of school desegregation, praised a number of cities for integrating their schools, and put Vice President Lyndon Johnson in charge of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity.

- Lyndon B. Johnson has been credited with being one of the most important figures in the civil rights movement. He was the president to sign the civil rights act of 1964
- Jackie Robinson was a sports pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement, best known for becoming the first African American to play professional sports in the major leagues. Robinson debuted with the Brooklyn Dodgers of Major League Baseball on April 15, 1947.