

The Important Steps and Gradual Success of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Posted on May 27, 2018

Introduction

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, passed in 1964, changed the course of the United States' history. It eliminated legal discrimination and provided equal rights to all. According to this act, there will be no discrimination while providing employment on the basis of color, race, or gender to anyone. It was first proposed by President Kennedy and then carried by Martin Luther King.

The main object of this act was to give equal rights to blacks and end the differences between whites and blacks. The act was not easily passed but resulted from the most complex and greatest battle of politics. The initiative of this act was taken right after the Civil War to end segregation in every public place in America. Those who supported this bill expressed their achievement by saying that this bill should have passed many years before and with the passing of the bill they explained it by saying it was long overdue. It was first proposed by President Kennedy and then carried by Martin Luther King. John F. Kennedy was the one president of the United States of America who was the first one to take this act to the parliament by sending messages to congress leaders that the constitution of America is color blind and the practices of America should follow the same thing. Even though Kennedy tried several times to pass the bill after bringing this up his weak proposal never let the bill make it through. But still, his efforts are still praised by historians because after that strong voices started to rise in the shape of the movement of civil rights and the most influential voice was from Martin Luther King. The discussion in this paper will thoroughly explain and highlight the important steps and gradual success of this act with affirmative actions with cases to show the impact on society.

Discussion

The forces used several methods against Martin Luther King, including the protests he started in Birmingham, but all those actions went in vain. Those combats by the police were described and criticized deeply by the [Birmingham jail letter](#), which won the Americans' moral conscience. This moral consciousness helped gain more support; not just blacks but even white people became part of those protests. Kennedy remarked that the acts of combat by police commissioner Bull were remarkable because his ways of combatting protests benefitted the civil rights movement more than Abraham Lincoln's. Those protests and the combat against those protests in Birmingham are defined as a remarkable incident for the civil rights movement because it not only won the sympathy of all Americans but also Kennedy started supporting it strongly who was once against it (Andrews & Gaby,

2015).

Before the incident in Birmingham Kennedy was close to indifferent toward this movement because he was keeping in consideration of both sides, the people of the movement and the southern state leadership who weren't willing to give blacks the rights of what whites have. Kennedy was unwilling to lose the support of southern states and did not want this movement to fail. Few liberals in the southern states were willing to give the rights but the support in his upcoming election was needed from all of them. Kennedy even tried to convince the protestors with his economic plan and educational programs to facilitate black people but the movement was strong enough not to let go of the chance to have equal rights. Kennedy took every move very carefully to avoid losing support from either side until the Birmingham incident happened.

Right after the Birmingham situation, Kennedy stopped caring for the Southern leaders and even endangered the upcoming election plan to get support from all of them, emphasizing the Civil Act. It started presenting the idea of making it a law. Kennedy and Johnson, who were planning to pass the legislation, knew very well that powerful political forces would build every hurdle to stop them, so they started planning to do it as quickly as possible. By working together with other liberal leaders, they planned to introduce the bill on 31st May 1963, which Kennedy planned to pass to give civil rights to every American. Kennedy spoke with the public by saying his plan to introduce the bill or give the rights to all the blacks same as whites, which he referred to American law should have done before because segregation and injustice have no place in it. Right after his announcement, Kennedy gathered all the leaders from his party that he thought would support the bill. He even gathered helpful groups and religious parties to win the support of as many as possible. Despite all the hard work by Kennedy and Johnson with the support of all the groups and leaders, the bill still faced several hurdles to pass. This goal was as difficult to achieve as close to impossible but they kept on working (Epstein, 2014).

The committee created to support the bill named the Leadership Conference started designing it and included the first major clause, Fair Employment Practices. They wanted to achieve this section by every means that would provide equal employment opportunities. With this clause, they also added the section where the act would implement the law that the Attorney general will govern. While working on this bill, on the other side, King kept on protesting and started the march to Washington for freedom and jobs for black people. The King organized the majority of protestors, but Kennedy also mobilized the public to build pressure so the bill could get passed. The protest in Washington adopted Kennedy's cause and chanted that the bill be passed. The protest was a big success for the black people and King, but the leadership conference had difficulty passing the bill from the House Judiciary Committee.

The bill needed to be redesigned so all the members of parliament could accept it, but in the meantime, it shouldn't lose its core point of liberating the people. The bill passed in the judiciary committee and moved to the House of Representatives. These things were unthinkable for both Kennedy and King because of the rigidity shown by the opposing leaders, but they still managed to

achieve one stage. While all these were happening, Kennedy was assassinated. This was the biggest shock to everyone working in support of the bill. After his assassination, all eyes went to Johnson, now the president (Andrews & Gaby, 2015).

Many leaders fighting for this cause feared that Johnson would no longer support this bill because he was originally from the South, and all the opposing parties came from southern states. Soon, those fears turned into a surprise for those in favor, and they shocked those who were against the bill because they expected Johnson to stop the movement from having the base south. The most remarkable history still recalls the historical address of Johnson right after he became the president of America. He thanked Kennedy and told the House that passing this bill would be the biggest most Nobel act we should do to pay respect to Kennedy. Johnson worked hard and the bill passed the House of Representatives with a majority of voters. Surprisingly, the bill also got one additional clause in which equal opportunity will be given to [women for employment](#). Not just women but minority women as well.

When the bill reached the Senate the hardest part started right after that because passing the bill in the Senate was the hardest thing at that time. In the Senate, the bill should get two-thirds in order to get passed, which was the law, and due to this, there was endless debate on the bill. After 4 months of long debate with the aim to kill the bill, finally on 10th June 1964 in the Senate, the filibustering was killed by the majority of votes, and the bill got passed and became law. The bill's passing changed history because never before had Southerners faced defeat in filibustering any bill. The bill includes clauses in which all the segregation in public places, all the discrimination on the basis of color, race, and gender will be eliminated, and equal opportunity in employment will be given to all people regardless of any race, color, or gender. On 2nd July 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the bill into law in a major White House ceremony (Guy & Fenley, 2014).

Some of the cases after the Civil Act was passed showed its implementation and how it prohibited discrimination. The ruling of judges eliminated the description which is given in the act:

- Griggs v. Duke Power was a famous case in which the Supreme Court eliminated a few criteria that were discriminating against [African Americans](#) when they applied for jobs. This case was put forward by black employees against generating plants, saying that the organization requires a special diploma for the job and an intelligence test if they want the job. The main reason behind the tests and diplomas was clearly to keep black people away from their right to have jobs.
- The other example of a case is Cleveland Ed V. Laflleur, in this case, the Supreme Court eliminated the discrimination policy against women. The mandatory leaves for pregnant women were creating discrimination because women had to go on leave for 5 months, which was unpaid. The policy was against the women and this was creating discrimination against them. Due to this, they were not secure in their jobs, which affected their family lives. This civil rights act protected the rights of employees and eliminated laws that affected their careers and family lives.

- The third example is Burlington Industries, in this case, the Supreme Court decided that **sexual harassment** will be treated under the civil act in which any unwelcome or threatening advancement with the aim of harassment by the supervisor will be held accountable to the owner for creating such a hostile environment. The case was filed by Kimberly Ellerth who quit her job at Burlington Industries where she was serving as a salesperson. She was continuously sexually harassed by her supervisor. She always resisted, but her supervisor threatened to fire her or not promote her. Before the Civil Rights Act, women were not protected by any law but under this law, she filed a case against her supervisor and the court held him accountable for the harassment under the Civil Rights Act.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 also included affirmative actions, these actions were policies which were based on actions to completely exclude all the discrimination which were present against blacks and women. Affirmative policy action focuses on employment and education so that those who were once not given these rights can take a step ahead in society. Few are the most important points of Affirmative Action:

- These actions were part of a policy of admitting people from underprivileged groups who faced discrimination to education institutes. The administration reached out to themselves and even provided financial aid to those people.
- Affirmative actions increased the number of applicants from the minority so that society could diversify by mixing every class together.
- They are given better job opportunities based on the education they received from the Affirmative action policy.
- The diversity created by the Affirmative action policy taught more and raised the intellect level of students because cultural differences boosted their minds.
- The discrimination they faced affected their socio-economic condition, so affirmative action will help strengthen both.

Affirmative actions also earned a lot of criticism, and those who criticized them referred to them as an outdated system that should be eliminated. They present the following points to support their stance:

- Students who get admission based on this policy are treated differently by management and peers because of special privileges. This special treatment can influence their behaviors and performance.
- The Fourteenth Amendment which protects the equal rights of every citizen, is contradicted by affirmative action because special treatment will discriminate against other students.
- Affirmative action only helps the middle class, but those from the lower class need better policies.
- The special treatment of students makes them less accountable, and the scores should be given based on performance (Wiececk & Hamilton, 2014).

The fight of politics by the southern state democrat leaders was one of the most legislative

showdowns in the history of America. After passing the bill called the Civil Rights Act of 1964, there will be no tolerance given to segregation. All the public places will be black with all the rights as equal to white have the rights. Regarding the employment clause, the bill stated that employment would be given equally to all people including blacks, any minorities, and women without any discrimination. In order to make sure that the bill is enforced everywhere, the government gave the authority to the State Department of Justice along with the Federal Bureau in the southern states that they can intervene if any discrimination or any act conducted contradicts the law enforced by the Civil Rights Act. The activists who were involved in this moment were extremely happy and satisfied that their struggle had created something worthwhile that would change the lives of many and be convenient. They outlawed all discrimination and segregation against African Americans from radical behavior. There were also several of political leaders who were clearly displeased with the passing of this law. They tried everything and used every tactic to fail the movement. They forced police and demotivated them through harsh addressing but achieving failure was not easy for them. The United States of America took the first step to end racism, which was making the lives of many difficult. The bill was the first step towards the future and leaving behind the dark past in which their acts have done so many wrongs to black people.

After the success of the Civil Rights Act, there were two other acts came to deliver equal rights to black people. The first one was the Voting Act of 1965, which eliminated discrimination based on literacy and voting practices. The second was the Fair Housing Act in 1968, which eliminated and banned all discrimination involving the sale of property and rental against when it comes to black people. The main object of these acts was to give equal rights to blacks and end the differences between whites and blacks. The act was not easily passed but resulted from the most complex and greatest battle of politics (Landsberg, 2015).

Conclusions

This bill was not just for the rights of civil but it changed even the politics of America. The votes increased just because blacks could vote now. The main object of this act was to give equal rights to blacks and end the differences between whites and blacks. The act was not easily passed but resulted from the most complex and greatest battle of politics. The initiative of this act was taken right after the Civil War to end segregation in every public place in America. It was first proposed by President Kennedy and then carried by Martin Luther King. John F. Kennedy was the first president of the United States of America and was the first one who took this act to the parliament by sending messages to congress leaders that the constitution of America is color blind and the practices of America should follow the same thing. Those who supported this bill expressed their achievement by saying that this bill should have passed many years before and with the passing of the bill they explained it by saying it was long overdue. The bill's passing changed history because Southerners had never faced defeat in filibustering any bill. The bill includes clauses in which all the segregation in public places, all the discrimination on the basis of color, race, and gender will be eliminated, and equal opportunity in employment will be given to all people regardless of any race, color, or gender. The bill's passing

exemplifies how peaceful protests and demonstrations could do those things that force can't do. The United States of America took the first step to end racism, which was making the lives of many difficult. The bill was the first step towards the future and leaving behind the dark past in which their acts have done so many wrongs to black people. The bill shows the importance of hard work because the bill started with nothing but hard work; nothing is impossible to achieve. Affirmative policy action is on employment and education so those who were once not given the rights could take a step ahead in society. This bill gave America a new definition of freedom and equality for everyone, which has never happened before in the history of America.

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