Journal of Women's History

**Journal of Women's History**
**Volume 11, Number 2, Summer 1999**
**Johns Hopkins University Press**
Article


# Race, Gender, and Anticommunism in the International Labor Movement:

## The Pan-African Connections of Maida Springer

**Abstract**

Maida Springer's reminiscence and the documentation concerning her activism provide insight into communist and anticommunist struggles within the United States and international labor movements. Her presence at the center of struggles of African labor movements during the 1950s and 1960s calls for a more complex view of the activism of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in Africa and of the federation's conflicts with the European labor centers belonging to the noncommunist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). This article traces the little-known story of Springer's influence on African labor and AFL-CIO policy, and explores the ways in which her race, gender, class, and nationality mediated her activism.

A 1963 *New York Times* article celebrating the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) international struggle against communism and colonialism mentioned the 1957 American Trade Union Scholarship Program for Africans and the AFL-CIO role in supervising Kenya's Institute of Tailoring and Cutting. Similarly, a 1965 article in the New York State Department of Labor's *Industrial Bulletin* listed several AFL-CIO African projects, including financial assistance for a headquarters for Kenyan labor, a 1961 labor education program, and the establishment of a Motor Drivers School in Nigeria. Both articles failed to acknowledge the indispensable role of Maida Springer in bringing these programs and projects to fruition and the resistance she met from colonial governments, the British Trades Union Congress (TUC), and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the noncommunist world labor body. [1]

Springer and fellow African-American labor leaders, George McCray and A. Philip Randolph, along with Irving Brown were the principal lobbyists for AFL-CIO activism in Africa. [2] Springer, however, formed the earliest sustained connections with future African labor and political leadership; the year 1945 marked the beginning of her contact with the pan-African leadership that would usher in the independence era. Her passion for African labor development led her to quit her job as a business agent for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) in 1960 in **[End Page 35]** order to join the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department. Springer made her primary imprint in anglophone Africa where she represented a vital liaison between African labor movements and the AFL-CIO.

Scholarship on pan-Africanism, AFL-CIO foreign policy, black labor, civil rights, and women has given Springer little attention. [3] Generally, African Americans' influence on African labor development and AFL-CIO policy in Africa has remained shrouded in studies that tend to position AFL-CIO foreign policy solely within the purview of white male leadership. Some work dealing with these issues falls into two rigid categories: one upholds that the AFL-CIO did a great service in preserving freedoms by its concentration on anticommunism and the other claims that the AFL-CIO acted as an agent of imperialism by opening up these new nations to U.S. corporate exploitation. [4] A study of Springer's work in Africa provides a different story which cannot be contained within these categories.

In their study of Edith Sampson's political career, Helen Laville and Scott Lucas point out the limitations of positioning African-American activists into a rigid dichotomy during the Cold War. Revisionist history of the 1980s, they assert, has completed the process of inverting the 1950s dichotomy between "good" African-American supporters of U.S. foreign policy and "radical left" critics. In this history, the motives of "mainstream" African-American leaders are reduced to "blind patriotism and vindictive anticommunism." [5]

Some critics of AFL-CIO foreign policy might be prone to label Springer's work as vindictive anticommunism because of her association with such leading anticommunists in the U.S. labor movement as Brown, Jay Lovestone, and ILGWU president David Dubinsky. Springer, however, was not a rigid ideologue or an exponent of "blind patriotism." Her anticommunism was mediated by criticisms of U.S. domestic and foreign policies as well as an understanding of the actions of African leaders who turned to communist powers to help solve economic and social problems that beleaguered their independent nations. She viewed her activism as a way of reinvesting herself with hope that democratic ideals would come closer to fruition. In turning down the opportunity in 1959 to become educational director of the ILGWU Dressmakers' Local 22 in favor of carving out a larger role for herself in Africa, she stated: "In all honesty, I believe that I need perspective and a change of atmosphere as much for the continuation and strengthening of my own faith in Western democracy as for any contribution I might make to positive Americo-African relations." [6]

Born in Panama in 1910, Springer settled with her family in Harlem in 1917. She spent many hours of her childhood in Liberty Hall, the meeting place of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, where she played and was exposed to oratory extolling a pan-African vision **[End Page 36]** of race redemption and triumph. Pride in ancestry and belief in black achievement were lessons Springer also learned at the Manual and Industrial School for Negro Youth in Bordentown, New Jersey, which boasted a faculty with degrees from the nation's most prestigious universities.

The concept of "race" viewed as a tool of cultural cohesion and black liberation provides a framework for understanding the strong ties that developed between Springer and other activists of African descent. Her life experiences illustrate Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham's work concerning race in which she states that race serves "as a 'global sign,' a 'meta-language'" due to its "powerful, all encompassing effect on the construction and representation of other social and power relations." [7] The interrogation of class, gender, and nationality, as well as ideological beliefs is vital to understanding other sites of her struggle. This article examines the ways in which these categories mediated her relationships to labor activism, pan-Africanism, and anticommunism. Her experiences provide new insights to the AFL and CIO rivalry, the ILGWU progressive record, and the African operations of the ICFTU and the united AFL-CIO.

## The Lovestoneite Factor

After Springer joined the ILGWU Local 22 in 1933, her ideological perspective was shaped in part by her experiences with U.S. communists, a mentorship that largely was composed of socialists and former communists, and her reading of history and political theory. The main group of ex-communists with whom she associated were Lovestoneites, supporters of Jay Lovestone, the former general secretary of the American Communist Party. [8] Following their expulsion from the party due to their refusal to accept Joseph Stalin's prescriptions, Lovestoneites established a firm base in Local 22 under the leadership of Charles "Sasha" Zimmerman. Soon after becoming Local 22 manager in 1933, Zimmerman searched for blacks who might be drawn into leadership positions "so that they may have their say in the conduct of the organization, as well as in the solution of problems that we are faced with in the industry." Springer quickly came to his attention, and Zimmerman became largely responsible for engineering her climb within the ILGWU hierarchy. [9]

Recognizing that socialist, Trotskyite, and Lovestoneite control of the ILGWU educational apparatus, and particularly Lovestoneite influence in Local 22, hindered their work, Communist Party members working in the garment industry waged a campaign to gain power within the ILGWU and win the support of blacks. [10] Springer recalled the discussions she had with a small communist delegation that dropped by her home unannounced on Sundays: "I was untrusting of their motives. But they

were **[End Page 37]** saying *all* of the right things. Very engaging. *All* of the right things. You cannot live in this society at that period and not at least listen. The structure of this society was *so* prejudiced. You couldn't have a job. You couldn't ride. You couldn't be employed as a bus driver. You could not be employed as a subway motorman. . . . You could not sit in the theater wherever you wanted. There were hotels and other places that you could not and didn't dare go. The Communist Party spoke of these things. . . . They had all of the angles for capturing the hearts of a disturbed and a downtrodden people." [11]

Springer's resistance to communist appeal was both personal and ideological. She viewed some of their representations, such as descriptions of the Soviet Union as a worker's paradise and a purely egalitarian society, as unrealistic. She also disagreed with their portrayal of every action of the Dubinsky administration as negative. Moreover, she perceived the party as patronizing and having an opportunistic concern for the plight of blacks in order to further party goals. She "believed that there was an opportunity in which men and women of color could participate without being patronized as much as I thought the Communist Party was patronizing me. I think the thing that offended me was that I always felt that I was being patronized. I think they loved me too much (laughter). And I'm always suspect. . . . I was here long enough to know that while this is the most wonderful place on earth, it leaves a great deal to be desired if you wear brown skin (laughs). But I didn't think that my Soviet colleagues would be any different. So I never bought that line." Reflecting on the influence of socialists and Lovestoneites on her ideological perspective, Springer held that "just as the communists were busy proselytizing me, the group that I dealt with . . . had a very different concept of the world—certainly a social democracy which gave better opportunities to the working men and women, a more egalitarian society, one in which people voted for something, people had a voice in something, and [in] which as much murder was not committed. You know, mine is the only right way. You had, similarly, religious walls. Mine is the only right religion and everyone else is wrong." [12]

The AFL-CIO anticommunist policies and its connections with government agencies helped fuel allegations of CIA involvement against Lovestone and Brown, but also many other AFL-CIO international representatives, including Springer. [13] In 1978, the allegation against Springer portrayed her as a CIA contact officer for Kenyan

labor and nationalist leader Tom Mboya, who was assassinated in 1969. Springer retorted that the only truth to the statement was the spelling of her and Mboya's names. [14] There are plausible reports that Lovestone and Brown fought against CIA influence and accepted payments from the CIA, particularly in post-World **[End Page 38]** War II Europe. However, assertions against Springer gain credence as a result of an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust which was generated by preexisting allegations, power struggles within and among labor centers, and Cold War politics.

## Progressivism and Tokenism: Two Sides of the Same Coin

Springer's labor and civil rights work was a point of pride for ILGWU leaders, as it helped to symbolize their progressivism. Yet, their supporters sometimes criticized them for not doing enough to bring people of color and white women to positions of power. Despite the majority female membership and the sizable number of black and Puerto Rican members, General Executive Board members were overwhelming white, Jewish men. ILGWU veteran Pauline Newman recalled that at conventions Dubinsky reacted angrily when Frank Crosswaith, ILGWU organizer and head of the Negro Labor Committee, criticized the board's lack of black representation in 1936 and when in 1946 vice president Rose Pesotta questioned why the number of females on the board was limited to one. Dubinsky's response to both challenges was to assert that "ability to represent the union" was the criterion. Springer remarked that many men who were not able became members of the board. Newman maintained that some women had the opportunity "to rise somewhat" as organizers, business agents, and educational directors, but not as vice presidents. [15]

By 1963, Dubinsky offered Springer the opportunity to join the General Executive Board as a vice president-at-large. She declined this offer to become the union's first black vice president because she was not a leader of a local; without a base of support, her potential to make meaningful changes would be undermined. As an organizer in the South and an observer of sweatshop conditions in Los Angeles in the mid-1960s, she argued for a broad inclusion of blacks as opposed to symbolic acts. "Negro workers are aware of their need of a strong trade union movement but we need also to believe that the trade union movement has moved from the concept of a few chosen for their high visibility to an inclusiveness which makes unionism meaningful to all the workers in industry and at all levels." [16]

Concerning the attitudes of ILGWU leaders toward Springer, Jennie Silverman, a former Lovestoneite, reflected that Springer was charming, loved, and appreciated, "but that has never had anything to do with being treated equally." To illustrate the male leadership's sexism, she told of an incident involving Dubinsky at a ceremony in which he was installing her, Springer, and others as newly elected officers. Civil rights activist Pauli Murray was present as Springer's guest. Dubinsky did not understand that he was insulting the women present when he spoke about installing a **[End Page 39]** man who was not a garment worker as an officer. "He's talking to us! He says, 'You know, we're a union of women, and so sometimes we have to go for leadership outside the union.' And Pauli pinched me (laughs). We were ready to scream. But we shut up; he was our president installing us. . . . That's how deep-seated this attitude was. They weren't *aware* that they were discriminating against women." [17]

Springer was also aware of the limited effect of progressive policies on union members and employers. In 1942, after a white shop chairman of ILGWU Local 132, the Plastic, Button, and Novelty Workers' Union, learned that she was the educational director, he spat in front of her on her office floor. In the same local, she encountered white immigrant families who would not allow their daughters to attend weekend education institutes because the few black men who would be present were presumed to be potential rapists. When Springer became Local 22's first black business agent to control a district in 1947, unbeknownst to her, all but one of the employers' association members from the district objected to working with her. Zimmerman responded that if they did not accept her, they would not work with anyone. An employer of highly priced garments who, in asking her for an operator, had the audacity to say, "Springer, don't send me a *shwartz*," a derogatory term for a black person. After he tried to recant, she selected a black woman whose skill astounded him.[18]

Springer responded to some of these racist cases by using her position to combat stereotypes and create greater social awareness. Part of her strategy was to help white workers understand the benefit of interracial solidarity, a lesson she learned from listening to one of Randolph's speeches before entering the labor force in 1932. The racist and sexist attitudes and policies embedded in one of the country's most

progressive unions served as a paradox for Springer. Despite the contradictions, she viewed organized labor on both the domestic and international front as a potentially powerful vehicle for social change.

## Symbol of Rivalry between the AFL and CIO

Springer's investment in the labor movement was in part due to the strong network of female activists she encountered within the Women's Trade Union League and the CIO-affiliated Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA). Among the white women she counted as her role models were Newman, Rose Schneiderman, Fannia Cohn, and Esther Peterson. Dollie Lowther Robinson and Charlotte Adelman, two black female labor leaders of the ACWA-affiliated Laundry Workers Union, served as role models and close friends. [19]

These female relationships often transcended the ideological and jurisdictional **[End Page 40]** conflicts between AFL and CIO male leaders. The solidarity black trade union women embraced is reflected in a 1942 election campaign in which Springer was the nominee of the needle trades-supported American Labor Party for the state assembly from the twenty-first district. Her selection on the party ticket made her the first trade union nominee from a Harlem district. Although the ACWA had temporarily pulled out of the American Labor Party because of disagreement with the ILGWU over the choice of gubernatorial candidate, the Laundry Workers Union endorsed Springer's candidacy. [20]

Springer's positive relationships with some CIO women did not mean that she was uncritical of communist influence in CIO unions or the ILGWU. Although as a business agent she socialized and discussed politics with some communist shop chairs over coffee, she believed that given the opportunity they would try to undermine the confidence workers in their shops had in her. For this reason, she asserted that she would perform "double duty" in those shops as an offensive move against any charge that she was not doing a good job in representing workers' concerns.

Unlike others in the anticommunist camp, Springer's associations with labor activists and supporters did not hinge on whether or not they engaged in communist networks. For example, Crosswaith, who viewed Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., as a

demagogue, had no use for him because of Powell's communist alliances. Springer admired Powell and found amusement in some of his mischievous antics.

In 1945, Dubinsky had the opportunity to put Springer in a position of becoming a symbol of the AFL and CIO rivalry over issues of communism and equality. When the ILGWU was allotted one spot on a four-woman delegation goodwill labor exchange trip with England, Dubinsky gave Springer's name to AFL president William Green. With her selection, Springer obtained the distinction of becoming the "first Negro woman to represent American labor abroad." Many newspapers that carried the story of the trip singled out her appointment for special recognition. [21]

In the context of widespread racist practices tolerated in the United States, many liberals appreciated what was then viewed as a bold stance on race that the ILGWU took. [22] AFL leaders, however, questioned Dubinsky's wisdom in appointing a black woman; and they were concerned that her youth and lack of international experience would prevent her from adequately addressing AFL foreign policy objectives. The central international conflict in 1945 was AFL opposition to the participation of both the CIO and, more important, the Soviet All Union Central Council of Trade Unions in the London and Paris meetings of the World Trade Union Conference which was convened to establish the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). British workers supported the Soviet Union, **[End Page 41]** their wartime ally. Four years later when noncommunist unions withdrew from the WFTU and joined the AFL in forming the ICFTU, there remained a significant core of support for engagement with the Soviet Union within many European labor movements. [23] Springer understood that Dubinsky reassured AFL leaders that she was competent to deal with any conflicts involving AFL policy. She asserted that "they could not deny him the *right* to select me, nor did they try. . . . The AF of L and CIO were very hard-nosed people. They lived in a world of all men. They would understand a Julia O'Connor Parker. She was there with [Samuel] Gompers for the [founding of the] League of Nations, and she was a political warhorse. I was not. And you throw in my color for good measure. Never leave that out (chuckles)."[24]

Parker, the AFL's other delegate, who represented the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, was also concerned about her lack of international experience and, Springer believed, "was extremely perturbed that she was going to have to be

the colleague of a Negro woman." Because of Parker's anxiety, a meeting was arranged for the two to meet. Feeling hostile, Springer expected a quarrel to develop; "my feeling was who was she that she had to determine whether she would like to be my colleague or no." However, no quarrel erupted and surprisingly, by the conclusion of the trip, their relationship turned into a "fast friendship" based on mutual respect. [25]

AFL leaders' anxiety about Springer's political savvy turned out to be unnecessary. After arriving in England, she wrote Dubinsky that there had not been "too much unpleasantness about our non-participation" in the labor conference. [26] People were more interested in Springer as a Negro than as a possible exponent of AFL foreign policy. Her race and charisma made her the subject of special attention. The U.S. Office of War Information singled her out in press releases. At a huge factory, she spoke from on top of a table to two thousand garment workers and then led them in a trade union song. After she spent an evening at the Luton ILGWU Merchant Navy Club, the British War Relief Society informed her that "the boys . . . have never stopped talking of your visit to them, and wonder whether you will find the time to go there one entertainment evening." [27] Anne Loughlin, a general organizer of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers and member of the Women's Advisory Committee of the TUC General Council, wrote of her "Maida Springer charmed all the people she came into contact with; she was extremely interesting, and in addition well-informed. Naturally I was pleased as she represented a sister Union." [28]

Preparations for the fifth Pan-African Conference influenced Springer on this trip. To take advantage of the presence of trade unionists from **[End Page 42]** colonial possessions who would attend the second meeting in Paris of the World Trade Union Conference scheduled for that fall, pan-Africanists in London planned for the Pan-African Conference to meet afterward. Although she did not attend the conference, Springer's introduction to George Padmore and other conference conveners represented a turning point in her activist career. Padmore, who later became her principal mentor on pan-African affairs, was also a former communist and had built a global network of black labor and political activists.

During her activist period in Africa, on many occasions, Springer dealt with questions concerning foreign policy objectives of both U.S. labor and government, as well as the government's racial policies. Ironically, the rampant segregation and discrimination she experienced in Washington, D.C., during preparations for the exchange trip had nearly influenced her to withdraw in anger. Her withdrawal would have meant forfeiting the opportunity to form early relationships with future African leaders. These relationships contributed to her later development as a trusted and influential contact within the U.S. labor movement.

## U.S. Government Hypocrisy

The U.S. government used Springer's selection to project a picture of race relations as evolving toward equality. However, Washington, D.C., in the 1940s exemplified a lack of freedom and democracy for blacks, and the city had a long history of alignment with Southern racist customs and laws. With the advent of the Cold War in 1947, the Truman administration viewed segregation in the nation's capital as fodder for Soviet propaganda and an acute embarrassment unexplainable to "friendly" governments. [29]

While in Washington for preliminary meetings with officials of various war and government agencies, congressmen, and representatives of labor groups, Springer experienced humiliations that were common to black people who visited or lived in the capital. As was the practice of Washington hotels, the Statler where her colleagues stayed drew the color bar. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins was unsuccessful in persuading the hotel to admit Springer. Unlike the ILGWU practice of not patronizing hotels that discriminated against blacks for their conventions, neither the government nor the federations insisted on finding accommodations where all delegates could stay. Instead, the government accommodated Springer by lodging her at Council House, Mary McLeod Bethune's home, and the National Council of Negro Women's headquarters. Unaware of the reason for this arrangement, Springer suspected that the government was hiding something from her. [30] She explained that "under ordinary circumstances to have been invited to be the guest of Dr. Bethune was a great **[End Page 43]** honor. O.K., so here was how my personality got very split on that. . . . There was the bittersweet [feeling]. . . . If I had known about the segregation I would face, I would never have gone to D.C. To be treated like that when

I was going on an overseas trip for the Office of War Information! And I was selected [as] one of four people in the United States to go! Had I known that this might have been one of the conditions, *no,* I wouldn't have gone. I was too young and too warmblooded to have accepted anything like this in advance." [31]

Although Springer experienced exclusionary practices in the "liberal" North, the feeling of degradation never lessened. When a New York restaurant refused to serve her and her white union colleagues because of her presence, her colleagues became indignant, left, and perhaps reaped some gratification for their principled stand, but Springer remained humiliated and angry. Springer was angered that behind the scenes the government tolerated segregation and exclusion while simultaneously it pulled out the red carpet in celebration of her appointment and used her as a symbol of racial progress.

Government officials also were not sensitive enough to recognize how simple conveniences they took for granted were not available to her. Springer spoke of her inability to obtain taxi service when she set out to attend the first briefing session for the exchange trip at the United Nations Relief Agency Office. [32]

> I walked out to take a taxi, and it was freezing, dreadfully cold, and *no* taxi. Nothing would pick me up. I was not aware of this. The Western Union man was delivering telegrams in their [*sic*] brown cars and kept driving around and around and around, and I'm still standing on the corner waiting. I don't know *anything* about transportation. I don't know where to go to take a bus or anything. Finally, the young white driver came over to where I was shivering and asked me where I was going. I gave him the address and he said, "Don't you know it is not easy, you won't be picked up." He told me the white cabs would not pick me up, and there were very few black drivers and jitneys. So he drove me to the building where I was to go.

Before entering the building for the meeting, Springer went to the coffee shop next door to warm up. There, she encountered a black porter who identified with the proponents of segregationist policies. "I went in and sat on the stool to get a cup of coffee. My teeth were chattering. I sat there and no one came to ask me for my order. Other people came, and they got their coffee and donuts. It was a greasy spoon. It

was a very ordinary coffee shop. Finally, someone came over to me, a porter with his mop, and he said, 'Us don't serve Colored in here.' By that time I was nearly apoplectic. **[End Page 44]** So I collected myself and went upstairs to the meeting out of my mind, out of control." [33]

Late for the meeting, which former New York governor Herbert Lehman attended, Springer informed everyone that she wanted to withdraw from the trip. Lehman soon apprised Bethune of the situation. In her work as head of the Negro Division of the National Youth Administration and in causes she championed, Bethune had a record of working for integrated opportunities when feasible and toward equal participation in separate programs when not. She took action on two fronts. First, she sought to make the rest of Springer's stay in D.C. free from inconveniences associated with discriminatory practices and contacted Eleanor Roosevelt who arranged for Springer to have a chauffeured limousine. Springer's colleagues benefited from this remedy; they joined her in using the limousine. Second, Bethune sought to broaden Springer's perspective on how to channel her outrage in a more productive manner. Bethune gently lectured her, challenged her sense of responsibility, and described her choice as being "an extraordinary opportunity to go 'abroad.'" [34] Springer understood that Bethune was conveying to her that she "did not have the right to the luxury of popping off and wanting to go back to New York." Springer stated: "It was a very great lesson for me in terms of what you do to achieve things you want, or what you make of your resentment, your disagreement with how you're being treated. . . . I ate that cake and drank that tea or cocoa, and I crawled back to my room. I had to have a deep conversation with myself (laughter). A great one had done it to me." [35]

## Pan-African Connections

Meeting such pan-Africanists as Padmore and Una Marson imparted a second unofficial agenda to Springer's trip. She was a guest on Marson's radio program, "Caribbean Voices," which the British Broadcasting Company World Service targeted to the Caribbean as part of the "Hands across the Sea" unity project. [36] Marson and others held that the price allies should pay for this unity was black liberation. In Marson's apartment, located in a half-blown-out building, Springer met African and Caribbean soldiers who, like African Americans, were caught up in the dilemma of defending ideals they were denied. Over Marson's Caribbean meals, they discussed

the implications of the war. “They had no illusions about what they were doing and for the most part—because I think Una was very selective about the people she invited—these were men who had a vision of the future, and they were looking to the day when they were going to have a country, not a colonial dependency. So it was very good talk at **[End Page 45]** night. Very explosive talk! (laughs) Had they been heard, they would all have been court-martialed.” [37]

After Springer met with Padmore at a press conference for the four delegates, he gave her a letter of introduction to meet Ras Makonnen in Manchester, England. She met with Makonnen as well as Jomo Kenyatta, the future first president of independent Kenya. When Kenyatta asked her “Young girl, what does the working class in America know of the struggle for liberation from colonialism,” she became embarrassed. [38] Her personal interest withstanding, the ILGWU, which prided itself on its radical tradition, diverse immigrant membership, and international activism, did not give colonial oppression official attention. Kenyatta’s question altered her life. Afterward she sought to build U.S. labor support for African labor development and independence. The lack of respect most white labor leaders initially held for her view that Africa soon would be a center of anticolonial struggle is reflected in a statement she made in 1959. “Listening to men like Jomo Kenyatta as far back as 1945 in England, made it abundantly clear the West would be called upon to make some hard decisions on their territories. In those days I was a prophet without honor.” [39]

Padmore continued to expose Springer to many Caribbean and African nationalists, trade unionists, and students. Commenting on her relationship with Padmore, Springer noted that “we developed a real bond. At that point he was of course talking to me about what he saw as the future for Africa which he was contributing to, because much of what went on was cooked in his kitchen (laughs), his book-lined kitchen. . . . George Padmore, I considered, was my Ph.D. education without going to a university for it. In a half hour we would sit down, and over a cup of tea and cognac he would—not discuss with me, because I wouldn’t have known what I was discussing—but he would *lay out to me* part of the history of what he called Empire. . . . So he was a great educator, and he didn’t have a problem proselytizing me. I was a very *willing* subject.” [40]

## Activism on the Continent

Many of Springer's African friends both inside and outside the labor movement referred to her as "Mama" or "Mama Maida," reflecting both a familial sentiment and respect for her older age. The culinary talents, hospitality, and humor of her own mother, Adina Stewart, were made renowned in African circles by the reports of dozens of travelers who stayed in Springer's Brooklyn home as guests of political and labor groups, students, or petitioners before the United Nations. On Mboya's first U.S. trip in 1956, under the auspices of the American Committee on Africa, he spent his first night in Springer's home and became a favorite of her mother. **[End Page 46]** Springer, whose son Eric was Mboya's age, quickly grew to consider him her second son.

Francis Edward Tachie-Menson, a government minister and president of the Gold Coast TUC (later changed to Ghana TUC), helped arrange Springer's first visit to Africa in 1955. Following a U.S. visit under the auspices of the State Department's International Education Exchange Program, he wrote the ICFTU that it was the "plea" of his colleagues that "this wonderful coloured American lady trade unionist of international fame" be invited to the ICFTU seminar to be held in Accra, Ghana. With the remark that she had the "magic color (black, laughter)," he stated his hope that she could help convince Gold Coast women to join the labor movement. [41]

Springer's activism in Africa always included a concern for women's development. She lobbied African labor, the International Labor Organization, the AFL-CIO, and the ICFTU to be more inclusive of women. In 1977, she co-coordinated the Pan-African Conference on the Role of Trade Union Women whose aim was to devise ways to increase women's participation in trade unions. Most of her efforts toward raising women's status were done quietly and on a small scale. For example, in 1957 in Tanganyika, after witnessing the spirit and dedication of four young girls who managed the office of the dockworkers without pay, she became involved in the decision of the financially strapped union to provide the girls with some pocket money every month. [42] She also observed the strong but unsung role that women, such as the West African market women and the Tanganyikan Muslim women, played in the nationalist movements. Bibi Titi Mohammed, the leader of the Muslim women, was the first wom-an to join the nationalist movement, the Tanganyika African

National Union (TANU), and she played a major role in its development. [43] During her 1963 U.S. government-sponsored tour, Bibi Titi Mohammed joined the long list of Africans who stayed in Springer's home.

As much as Springer was accepted and honored in Africa, her femaleness and American nationality continued to be potential barriers. For example, a number of trade unionists felt more comfortable calling her "Brother Maida" in the language of the labor movement. Higginbotham's discussions of the "totalizing effect" of race in "obscuring" other social relations such as gender paralleled Springer's experience at the 1958 All African People's Conference at which women, primarily from Guinea, the French Cameroons, and Ghana, raised questions relating to women's status and inclusion in power. Some men responded to these challenges by shouting down the women. Springer's nationality and age led some men to assume that she concurred with their point that these issues had no bearing before independence. In their eyes, her honorary non-femaleness placed her apart from the issues these African women embraced. [44] **[End Page 47]**

British protectors of colonialism tried to use Springer's nationality to force a wedge between her and all Africans. One tactic they used was to say that as an American she was smarter than Africans. [45] Citing financial mismanagement and corruption of African union leaders, the ICFTU and the British TUC opposed the implementation of many programs Africans had requested from Springer. She and others, however, held that fear of African nationalism was the strongest reason for Europeans' hesitation. Although the ICFTU issued strong anticolonial statements, and in many cases represented the primary forum through which Africans could fight colonial governments both on the labor and nationalist front, Africans viewed numerous ICFTU representatives as compromised by sympathies for colonialism. British labor leaders resented Springer's close relationships to the labor leaders whom they tried to keep separated from political movements and her fraternization with such nationalists as TANU leader Julius Nyerere.

European labor representatives openly disapproved of the presence of Springer in particular and the AFL-CIO delegation in general at the first ICFTU African Regional Conference held in Accra in 1957. The most egregious act was the speech William Schnitzler, the secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, delivered. Concerned that U.S.

labor's position not be offensive to the emerging independent nation of Ghana, Springer showed the speech to Padmore and then offered suggestions to Schnitzler regarding tone and nuance. Schnitzler's speech included a tirade against Soviet aggression in Hungary, criticisms of U.S. foreign policy, a discussion of the civil rights struggle, and a ringing denunciation of colonialism. While his speech elated Africans, it caused panic among British authorities for some time. [46]

Following the ICFTU conference, Springer proceeded to East Africa as did Walter Hood, head of the British TUC Colonial Section, and Albert Hammerton, an ICFTU representative in Africa. Hood and Hammerton went on a mission charged with breaking the stalemate between the Tanganyikan Federation of Labor (TFL) and the colonial government which was bending every effort to destroy the two-year-old national movement. When Hood voiced resentment at Springer's presence, TFL general secretary Rashidi Kawawa made it clear that the TFL wanted her there, thus ending the discussion but not the resentment. At union meetings, Hood and Hammerton ignored Springer, and, in the hotel they only said brief hellos when they were in the hallway and she was letting in visitors who came in a constant stream. [47] Unbeknownst to Springer, European la-bor leaders refused Kawawa's request while in Accra that she be an official part of the mission. That summer, at the fifth ICFTU Congress in Tunis, Tunisia, they also ignored African delegates' requests to appoint her to Hammerton's position. [48] While she was in East Africa, numerous Africans **[End Page 48]** pleaded with her to convince the AFL-CIO to withstand any pressure from the ICFTU to withdraw their attention. Springer wrote, "they just beg that we do not leave them to the mercy of the [British] TUC." [49]

Springer relentlessly lobbied U.S. colleagues to fulfill requests Africans made for direct interactions with the AFL-CIO, financial and technical assistance, and, above all, educational opportunities, especially labor scholarships to study in the United States. Randolph convinced the AFL-CIO executive council to provide scholarships for ten to twelve Africans to enter a labor education program at Harvard University and afterward gain practical experience by working with unions. [50] Named the special representative for the program, Springer chose Tanganyika as her home base from which she traveled to other parts of Africa to facilitate the process by which labor centers would select a candidate. Both charmed by the people and concerned about the harsh conditions under which they lived, she wanted to focus attention on this

region. Unlike West Africa, East Africa, with its large white settler and Indian populations, had a three-tier wage system based on race which greatly exploited Africans. Moreover, education opportunities were severely limited and little publicity was given to African struggles except for British renditions of the horrors of Mau Mau in Kenya. While in London to meet with government and labor officials regarding the AFL-CIO program, Springer got an inkling of just how anxiety-ridden the British were about having the light focus on this territory. They wanted to know "why East Africa, why Tanganyika?" When one British TUC leader told her "that being starry eyed about such a program would hardly bring the desired results," Springer answered him sharply "so it was a little strained for a bit." [51]

While in East Africa, Springer became a valued advisor to the labor movements in resolving ethnic conflicts, and tensions with colonial governments, employers, and the ICFTU, as well as in organizing workers. She also provided the TFL with office space in the building where she resided. These actions helped fuel the constant harassment under which the colonial government and white settlers put her. Her picture and articles about her in newspapers made her face and name recognizable. Many of the articles criticized her, the AFL-CIO, and the African labor and nationalist movements. Moreover, government authorities and some ICFTU representatives believed rumors that she was distributing money. These rumors found believers because earlier in the year she had successfully lobbied the AFL-CIO to send financial support to Tanganyikan strikers and had overseen some discussions with the Kenyan colonial government regarding plans for constructing Solidarity House, the trade union headquarters made possible largely through a grant from the AFL William Green Fund and over the initial objection of the ICFTU. [52] **[End Page 49]**

Instead of the year that she had planned to stay in Africa, Springer remained for less than four months. Under pressure from ICFTU and CIO leaders, including Walter Reuther, Victor Reuther, and James Carey, at its convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the AFL-CIO canceled the program and agreed to channel all international work through the ICFTU in exchange for the international's pledge to build immediately a labor school in Africa. The three African candidates, who had already been selected by their labor centers, were allowed to go through the Harvard program. CIO leaders joined in opposing a program they had endorsed originally

because of opposition to Lovestone. Since Springer was Lovestone's associate they came to view the scholarship program as an "independent activity" adding strength to his power base. [53]

After what became known as the Atlantic City Compromise, an ICFTU committee was appointed to make plans and recommendations concerning the establishment of what later was popularly known as Kampala College, located in Uganda. Committee members were astonished when Springer showed up in Brussels for the meeting. George Brown, the outgoing director of the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department, learned this and more when he was sidetracked into the office of the ICFTU general secretary, Jacobin Oldenbroek from Holland. In the office with Oldenbroek were Canadian Charles Millard and American Jay Krane, respectively the ICFTU director and assistant director of organization. Brown reported the grilling and his response:

> Millard pointed out that Maida Springer was still in Africa and that he understood that she would return to Africa after this meeting; that he did not know that she was coming to this meeting in Brussels; that he had heard a third student had been selected to come to the United States under the AFL-CIO program and that therefore, he would like to know what was going on. Since he did not raise these questions in a conversational manner, I was rather abrupt in my reply. I explained that Maida Springer had come to Brussels because she had not had time to return to the States in order to confer with me prior to my leaving for Brussels; that the third student was included in the AFL-CIO program because we had already made a commitment prior to the decision in Atlantic City to modify our program; and that she would return to the United States when she saw fit. [54]

The ICFTU decision to implement a longstanding African request for a labor school did nothing to quell the outrage Africans expressed toward the ICFTU and the British TUC for other aspects of the compromise. For Springer, the constant harassment of living under siege in East Africa and the AFL-CIO agreement to no longer have independent programs with **[End Page 50]** African labor contributed to the onset of her depression and illness, eventually forcing her to take a year off from work.

The Atlantic City Compromise and the continued inadequacy of ICFTU African

policy underlay the growth of a pan-African labor movement opposed to outside international affiliation. Through the lobbying of McCray, who had become a staff member at Kampala College, and Mboya, Walter Reuther began to back off his commitment to working only through ICFTU channels and joined with other U.S. labor leaders in calling for a sweeping change in ICFTU officials and organizational structure. [55] The changes were implemented too slowly and too late to stop even those African labor leaders who had some success in bending the international union to the will of African labor from joining the march toward disaffiliation.

The AFL-CIO rigid anticommunism also increasingly became an issue of discontent for African labor leaders, particularly when the emerging nations and Africans still fighting colonialism and white minority rule sought allies and financial support from communist countries. Although at many critical times Springer and McCray urged Africans to keep their influence on and membership in the ICFTU, they also tried to convince the AFL-CIO that their anticommunist approach was shortsighted. Moreover, they criticized the U.S. government's persistence in supporting colonial powers.

After the *New York Times* printed a third procolonial article in less than a year, Springer wrote Mboya, "I have been forced to conclude that the *Times* has joined the Colonial Powers to create and maintain a certain kind of American public opinion about Africa and over African aspirations for the future." [56] With Mboya and Nyerere in mind, she urged the *New York Times* to "render a world service by presenting the case of the African by an African." [57] She also argued that "continued deprivation of rights —whether in Africa or the US—is not the answer or solution to the demands for justice, freedom and equality. Nor will Apartheid serve to quell the nascent fires." With regard to Western hypocrisy in the age of the Cold War, she added, "It seems self-defeating for the United States and Britain to skimp or deny support and aid to the Africans and then bemoan the threat of Red domination." [58]

As African nations emerged, the movement toward instituting one-party states and formally attaching the labor movement to the political party in the name of nation building placed Springer in a contradictory position. However, she did not join AFL-CIO officials in condemning what they viewed as an abridgment of a fundamental trade union right of "freedom of association." The similarity to Communist Party structures was not lost on Lovestone who made a distinction between informal and

formal **[End Page 51]** government alliances. He told Springer that these unions as "instruments of the State machine" would become "prey of the politicians, hungry for power." [59]

Springer explained to Lovestone the motivations of Africans by commenting on the struggle her friends had waged for "recognition as men, and the right to govern themselves" and the difficult problems facing them. She also pointed out the shortcomings of the West. Noting that much elementary work still had to be done to advance trade unionism in Africa, she wondered "how some of our international colleagues, if they really had the African workers at heart, could have wasted so much precious effort in acrimonious debate over who was influencing what." [60] Engaged in setting up Kenya's Institute of Tailoring and Cutting, which a grant she secured from the ILGWU's Philadelphia Dress Joint Board made possible, she castigated the International Garment Workers Federation, one of the trade secretariats associated with the ICFTU, which for years turned down all appeals for aiding this project. "Their lack of assistance and lack of interest in the African Garment Workers generally, and the Kenya Tailors and Textile Workers in particular, is shameful. One can only conclude that this London led group is so deeply prejudiced that even when a union demonstrates ability and initiative the secretariat remains unmoved." [61] She once concluded that "when the Communists move in on this lush field they will then start howling about democracy and responsibility." [62]

Soon after the 1964 failed army mutiny in Tanganyika, Springer indicated to Lovestone her sympathy for the country's need for political stability in order to fight what the government defined as their enemies: disease, poverty, and ignorance. She remarked, "Perhaps we have not always realized the odds against which they must work to build a functioning and developing social, political system." She looked to the AFL-CIO to view its role in Africa not in terms of teaching traditional trade union techniques and methods of organization, which conflicted with policies of African governments, but in terms of helping the governments by implementing programs with African labor aimed at improving industrial skills, housing, and literacy. [63]

Months later, Springer became disheartened upon hearing rumors that her old labor friend Michael Kamaliza believed that she was uncivil and had lost interest in the Tanganyikan workers. These rumors were connected to a conversation they had

about a workers housing scheme which she previously had discussed with Nyerere. At that time the Tanganyika government proceeded with plans to dissolve all unions affiliated with the TFL and to institute a new structure of one union, the National Union of Tanganyikan Workers (NUTA). NUTA became part of the government apparatus and disaffiliated from the ICFTU. Kamaliza, serving as Minister **[End Page 52]** of Labor, was appointed general secretary of NUTA. In response to Springer's letter inquiring about the rumors, Kamaliza wrote that he understood her to state that with the changes in the labor movement, her hopes of obtaining a loan from the "'Free Labour Financing Organisation'" were small since its funds supported the "'Free Labour Movement.'" [64]

In reply to Springer's questions about these rumors, Kamaliza assured her that differences in approach would not interfere with their friendship. Kawawa, who had become second vice president of the country, agreed with Kamaliza. "You should rest assured that in Mwalimu Nyerere, Michael and myself you have most trusted friends. And also we trust you. Your services to Tanganyika at that most crucial time will never be forgotten. You will always remain dear in our hearts. I hope whoever writes the Trade Union and Political history of Tanganyika will never forget to include your name —for it won't be complete without mentioning the very vital part you played." [65] Asking for her understanding if governments did not develop the way she had expected, he stated that they had to develop institutions to deal best with the challenges they faced in building a new country.

In response, Springer explained that funds for the housing scheme would come from U.S. union pension funds which had many legal restrictions, and any proposal would be "subjected to the most rigorous scrutiny." However, she believed that this proposal would receive "careful consideration" because of respect for Nyerere. Yet, she knew that the creation of the new trade union structure "raised additional difficult questions." In terms of the Tanganyikan government's decisions about how best to promote development, she remarked, "The one mistake I hope I have never made, Rashidi is to use the United States' present development as the yardstick by which other developing countries are to be measured." To Kamaliza she stated: "During my entire career I have been judicious in the use of such terms as 'freedom'

and 'democracy,' for I am among those who hold the view that this commodity is still in short supply in too many parts of the world including sections of my own country." [66]

Her situation continued to be conflictual. While she sympathized with the nation-building policies of her friends who served in the independence governments, various rank-and-file trade unionists complained to her about such government repression as arrests and severe limits on strike activity. Moreover, Lovestone began to prod her gently to use her influence in challenging the restrictions placed on labor movements and repression used against labor activists opposed to government policies. Not only was she not prepared to do this, she knew that her friends would view any protest from her as opposition to nation building and support for the further decline of African economies. **[End Page 53]**

Springer used her upcoming marriage to Chicago labor and civil rights leader James Kemp as a way out of the contradiction. She resigned from the AFL-CIO soon after helping to complete the Motor Driver School project for the Nigerian Transport Workers Union in 1965. However, she continued to foster her connections and friendships in Africa and participated in AFL-CIO international projects until the early 1990s. During the early 1970s, she served as both a consultant to and staff member of the AFL-CIO African American Labor Center.

## Conclusion

Springer's activism demonstrates that assessments of AFL-CIO and ICFTU policies and actions are inadequate without examining the vital relationships among labor and nationalist leaders of African descent. This history calls for its placement within both Cold War and pan-African parameters and with close attention paid to issues of race, nationality, and gender. Springer's continued credibility with many Africans, even during fierce struggles concerning international affiliation, was in part due to her approach to U.S. racial problems and the questions of democracy it raised, and the struggles she waged on behalf of Africans within the AFL-CIO and ICFTU. When Springer met resistance to her work in Africa, she again returned to Bethune's counsel. The significance of her work was larger than the price the individual had to

pay. The power she had to effect change derived from the support of a few key labor leaders as well as her own resourcefulness, utter commitment, and ability to influence others.

**Yevette Richards**

Yevette Richards received her doctorate in American Studies from Yale University in 1994 and is currently assistant professor of Africana Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. As a 1997-1998 Ford Foundation postdoctoral fellow, she has completed *Maida Springer: A Story of Organized Labor, Pan-Africanism, and the Cold War* and is author of an oral history companion book, *Between Two Worlds: Interviews with Maida Springer, International Labor Representative* (University of Pittsburgh Press, both forthcoming).

## Footnotes

**1.** "AFL-CIO Work," *New York Times*, 16 November 1963; and "Hands across the Atlantic: How the AFL-CIO Helps African Nations Develop a Free Trade Union Movement," *Industrial Bulletin*, December 1965, both in Labor Unions—Africa, Clippings File, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, N.Y., (hereafter Schomburg).

**2.** A leader with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees in Chicago, George McCray was an instructor at the ICFTU African Labor College, and in 1965 became a staff member of the AFL-CIO African American Labor Center (AALC). A longtime advocate of socialism, labor organizing, and civil rights, A. Philip Randolph was president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and an AFL-CIO vice president. Irving Brown served as a U.S. representative for the AFL, and later the AFL-CIO in Europe, headed the AALC, and eventually led the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department.

**3.** For discussions on the neglect of black women's histories, see Darlene Clark Hine, "International Trends in Women's History and Feminism: Black Women's History, White Women's History: The Juncture of Race and Class," *Journal of Women's History* 4, no. 2 (fall 1992): 125-33; and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "Beyond the Sound of Silence: Afro-American Women in History," *Gender and History* 1, no. 1 (spring 1989): 50-67.

**4.** An example of the former is Roy Godson, *American Labor and European Politics: The AFL as a Transnational Force* (New York: Crane, Russak & Co., Inc., 1976). An example of the latter is Beth Sims, *Workers of the World Undermined: American Labor's Role in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Boston: South End Press, 1992).

**5.** Helen Laville and Scott Lucas, "The American Way: Edith Sampson, the NAACP, and African American Identity in the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 20, no. 4 (fall 1996): 565-90, quotation on 566.

**6.** Springer to Charles "Sasha" Zimmerman, 15 March 1959, Collection 14, Box 12, file 11 (hereafter cited as 14/12/11), ILGWU Archives, General Collection No. 5780, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.

**7.** Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," in *"We Specialize in the Wholly Impossible": A Reader in Black Women's History*, ed. Darlene Clark Hine, Wilma King, and Linda Reed (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1995), 3-24, quotations on 3, 5.

**8.** Robert J. Alexander, *The Right Opposition: The Lovestoneites and the International Communist Opposition of the 1930s* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981); Robin D. G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); and Bert Cochran, *Labor and Communism: The Conflict That Shaped American Unions* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977).

**9.** Zimmerman to James Hubert [executive director of the Urban League], 29 May 1933, 14/27/7, ILGWU Archives.

**10.** Max Steinberg and Josephine Martini, Reports of the Proceedings of the Tenth Convention of the Communist Party in New York State, 20-23 May 1938, 14/5/1, ILGWU Archives. By 1938, the ILGWU represented the third largest union in the AFL, counting three hundred thousand members, twelve thousand of whom were black. Ted Poston, "Harlem Emerges as Stronghold of Trade Unionism," *New York Post*, 13 May 1938, Frank Crosswaith Papers, Schomburg.

**11.** Maida Springer-Kemp, interview by author. All interviews by author were conducted in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, between 1990 and 1992. These interviews are also part of the oral history chapters in Yevette Richards, "'My Passionate Feeling about Africa': Maida Springer-Kemp and the American Labor Movement" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1994).

**12.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**13.** Sources reporting allegations of CIA involvement include Sims, *Workers of the World Undermined*; Ellen Ray et al., ed., *Dirty Work 2: The CIA in Africa* (London: Zed Press, 1980); Victor Reuther, *The Brothers Reuther and the Story of the UAW* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976), 423-27; and Philip Agee, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (New York: Stonehill, 1975), 75, 604. For denials of CIA involvement, see Jay Lovestone, interview by E. Finn, 30 August 1978, transcript, 4, 57, 59-60, ILGWU Archives; David Dubinsky and A. H. Raskin, *David Dubinsky: A Life with Labor* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977), 259-61; and George Meany to Walter Reuther, 11 January 1961, "Ross, Michael, 1956-1961," Box 386, Lovestone Papers, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

**14.** Barry Cohen, "The CIA and African Trade Unions," in *Dirty Work 2*, 70-79, esp. 75, 79; and Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**15.** Pauline Newman, interview by Barbara Wertheimer, 1978, transcript, 72-75, 94, "The Twentieth-Century Trade Union Woman: Vehicle for Social Change," Oral History Project Program on Women and Work, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; and Elizabeth Balanoff, "Maida Springer-Kemp Interview," in *The Black Women Oral History Project*, vol. 7, ed. Ruth Edmonds Hill (New Providence, N.J.: K. G. Saur Verlag, 1991), 39-145, esp. 139.

**16.** Springer-Kemp to David Dubinsky, 23 November 1965, 4/33/8, ILGWU Archives.

**17.** Jennie Silverman, interview by author, New York, N.Y., 30 April 1991.

**18.** Edith Ransome was the first black business agent for Local 22, but Springer was the first to control a district. Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**19.** Springer-Kemp, Keynote Address, Tenth Anniversary Celebration of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Saint Louis, 12 November 1983, Maida Springer-Kemp Papers, Amistad Center, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louis. (hereafter Amistad).

**20.** Springer agreed to enter the race because party supporters needed a trade unionist as a stalking-horse on the ticket and they assured her that she could not win the primary. Springer-Kemp, interview by author; "Maida Springer Represents New Type of Leader," *New York Amsterdam News*, October 1942, folder 8; and "Unite behind the President and His War Effort, Vote Labor," folder 9, both in Box 1, Maida Springer-Kemp Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Mass. (hereafter Schlesinger).

**21.** For example, see "Women Labor Leaders Are Going to England in Good-Will Exchange with 4 from There," *New York Times*, 10 January 1945, 14/5/1, ILGWU Archives.

**22.** Frank Crosswaith to Zimmerman, 16 February 1945, and Zimmerman to Crosswaith, 11 April 1945, both in 14/28/3, ILGWU Archives; and Crosswaith to Dubinsky, 15 February 1945, A. Philip Randolph to Dubinsky, 29 March 1945, and Mildred A. Keller of the Burlington, N.J., Inter-Racial Committee to Dubinsky, 22 January 1945, all in 2/5/1B, ILGWU Archives.

**23.** Peter Weiler, *British Labour and the Cold War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), 5-9, 56-68; and Archie Robinson, *George Meany and His Times: A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), 131-39.

**24.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**25.** Ibid.

**26.** Springer to Dubinsky, 22 February 1945, 2/5/1B, ILGWU Archives; and U.S. Office of War Information (OWI), For Immediate Release, N-1357, n.d., Maida Springer Clippings File, Schomburg.

**27.** OWI, N-1371, n.d., Maida Springer Clippings File; Wendy Craigen [Press Department of the British War Relief Society Inc., of the USA in London] to Springer, 19 March 1945, in possession of Springer-Kemp; and Springer-Kemp, interview by author. Springer-Kemp donated many of her personal papers to Amistad in January 1999.

**28.** Anne Loughlin to Dubinsky, 4 April 1945, 2/5/1B, ILGWU Archives.

**29.** Mary L. Dudziak, "Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative," *Stanford Law Review* 41, no. 61 (November 1988): 109-13.

**30.** OWI, NB-2972, 13 January 1945, Maida Springer Clippings File; and Maida Springer-Kemp, Remarks at Community College, 31 March 1989, Springer-Kemp Papers, Amistad. For the reaction of another black woman to segregation in Washington, D.C., see Anna Arnold Hedgeman, *The Trumpet Sounds: A Memoir of Negro Leadership* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), 87-88, 95.

**31.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**32.** Springer-Kemp, Remarks at Community College.

**33.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**34.** Maida Springer-Kemp, "Maida Springer-Kemp on Dr. Caroline F. Ware, A Supplement to the Black Women's Oral History Project, 'Dr. Caroline F. Ware—A Majority of One, A Friend for All Reasons, for All Seasons,'" in *Black Women Oral History Project*, 7:146-57, quotation on 149.

**35.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**36.** For information on Marson, see Margaret Busby, ed., *Daughters of Africa: An International Anthology of Words and Writings by Women of African Descent from the Ancient Egyptian to the Present* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992), 221-23.

**37.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**38.** Springer-Kemp, "Free Africa Speech," Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Free Africa Conference, 12 September 1985, in possession of Springer-Kemp.

**39.** Springer to Israel Breslow, 22 March 1959, 14/12/11, ILGWU Archives.

**40.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**41.** Francis Edward Tachie-Menson to Jacobin Oldenbroek (ICFTU general secretary), 2 September 1955, Box 4, file 17 (hereafter 4/17), International Affairs Department, Irving Brown files, 1943-1989, Record Group 18-004 (hereafter RG18-004), George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Md. (hereafter GMMA).

**42.** Springer, Memorandum on Tanganyika, 19 February 1957, 60/23, International Affairs Department, Jay Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003, GMMA.

**43.** The independence government subsequently charged Bibi Titi Mohammed and six others with trying to overthrow the government. After a period of jail time, she was released and her property was restored to her. Bibi Titi Mohammed, interview by author, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 25 March 1991.

**44.** Springer-Kemp, interview by author; and Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History," 3-24, quotation on 5.

**45.** Springer to William Schnitzler, 5 December 1959, Springer-Kemp Papers, Amistad.

**46.** Schnitzler's speech was reprinted in *Ghana Worker* 1, no. 2 (February-March 1957): 7, 9, 24; and Springer to Lovestone, 9 January 1957, both in 60/23, Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003; Springer, Memorandum on the African Regional Conference, January 14-19 [1957] Accra, "African Trade Unions," Box 398, Lovestone Papers; and Springer-Kemp, interview by author.

**47.** Letter from Springer, 31 January 1957, 60/23, Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003.

**48.** "Ms. Springer: An African American with the heart of a Tanzanian," in *Habari Mbalimbali* (Tanzania), 23 March 1991, script translated on behalf of the author by Susan Chematia, Pittsburgh, Penn.; John Tettegah to Springer, 29 October 1957, and Arthur Ochwada to Springer, 16 August 1957, in possession of Springer-Kemp.

**49.** Springer, Memorandum on Tanganyika, 19 February 1957, 60/23, and Report of General Secretaries Conference held at Arusha, 15 February 1958, 1/22, both in Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003; and Rashidi Kawawa to Springer, 19 May 1957, and Ghana TUC general secretary (signature illegible) to Sir Vincent Tewson, 18 October 1957, 21/8, both in Brown files, 1943-1989, RG18-004.

**50.** Kawawa to Meany, 4 March 1957, 13/7; and Report to Meany from Randolph, n.d., 9/23, both in International Affairs Department, Country files, 1945-1971, RG18-001, GMMA; Kawawa to Springer, 19 May 1957, 21/8, Brown files, 1943-1989, RG18-004; and A. Philip Randolph, Report on Trip to Africa, [c. March 1957], A. Philip Randolph Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, Schomburg).

**51.** Springer to Anne Stolt (Lovestone's secretary), 16 October 1957, 60/23, Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003.

**52.** Some hostile articles about Springer and African nationalists are found in 60/23, Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003.

**53.** Don Thomson and Rodney Larson's rendition of the controversy surrounding the scholarship program, which they erroneously term as a project to build an African labor center, and Anthony Carew's assessment do not include the views of African labor toward this project. Don Thomson and Rodney Larson, *Where Were You, Brother? An Account of Trade Union Imperialism* (London: War on Want, 1978), 18-20; and Anthony Carew, "Charles Millard, A Canadian in the International Labour Movement: A Case Study of the ICFTU, 1955-1961," in *Labour/Le Travail* 37 (spring 1996): 136-43. See also *Proceedings of the AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention* (n.p.: n.p., 1957), 1:382-84, 428-33.

**54.** George Brown, Report of ICFTU Trade Union Training Program in Africa, 27 February 1958, 54/12, Office of the President, President's Files: George Meany, 1944-1960, RG1-027, GMMA.

**55.** George McCray to Lovestone, and McCray to Walter Reuther, 23 May 1959, 48/26, and Lovestone to Springer, 1 June 1959, 60/24, all in Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003; and McCray to Lovestone, 19 October 1959, "McCray," Box 378, Lovestone Papers.

**56.** Springer to Mboya, 10 May 1958, in possession of Springer-Kemp.

**57.** Springer to the editor of the *New York Times*, 28 April 1958, Amistad.

**58.** Springer to the editor of the *New York Times*, 6 September 1957, Amistad. See also Springer to Mboya, 10 May 1958, and Mboya to Springer, 20 May 1958, Springer to Nyerere, 6 September 1957, and [Nyerere to Springer], 25 September 1957, all in possession of Springer-Kemp; and Springer to Mboya, 15 April 1960, 11/5, Country files, 1945-1971, RG18-001.

**59.** Lovestone to Springer, 11 February 1963, 60/26, and 15 November 1961, 60/24, both in Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003.

**60.** Springer to Lovestone, 11 February 1962, 60/25, and 16 December 1961, 60/24, both in Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003.

**61.** Springer to Lovestone, 17 February 1964, 60/26, Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003.

**62.** Springer to Lovestone, 18 December 1963, "Maida Springer," Box 388, Lovestone Papers.

**63.** Springer to Lovestone, 17 February 1964, 60/26, Lovestone files, 1939-1974, RG18-003.

**64.** Springer to Michael Kamaliza, 28 August 1964, and Kamaliza to Springer, 18 September 1964, both in 13/9, Country files, 1945-1971, RG18-001.

**65.** Kamaliza to Springer, 18 September 1964 and Kawawa to Springer, 22 September 1964, both in 13/9, Country files, 1945-1971, RG18-001.

**66.** Springer to Kamaliza, 8 October 1964, and Springer to Kawawa, 5 October 1964, both in 13/9, Country files, 1945-1971, RG18-001.



## Additional Information


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| **ISSN** | 1527-2036 |
| **Print ISSN** | 1042-7961 |
| **Launched on MUSE** | 1999-06-01 |
| **Open Access** | No |