

“The American Dream”

A speech given by
The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Drew University
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President Oxnam, members of the faculty, and members of the student body of this great institution of learning, ladies and gentlemen. I need not pause to say how very delighted and honored I am to be with you tonight and to be a part of your lecture series. It is always a very rich and rewarding experience when I can take a brief break from the day-to-day demands of our struggle in the South and discuss the issues involved in that struggle with college and university students. And so I can assure you that it is an honor and a privilege to be here and I want to thank you for extending the invitation. It's good to renew old friendships; I'm very happy to be here with my teacher, Dr. George Kelsey and his lovely wife and other friends that I have in this area of New Jersey and in this area of our country.

I would like to use as a subject from which to speak tonight, the American Dream. And I use this subject because America is essentially a dream, a dream yet unfulfilled. The substance of the dream is expressed in some very familiar words found in the Declaration of Independence. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This is a dream.

Now one of the first things we notice about this dream is an amazing universalism. It does not say some men, it says all men. It does not say all white men, but it says all men which includes black men. It doesn't say all Protestants, but it says all men which includes Catholics. It doesn't say all Gentiles, it says all men which includes Jews. And that is something else at the center of the American Dream which is one of the distinguishing points, one of the things that distinguishes it from other forms of government, particularly totalitarian systems. It says that each individual has certain basic rights that are neither derived from nor conferred by the state. They are gifts from the hands of the Almighty God. Very seldom if ever in the history of the world has a socio-political document expressed in such profound eloquent and unequivocal language the dignity and the worth of human personality.

But ever since the Founding Fathers of our nation dreamed this dream, America has been something of a schizophrenic personality, tragically divided against herself. On the one hand we have proudly professed the great principles of democracy. On the other hand we have sadly practiced the very antithesis of those principles. Indeed, slavery and racial segregation are strange paradoxes in the nation founded on the principle that all men are created equal.

But now, more than ever before, our nation is challenged to realize this dream. For the shape of the world today does not afford us the luxury of an anemic democracy, and the price that America must pay for the continued oppression of the Negro and other minority groups is the price of its own destruction. The hour is late and the clock of destiny is ticking out, and we must act now before it is too late.

Now I must hasten to say that we must not seek to solve this problem in America merely to meet the Communist challenge. We must not seek to solve this problem in America merely to appeal to Asian and African peoples. In the final analysis racial discrimination must be uprooted from American society because it is morally wrong. In the final analysis we must get rid of segregation because it is sinful. In a real sense it is a new form of slavery covered up with certain niceties of complexity. It is wrong, to use the words of the great Jewish philosopher Martin

Buber, because it substitutes an I-It relationship for the I-Thou relationship and relegates persons to the status of things. And so this problem must be solved not merely because it is diplomatically expedient but because it is morally compelling.

And so I would like to suggest some of the things that must be done in our nation if this American Dream is to be realized, some of the challenges that we face at this hour; and in facing the challenges we will be able to bring this dream into full realization.

I would like to start on the world scale, so to speak, by saying if the American Dream is to be a reality we must develop a world perspective. It goes without saying that the world in which we live is geographically one, and now more than ever before we are challenged to make it one in terms of brotherhood. Now it is true that the geographical oneness of this age has come into being to a large extent through man's scientific ingenuity. Man through his scientific genius has been able to dwarf distance and place time in chains. And our jet planes have compressed into minutes distances that once took weeks and even months. I think Bob Hope has adequately described this new jet age in which we live. He said it is an age in which it is possible to take a nonstop flight from Los Angeles, California to New York City, a distance of some 3,000 miles...and if on taking off in Los Angeles you develop hiccups, you will "hic" in Los Angeles and "cup" in New York City... (laughter) ...You know, it is possible because of the time difference to take a jet flight from Tokyo, Japan on Sunday morning and arrive in Seattle, Washington on the preceding Saturday night; and when your friends meet you at the airport and ask you when you left Tokyo, you would have to say I left tomorrow...(laughter)...This is the kind of world in which we live. Now this is a bit humorous, but I'm trying to laugh a basic fact into all of us, and it is simply this: through our scientific genius we have made of this world a neighborhood, and now through our moral and ethical commitment, we must make of it a brotherhood. We must all learn to live together as brothers or we will all perish together as fools. This is the challenge of the hour. No individual can live alone, no nation can live alone. Somehow we are interdependent.

I remember an experience that I had just a few years ago. Mrs. King and I had the privilege to journey to that great country known as India. I never will forget the experience of meeting and talking with the great leaders of India, meeting and talking with thousands and thousands of people in the cities and villages all over that vast country. These experiences will remain meaningful and dear to me as long as the chords of memory shall let them. But I must say to you that there were those depressing moments. How can one avoid being depressed when he sees with his own eyes evidences of people by the millions going to bed hungry at night? How can one avoid being depressed when he sees with his own eyes thousands of people sleeping on the sidewalks at night, no houses to go in, no beds to sleep in? How can one avoid being depressed when he discovers that out of India's population of more than 400 million people, some 375 million make an annual income of less than \$80 a year? And most of these people have never seen a doctor or a dentist. As I noticed these conditions, something within me cried out, "Can we in America stand idly by and not be concerned?" And an answer came, "Oh, no, because the destiny of the United States is tied up with the destiny of India and every other nation. And I started thinking about the fact that we spend millions of dollars a day in America to store surplus food. I said to myself, "I know where we can store that food free of charge, in the wrinkled stomachs of the millions of God's children in Asia and Africa and in South America, and even

our own country, who go to bed hungry at night. And it may well be that we spend far too much of our national budget establishing military bases around the world rather than bases of genuine concern and understanding.

All I'm saying is simply this, that all life is interrelated. And we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny -- whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. For some strange reason I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality. John Donne caught it years ago and placed it in graphic terms, "No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." And he goes on toward the end to say, "Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. Therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee." I think this is the first challenge and it is necessary to meet it in order to move on toward the realization of the American Dream, the dream of men of all races, creeds, national backgrounds, living together as brothers.

If the American Dream is to be a reality, secondly we must get rid of the notion once and for all that there are superior and inferior races. This idea still lingers around in some situations and in some circles. Certainly the intellectual disciplines, the anthropological sciences, have made it very clear that there is no truth in this. Great anthropologists like Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, the late Melvin Herskovitz and others have made it clear that as a result of their long years of study in these various areas, there is no truth in the idea of superior and inferior races. There may be superior and inferior individuals academically within all races. But there are no superior and inferior races. But in spite of this, the notion still lingers around. There was a time when people tried to justify this or tried to give some validity to this argument by turning to the Bible. And there again, it is a strange thing to see how individuals will use or misuse the Bible and religion to justify their prejudices and crystallize the status quo. And so from some pulpits around the nation it was argued that the Negro was inferior by nature because of Noah's curse upon the children of Ham. The apostle Paul's dictum became a watchword, "Servants, be obedient to your master." Then one other brother had probably read the logic of the great philosopher Aristotle, and you know Aristotle did a great deal to bring into being what we now know in philosophy as formal logic. And in formal logic you have the syllogism with its major premise and minor premise and conclusion. And this brother decided to put his argument of the inferiority of the Negro in the framework of an Aristotelian syllogism. He could say as his major premise, all men are made in the image of God. Then came the minor premise: God, as everybody knows, is not a Negro. Therefore, the Negro is not a man. This was the type of reasoning that prevailed.

Now on the whole I think people have gotten away from that; not altogether though because I heard the other day where someone in Mississippi said that God was a charter member of the White Citizen's Council...(laughter)...But on the whole we've moved away from these arguments. Now it's done on subtle sociological grounds. "The Negro is not culturally ready for integration, and if you integrate schools and public facilities, you will pull the white race back a generation." And then other arguments come out. You see, the Negro is a criminal. And these arguments go on ad infinitum. And the individuals who come forth with these arguments never go on to say that if there are lagging standards in the Negro community, they lag because of segregation and discrimination. And criminal responses are not racial, they are environmental. Poverty, ignorance,

social isolation, economic deprivation breed crime whatever the racial group may be. And it is a tortuous logic for you to use the tragic results of segregation as an argument for the continuation of it. It is necessary to get to the causal basis.

And I think that we have enough evidence in practical experiences and practical accomplishments of individuals in the Negro community and individuals in other minority groups to demonstrate that there is no truth in the idea of the inferiority of the Negro race, of the superiority of any other race. From an old slave cabin in Virginia's hills, Booker T. Washington rose to the position of one of America's great leaders. He lit a torch in Alabama and darkness fled. From the red hills of Gordon County, Georgia, in the arms of a mother who could neither read nor write, Roland Hayes rose to the point of being one of the world's great singers and carried his melodious voice into the palaces and mansions of kings and queens. From crippling poverty-stricken circumstances in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, there came a Marian Anderson to be the world's greatest contralto so that a Toscanini had to say, "A voice like this comes only once in a century." And Sibelius of Finland cried out, "My roof is too low for such a voice." From difficult, crippling, oppressive circumstances, George Washington Carver rose up and carved for himself an imperishable niche in the annals of science. There was a star in the sky of female leadership and then came a Mary McCleod Bathune, grabbed it and allowed it to shine in her life with all of its radiant beauty. There was a star in the diplomatic sky and then came a Ralph Bunche, a grandson of a slave preacher and allowed it to shine in his life.

These are just few examples, inspiring examples to refute the idea of the biological inferiority of the Negro. And they justify the conviction of the poet, "Fleecy locks and black complexion cannot forfeit nature's claim; skin may differ but affection dwells in black and white the same. Were I so tall as to reach the pole or to grasp the ocean at a span, I must be measured by my soul and the mind is the standard of the man."

A third thing that must be done in order to make the American Dream a reality is a very practical thing, but very important. It is necessary to develop an action program to get rid of the vestiges of segregation and discrimination. Now in order to get rid, I mean in order to develop an action program, it is necessary to get rid of one or two false ideas that are disseminated. They are myths and they are disseminated over and over again. One is the myth of time, and I'm sure that everybody assembled here has heard this idea, that only time can solve the problem of racial injustice. And so the individuals who believe this say to the Negro and to his allies in the white community, "Just be patient, don't push things too fast. Be nice and the problem will work itself out in a hundred or two hundred years." They say wait on time. The only answer that we can give to this myth is that time is neutral. It can be used either constructively or destructively. And points, I think, the people of ill will in our country have used time much more effectively than the people of good will. And it may well be that we will have to repent in this generation, not merely for the bitter words and violent actions of the bad people who will bomb a church in Birmingham, Alabama, but for the appalling silence of the good people who sit around and say, "Wait on time." Somewhere along the way of life, we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals who are willing to be coworkers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the primitive forces of social stagnation. And so it is necessary for us to help time and forever realize that the time is always right to do right.

Now the other myth that is disseminated is the idea that legislation and judicial decrees and executive orders from the President cannot really solve the problem of racial injustice, only education and religion can do that. Now certainly a half-truth is involved here: if the problem is to be solved ultimately, hearts must be changed and religion and education must play a great role at this point. But it is merely a half-truth, for it may be true that morality cannot be legislated, but behavior can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot change the heart but it can restrain the heartless. It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me but it can keep him from lynching me, and I think that's pretty important also...(laughter)...In other words, through legislation we control the external effects of bad internal attitudes; and so it is necessary in society to have legislation, and this is why it is urgent for the Civil Rights bill that is now in the House of Representatives of our nation to be passed. This is a need and it is a need at this hour and I feel that people of good will all over this nation should write in to congressmen, should write in to senators letting them know in no uncertain terms that this is a moral issue and that this bill is needed in order to help the nation rise to its full moral and political maturity. Now it seems that the bill will get through the House, but then it goes to the Senate. And there is a real danger that the filibuster will be used and in the midst of the filibuster, behind closed doors, compromises will be made, particularly on the public accommodation section of the bill and FEPC. And I am convinced that if these two sections of the bill are deleted, the bill will be so watered down that it will have no meaning. And this already ugly sore of racial injustice on the body politic of our nation may suddenly turn malignant, and we may be inflicted with an incurable cancer that will totally destroy our political and moral health. And so it is urgent for men of good will and women of good will all over the nation to work with determination to see that this bill is passed and that the coalition in Congress made up of right-wing northern Republicans and southern Dixiecrats will not again serve as the legislative incinerator that will burn to ashes this meaningful Civil Rights bill.

Several months ago, a great, intelligent, vigorous young man stood before the nation and he said, "The issue of Civil Rights is not merely a political issue, it is not merely an economic issue; it is at bottom a moral issue. It is as old as the scriptures and as modern as the Constitution. It is a question of whether you will treat your neighbors as you would like to be treated." And on the heels of that great speech, he presented to the Congress of our nation, this comprehensive package of Civil Rights legislation, the most comprehensive and the strongest Civil Rights bill ever presented by any President. Since that time, a dark moment has come to our nation - - that young man has been assassinated. Now he belongs to the ages. But it is tragic indeed that the question of Civil Rights is still being debated. And it will be debated in the Senate to the point of a filibuster probably. This is tragic indeed, for I am convinced that one of the greatest tributes that a nation can pay to the late President Kennedy is to see that this bill, that he recommended to the Congress, will pass and pass without being watered down at any point.

Also...(applause)...and I would also like to say that there is need for legislation not only on the Federal level but also on the local level or within cities and states. The problem of housing discrimination is a glaring reality all over this country, north and south; and as long as we have this problem, there will be some form of de facto segregation in the public schools and in all other areas of life. And so there is a need for every state to work vigorously for fair housing bills so that we can move out of the long night of housing discrimination. The real test of one's

commitment to the brotherhood of man may well be in this housing area, where the men and women can live together as brothers and sisters and not confine the Negro to a ghetto after a ghetto, a ghetto after a ghetto. And so this is a need in every state.

There is also a need to grapple with the serious problem of economic or rather employment discrimination. The Negro is still at the bottom of the economic ladder. The Negro is still somehow caught and smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society. 42% of the Negro families of our nation still earn less than \$2000 a year, while just 17% of the white families earn less than \$2000 a year. 21% of the Negro families of our nation still earn less than a \$1000 a year, while just 5% of the white families earn less than a \$1000 a year. 88% of the Negro families of America still earn less than \$5000 a year, while just 58% of the white families earn less than \$5000 a year. Now we can see the social problems created by this. If one does not make an adequate income, he cannot have adequate housing, he cannot have adequate health facilities, he cannot educate his children. And so the problems of juvenile delinquency, and the welfare problems, and all of the other social problems that develop are only compounded by the failure to grapple with this problem of employment discrimination. And the problem is even more difficult now because of a force known as automation. The Negro has been confined to semiskilled and unskilled labor, mainly because of a lack of educational opportunities and because of discrimination in apprenticeship training. And now these unskilled and semiskilled jobs are the ones that are passing away. And so the Negro wakes up and discovers that he's 28% of the population in a city like Detroit, Michigan, and 74% of the unemployed.

These problems are growing all over the nation. And the only way that these problems can be dealt with will be through strong concerted action on the part of people of good will. Labor, industry, the federal government, and individuals of good will must come to see that this is one of the most serious problems of our nation, and a program must be developed at every point to rid our nation of this system, along with action programs in the legislative area, and certainly there are other things that must be done. Many of the civil rights organizations are working with these other things, such as increasing the number of Negro registered voters. We are still working through the courts; this is necessary. But even after working through the courts and even after these other areas, we must see that a court order can only declare rights, it can never totally deliver them. And only when the people themselves begin to act, are these rights which are written on paper given life blood. And so this is why nonviolent direct action is necessary to supplement what can be done through these other areas.

Now I would like to take a few minutes to say something about this method or this philosophy of nonviolence, because it has played such a prominent role in our struggle over the last few years, both north and south. First I should say that I am still convinced that the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom and human dignity is nonviolent resistance. I am convinced that this is a powerful method. It disarms the opponent, it exposes his moral defenses, it weakens his morale and at the same time it works on his conscience, and he just doesn't know how to deal with it. If he doesn't beat you, wonderful. If he beats you, you develop the courage of accepting blows without retaliating. If he doesn't put you in jail, wonderful; nobody with any sense loves to go to jail. But if he puts you in jail, you go in that jail and transform it from a dungeon of shame to a haven of freedom and human dignity. Even if he tries to kill you, you develop the inner conviction that there are some things so precious, some

things so dear, some things so eternally true that they are worth dying for. And in a sense, if an individual has not discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live. This is what the nonviolent discipline says. And there is something about this that disarms the opponent and he doesn't know how to deal with it.

Another thing about this method is that it makes it possible for individuals to struggle to secure moral ends through moral means. One of the great debates of history has been over this whole question of ends and means. There have been those individuals who have argued that the end justifies the means. Sometimes the whole systems of government have gone down this path. I think this is one of the great weaknesses and tragedies of Communism; it is right here, that often the attitude that any method, any means can be used to bring about the goal of the classless society. This is where the nonviolent philosophy would break from Communism or any other system that argues that the end justifies the means, because in a real sense the end is pre-existent in the means. And the means represent the ideal in the making and the end in process. And somehow in the long run of history, immoral means cannot bring about moral ends. And so the nonviolent philosophy makes it possible for individuals to work to secure moral ends through moral means.

Now, there is another thing about this philosophy -- I guess it's one of the most misunderstood aspects. It says that it is possible to struggle passionately and unrelentingly against an unjust system and yet not stoop to hatred in the process. The love ethic can stand at the center of a nonviolent movement. And people always ask me, "What in the world do you mean by this? How can you love people who are bombing your home, and people who are threatening your children, and people who are using violence against your every move?" I guess they have a point. I'm not talking about emotional bosh at this point. It is nonsense to urge oppressed people to love their oppressor in an affectionate sense. This isn't what we are talking about.

Fortunately the Greek language comes to our aid in trying to discover the meaning of love in this context. There are three words in the Greek language for love. One is the word "eros." Eros is a sort of aesthetic love. Plato used to talk about it a great deal in his dialogues, a yearning of the soul for the realm of the divine. It has come to us to be a sort of romantic love, and so in this sense we have all read about eros in the beauties of literature. In a sense Edgar Allen Poe was talking about eros when he talked about his beautiful Annabelle Lee with a love surrounded by the halo of eternity. In a sense Shakespeare was talking about eros when he said, "Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds, or bends with the remover to remove. It is an ever-fixed mark that looks on tempest and is never shaken. It is a star to every wandering barque." You know, I can remember that because I used to quote it to my wife when we were courting. That's eros...(laughter)...Then there is "philia." The Greek language talks about this kind of reciprocal love, a sort of...a love that develops out of the fact that you, you like the person. You love because you are loved. This is friendship.

There is another word in the Greek language. It is the word "agape." Agape is more than friendship, agape is more than aesthetic or romantic love. Agape is understanding, creative, redemptive good will for all men. It is an overflowing love that seeks nothing in return. Theologians would say that it is the love of God operating in the human heart. And when one rises to love on this level, he loves every man, not because he likes him but because God loves

him. And he rises to the level of loving the person who does the evil deed while hating the deed that the person does.

And I think that this is the kind of love that can guide us through the days and weeks and years ahead. This is the kind of love that can help us achieve and create the beloved community. I think this is what Jesus meant when he said, "Love your enemies," and I'm so happy he didn't say, "Like your enemies," it's pretty difficult to like some people. Like is an affection. It has sentimental qualities and, frankly, it is difficult to like, I find it very difficult to like Senator Thurmond and Senator Eastland and the things that they are doing on this Civil Rights issue and the way they are voting, I really don't like it. But Jesus says, "Love them" and love is greater than like. Love is understanding, creative, redemptive good will for all men. And I seriously say that I think this can stand at the center of the nonviolent movement and help bring about the new America, the great America.

And so, as Dr. Oxnam said earlier, we can stand before our violent, most violent opponents and say in substance, we will match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will, and we will still love you. We cannot in all good conscience obey your unjust laws because noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good. And so throw us in jail and we will still love you. Burn our homes and threaten our children, and as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities at the midnight hours and beat us and drag us out on some wayside road and leave us half dead and, as difficult as it is, we will still love you. But be ye assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer, and one day we will win our freedom. We will so appeal to your heart and your conscience that we will win you in the process. And our victory will be a double victory.

This is the nonviolent message. And it is this message, it is this approach, it is this method that has been used all across the country. Students by the thousands have taken our deep groans and passionate yearnings for freedom, and filtered them in their own souls and fashioned them into a creative protest, which is an epic known all over our nation. And as a result of their disciplined, dignified, determined, courageous yet nonviolent efforts, they have been able to bring about integration at lunch counters in more than 350 cities in the South and things are still happening as a result of the nonviolent movement.

And so this method will help the individuals who use it to go into the new age which is emerging with the right attitude. It will help every Negro as he struggles to realize that he must struggle with all his might for first-class citizenship. But he must not use second-class methods to gain it. It will help him to realize that he must not substitute one tyranny for another. And he will realize that a doctrine of black supremacy is as dangerous as a doctrine of white supremacy, and that God is not interested merely in the freedom of black men, and brown men, and yellow men; but God is interested in the freedom of the whole human race and the creation of a society where all men will live together as brothers, and every man will respect the dignity and worth of human personality. This is what the nonviolent discipline, when one takes it seriously, says.

And so I am convinced that with all of these methods at work we will be able to move on into that new and great day and the American Dream will be a reality. May I say that this problem

which we face is not a sectional problem. This problem which we face is not confined to any particular community. The fact is that no section of our country can boast of clean hands in the area of brotherhood. It is one thing for a white person of good will in the North to rise up with righteous indignation when a bus is burned with freedom riders in Anderston, Alabama...or when a courageous James Meredith cannot go to a state-supported university without 16,000 federal troops...or when a church is bombed in Birmingham, Alabama and 4 unoffending, beautiful, innocent girls are killed. But it is also necessary for a white person of good will to rise up with as much righteous indignation when a Negro cannot live in his neighborhood, or when a Negro cannot get a job in his particular firm, or when a Negro cannot join his professional society, his fraternity, or her sorority. If this problem is to be solved there must be something of a divine discontent.

There are certain words in every academic discipline that soon become stereotypes and clichés. Every academic discipline has its technical vocabulary. Modern psychology has a word that it probably used more than any other word in psychology, it is the word “maladjusted.” This is the ringing cry of modern child psychology, maladjusted. And certainly we all want to live the well-adjusted life in order to avoid neurotic and schizophrenic personalities. But I say to you this evening that there are certain things in our nation and in our world to which I am proud to be maladjusted. And to which I hope all men of good will be maladjusted until the good society is realized. I never intend to adjust myself to segregation and discrimination. I never intend to become adjusted to religious bigotry. I never intend to adjust myself to economic conditions that will take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few. I never intend to adjust myself to the madness of militarism and the self-defeating affects of physical violence. But in a day when Sputniks and Explorers are dashing through outer space and guided ballistic missiles are causing highways of death through the stratosphere, no nation can win a war. It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence, it is either nonviolence or nonexistence. And the alternative to disarmament, the alternative to suspension of nuclear tests, the alternative to strengthening the United Nations and thereby disarming the whole world, may well be a civilization plunged into the abyss of annihilation.

This is why I welcome the recent Test-Ban Treaty. Indeed there is need for a new organization in our world, the International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment, men and women who will be maladjusted. Maladjusted as the prophet Amos, who in the midst of the injustices of his day could cry out in words that echo across the centuries, “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.” As maladjusted as Abraham Lincoln, who had the vision to see that this nation could not survive, half slave and half free. As maladjusted as Thomas Jefferson, who in the words that I quoted earlier could cry out, “all men are created equal.” As maladjusted as Jesus of Nazareth, who could say to his followers, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you. Pray for them that despitefully use you.” And through such maladjustment we will be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of man’s inhumanity to man, into the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice.

And I am still convinced that this day can, and this day will come. Before the victory for brotherhood is won, some more will get scarred up a bit. Some more will be thrown into jail. Before the victory is won, maybe some more like a courageous Medgar Evers will have to face physical death. But if physical death is the price that some must pay to free their children and

their white brothers from a permanent death of the spirit, then nothing can be more redemptive. Before the victory is won, some will have to suffer and sacrifice and spend restless nights. But I am convinced that it can be won. And I am convinced of that because Carlyle is right, no lie can live forever. I am convinced of that because there is something in this universe which justifies William Cullen Bryant in saying "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." I am convinced of that because there is something in this universe that justifies James Russell Lowell in saying, "Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne. Yet that scaffold sways the future. Behind the dim unknown standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

With this faith we will be able to move into this new day. With this faith we will be able to adjourn the councils of despair and bring new light into the dark chambers of pessimism. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. This will be a great day. This will be the day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last." Thank you...(applause).