

All Hail To The Militant New Negro

An Address Delivered by
Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune,
Director of Negro Affairs, National
Youth Administration,
President of Bethune-Cookman
College. During the Mass
Meeting of the March-On-
Washington Movement, Tues-
day, June 16, 1942 in Madison
Square Gardens.

YOUR CHINS ARE OUT, your
eyes are clear! I see determina-
tion written on the faces of every-
one of you.

Your militancy and resoluteness
are among America's most valuable
assets in a day like this. We must
not let America ignore the power-
ful service that can be rendered
her by these attributes you possess.
America needs today, as never be-
fore, your fighting hearts, your
courage, your refusal to surrender
or retreat in the face of discourag-
ing odds.

You who are here tonight are a
new experience to America.
Throughout the history of your life
in this country—over three hun-
dred years—you have been regard-

ed as the patient, submissive
minority—your first two and a half
centuries were spent in enforced
slavery. You had no rights, the
supreme court held—you were
chattel like any horse, or plow or
iron pot. You were not permitted
to use a voice and so had to ex-
press your hopes and dreams for
freedom, your bravery and cour-
age, through individual rebellion,
occasional mass uprisings and more
often through the spirituals, the
sorrow songs that gave the first
mass expression to our deep long-
ing to live some day as free citi-
zens in a democracy.

SLAVERY ABOLISHED

Then came your emancipation—
to save the union which could not
exist half slave and half free. The
Thirteenth Amendment to the
Constitution legally abolished
slavery. The Fourteenth and Fif-
teenth Amendments took you out
of the status of chattels and made
you citizens, made the Bill of
Rights yours. Still, you were patient
— experiencing discriminations,
injustices, segregations, and denials
of equal opportunities. Here and
there a clarion voice rose above
the rumblings against injustice, a
Frederick Douglass, a Harriet Tub-
man, a Walter White, a Phillip
Randolph and nameless and numer-
ous unsung heroes. But, the pall
of a slave experience still hung

over the masses of our people.
They had the right to speak out
but dared not speak out.

But, today—a new Negro has
arisen in America. He is here in
Madison Square Garden tonight.
He is you!

You are neither young nor old—
You're just new! You have awak-
ened as the world. You are seek-
ing full freedom, justice, respect,
and opportunity.

YOU ARE MILITANT

You are militant in spirit. You
are unwilling to accept less than
the Constitution guarantees to you
as citizens of the world's greatest
democracy.

You are no longer begging—you
are insisting, because you realize
that America, the only country you
know and the country you love,
cannot be preserved nine-tenths
free and one-tenth oppressed. You
realize your insistence is neces-
sary to save America from itself, to
make America the ideal democracy
that it professes itself to the world
to me. Not only are our enemies
capitalizing on America's slightest
failure to do so, but our allies and
friends in China and India, Africa
and South America, are weighing
America's sincerity on her own
"home" scales.

Thank God you have these
qualities of militancy and insist-
ence. And thank God you have a

leadership to cultivate and to
guide these qualities that are rising
from the masses.

NEVER STRIKE FLAG

You know how important it is
that this surging spirit be kept
within the bounds of law and
order. You know how necessary it
is that your militancy be non-
violent. But you must at the same
time keep it persistent, keep it
courageous, make it intelligently
articulate.

Only by so doing can we win
victory for democracy at home and
for democracy throughout the
world. Our insistence upon the
practice of democratic ideals here
does not in any measure detract
from our loyalty to our country, nor
from our militancy in our stand for
the democratization of the world.
Friends of freedom are aware of
our purpose—they know our in-
sistence is an effort to rid America
of shame.

We have grown tired of turning
the other cheek. Both our cheeks
are now so blistered they are too
sensitive for further blows. But
regardless of our trials and tribu-
lations at home, we must not for

(Continued on Page 7; Col. 1)

no victory in our struggles here at home. I want all America to understand—and I believe I voice the sentiment of everyone of you here—that we will never strike our flag. On the contrary, we will eternally protect it with all that we have in courage, in faith, in endurance.

At the same time, we want our flag to protect us—at home in our right to produce and to live, abroad in our willingness to sacrifice and to die.

"Hail

(Continued from Page 4)

moment lose sight of the fact that we must give our all-out, unserved effort to winning this war. Unless this war is won on the battlefields abroad, there can be