

## MLK Speech Notes - INTRODUCTION

Part of the fascination of MLK is seeing how greatness emerged. King might have said, as Lincoln did, "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me.

King could have settled for a quieter life. His father paved the way, preaching and marrying his way up from sharecropping to the middle class. Outwardly young Martin followed the path laid out for him by his parents: suitable marriage, a prosperous church, a safe passage through a dangerous world. It would have surprised people to hear that he had any interest in social protest.

### Decisive Moment

Author Branch-- believed that King decided to join when he discovered he could make people believe in the SPIRITUAL JUSTICE of a cause, in the power of nonviolence and in their own power. Nothing like that had ever happened on that scale in America.

### DREAM

Nearly 21 years ago Martin eloquently described his vision of an America free of HATE, free of DISCRIMINATION ns full of HOPE -- A LAND in which no person is denied housing, education or employment because of race, creed or national origin.

Tragically, Dr. King did not live to see his dream fulfilled. Martyred on April 4, 1968, he was felled by an assassin's bullet four years and eight months after delivering his memorable "I Have A Dream" message.

His words gave oppressed people hope and strength. His deeds gave them a new sense of dignity. But if King remained a Dreamer, painting idyllic picture to blacks and whites together, he would not have been assassinated. The King that warranted assassination was King the doer- King the shaker.

It was the MLK, who was against the way in Vietnam; King that shook the foundations of antiunionism in the south.

Though he was jailed, kicked, beaten and stabbed, though his house was bombed and his life threatened, his message of love and his commitment to social change through nonviolence never wavered.

### CHALLENGE

IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE THAT THE HUNGREY ARE FED, THAT THE HOMELESS ARE HOUSED, THAT THE CHILDREN ARE EDUCATED AND THAT THE UNEMPLOYED HAYEN AN OPPORTUNITY RO WORK AT JOBS THAT RECOGNIZE THEIR SKILLS AS WELL AS THEIR LIMITATIONS.

WE HAVE STRUGGLED TOO HARD TO REACH DR. KING'S MOUNTAINTOP TO FALL BACK NOW

We've got to be careful that the image of King the teachers are giving to our children is the correct one - that they are not denigrating him to the arena of Kinfly Old Uncle.

If King is to live, he must not be relegated to the dusty shelf of American history, to be dusted off once a year, until people finally get tired of the emptiness of it and tune out.

Kings birthday must remain a rallying point. Now more ever, people must look to Dr. King's teachings as a guide to achieving social justice and dignity for all.

We must be hammerd, shaping a New Society, rather than anvils molded by the old.

#### UNITY

*Black man need white men and white man needs the black man.*

There is no separate path and fulfillment short of social disaster that does not share that power with black aspiration for freedom and human dignity.

We are bound together in a single garment of destiny.

The language, cultural patters, the music, the material prosperity and even the food of America are an amalgam of black and white.

All of our destinies are tied in America.

America must be a nation in which its multiracial people are Partners in Power. This is the essence of democracy- towards which all blacks struggles have been directed.

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WHO AM I? -

We are descendants of slaves

Offsprings of noble men and women kidnapped from their native land and chained in ships like beast.

I for one am not ashamed of the past- My shame is for those who became so inhuman  
Violence

Time is cluttered with the wreckage of individuals and communities that surrendered to hatred and violence.

Rich vs Poor

Hyman Bookbinder, former Asst. Director OED 12/29/66

" The poor can stop being poor if the rich are willing to become even richer at a slower rate."

- Commitment was shallower
- Conscience burned only dim
- When atrocious behavior was curbde
- The spirit settled easily into well-padded pockets of complacency
- Justice at the deepest level had but few stalwart champions.

#### HOW STANDS THE CITY? RONALD REAGAN

The past few days when I have been at that window upstairs, I've thought a bit of the shining "city upon a hill," The phrase comes from John Wintrop[, who wrote it to describe the America he Imagined . What he imagined was important, because he was an early Pilgrim - an early "Freedom Man." He journeyed here on whattoday we'd call a little wooden boat; and like the other pilgrims, he was looking for a home that would be FREE.

I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I saw it. But in my mind it was a tall proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind swept, God blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds, living in harmony and peace - a city with free portas that hummed with commrerce and creativity, and it there had to be city walls, the walls had doors, and the doors were open to anyone with the WILL and the HEART to get here.

That's how I saw it and still see it

#### HOWSTANDS THE CITY?

And how stands the city on this winter night? More Prosperous, more secure and happier than it was eight years ago. But more than that: after 200 years, two centuries, she still stands strong and true on granite ridge, and her glow has held steady no matter what the storm.

And she's still a beacon, still a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the Pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling throughb the darkness, towards home...

A final word to the men and women of the Reagan Revolution - the men and women who bought America back:

My friends, we did it. We weren't just marking time, we made a difference. We made the city stronger - we made the city freer - we left her in good hands. 1/11/89

#### POLL FINDS BLACKS AND WHITES "WORLDS APART"

A NATIONAL SURVEY conducted by Louis Harris, commissioned by NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

- Large majority of whites believing that blacks are treated equally in America and a similar number of blacks disagreeing
- A growing insecurity in the black community, particularly among college educated men earning more than \$35,000 a year, about employment and economic stability
- That the public is interested in addressing race issues that have not been addressed in the past eight years.
- Sharp differences in response to specific questions; equal pay for equal work, treatment of the crimminal justice system.
- Urban underclass, poor, women 78%, median income of these households over the past 5 years has been \$4,900.
  
- 61% Of 347 surveyed held no jobs last 2 years  
44% either had never worked or had no training
  
- But - Harris poll - demonstrated a remarkable willingness to advocate steps for themselves which are in full accord with those of the rest of society-
  
- Harris said, racial bias exists, and was reflected in the survey by an endorement of racial stereotypes that was identified in more than one third of the whites. Example 36% of whites in the poll believed that "blacks tend to have less Amition than whites. 1/12/89 NY Times

"Boom Ends As Minorities In The Region Lag Behind" (*NY Times* 1/11/89)

The metropolitan region's sin-year economic boom has ended but without any progress in drawing a large part of the population into the mainstream workforce. Hudson County had the highest unemployment rate, an old industrial heartland, 6.4, 3.9 region, 5.6 nationwide--

Richard P. Nathan, a professor of Public Affairs at Princetown University said, "discouraging- they show movement toward much greater divisions between the very poor and the well-off.

### King - Destiny or Fate

That King is an accident of time, place and circumstance may be superficially true. But he is no more or less- an accident than Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill or Gandhi himself. Significantly, he is extremely fond of quoting Tom Paine's axiom that " there is no power like the power of an idea whose time has come." Since all change is the result of ideas that are put to work by men fortunate enough to arrive on stage at a time when fruition is possible, history, in this sense, may only be recorded.

If we are to maintain any faith in the ability of one man or one hundred million men to alter established courses, .... If we are willing to accept deterministic concept of uncontrollable forces sweeping us headlong toward some dark and mysterious goal .... If we believe that the individual, solitary or in concert, can influence his own destiny.

### New Paradigm

KING-represented a latterday Moses, who with the assistance of Thoreau, Gandhi - had demonstrated that new methods might solve age-old problems

### MLK On Equality

The personal torment of discrimination cannot be measured on a numerical scale, but the grim evidence of its hold on white America is revealed in the polls that indicate the 88 percent of them would object if their teen-age child dated a Negro. Almost 80 percent would mind it if a close friend or relative married a Negro, and 50 percent would not want a Negro as Neighbor.

The brief facts disclose the magnitude of the gap between existing realities and the goal of equality... There is not even a common language when the term "equality" is used. Negro and white have a fundamentally different definition.

Negroes take the word "equality" at face value while whites proceed from a premise that equality is a loose expression for improvement. White America is not psychologically organized to close the gap -- essentially it seeks only to make it less painful and less obvious but in most respects to retain it. Most of the abrasion between Negroes and white liberals arise from this fact.

### ROLL CALL

- Crispus Attucks - a black seaman - First American to shed blood in the American revolution which freed this country from British oppression.
- Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, a Negro physician, performed the first successful operation on the heart in America.
- Dr. Charles Drew, was largely responsible for developing the method of separating blood plasma and storing it on a large scale, saved thousands of lives in the second world war.
- Granville T. Woods, an expert in electric motors, whose many patents speeded the growth and improvement of the railroads at the beginning of this century.

MLK story of attending his kid's school - Music that made America-folk songs from various immigrant groups- ended with Dixie - He wept that night for all the black children being denied a knowledge of their heritage; i wept for white children who, through daily miseducation, are taught that the Negro is an irrelevant entity in American society.

### EDUCATION & SOCIAL ACTION

Education without social action is a one-sided value because it has no true power potential.

Social action without education is a weak expression of pure energy... Deeds uninformed by educated thought can take false directions. When we go into action and confront our adversaries, we must be as armed with knowledge as they are.... Our policies should have the strength of deep analysis beneath them to be able to challenge the clever sophistries of our opponents..... We in this generation must do the work and in doing it stimulate our children to learn and acquire higher levels of skill and technique.

By 1970 ten of our larger cities will have Negro majorities if the present trend continues. We can shrug off this opportunity or use it for a new vitality to deepen and enrich our family and community life.

#### SPIRIT

One of the problems of mankind is that we suffer from a poverty of spirit which stands in glaring contrast to our scientific and technological abundance. The richer we have become materially, the poorer we have become morally and spiritually.

Every man lives into two realms, the internal and the external. The internal realm of spiritual ends expressed in art, literature, moral and religion.

The external is that complex of devices, techniques, mechanisms and instrumentalities by which we live.

Our problem today is that we have allowed the internal to become lost in the external

We have allowed the means by which we live to outdistance the ends for which we live. Thoreau's phrase states it simply:

— "improved means to an unimproved end"

#### RACIAL UNDERSTANDING

Like life, racial understanding is not something that we find but something that we must CREATE. What we find when we enter the mortal plains is existence; but existence is only the raw material out of which all life must be created. A productive and happy life is not just something you find; it is something you make.

The ability of Negroes and whites to work together, to understand each other, will not be found ready made; it must be created by the fact of contact and negotiation.

#### LOVE

Love is the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality. This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all men. Summed up in The First Epistle of Saint John

Let us love one another; for love is of God  
and every one that loveth is born of God, and  
Knoweth God, He that loveth not knoweth not  
God; for God is Love....If we love one another  
God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Let us hope that this spirit will become the order of the day. We can no longer afford to worship the God of hate and bow at the altar of retaliation. As Arnold Toynbee once said in a speech.

Love is the ultimate force that make for the  
saving choice of life and good against the damning

choice of death and evil. Therefore the first hope in our inventory must be the hope that love is going to have the last word.

#### MAN - WHO IS HE?

Our conviction, Jueo-Christian tradition refers to this inherent dignity of man - "the image of God." The image of God is universally shared in equal portions by all men. There is no graded scale of essential worth. Every human being has etched in his personality the indelible stamp of the Creator.

The worth of an individual does not lie in the measure of his intellect, his racial origin or social position. Human worth lies in relateness to God.

Whenever this is recognized, "whiteness" and "blackness" pass away as determinants in a relationship and "son" and "brother" are substituted

Immanuel Kant said "All men must be treated as ends

#### CHALLENGE

Yes, Martin, we are going on until Justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream, Until this nation becomes a nation where injustice and inequality cease.... Until there is Justice in the Workplace..... Until sexism and racism become anachronisms on the Landscape of the American scene.... Until the leaders of Government hear the Voice of Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of independence, leaping across the dark vistas of time saying,

"We hold these truths to be self-evident,  
that all men are created equal."

Until the dreams of Roy Wilkins, Martin Luther King, Jr., Whitney Young, James Weldon Johnson, W.E.D. Dubois and other noble social prophets become a reality.

The Bridge Builder

The Occasion - Dr. MLK

Historical Perspective - rivers to cross

Pendulum - attitudes, national Values

MLK's Bridge bequethed us

The challenge

The close and finale.

Dr. King's Main Theme

#### " Search For The Beloved Community"

One that mutually Cooperative in voluntary ventures of a man in the assemblage of responsibility for his brother.

King's search for the Beloved Community where persons sought to understand each other.....the importance of relationship and social progress in the shaping and destiny of persons.

King's cenral motif was the need for and concern for the community to experience God in relationships and social progress.

He constantly quoted " No man is an island, no man stands alone. We must be open enough to meet each other without a confrontational or adversarial attitude.

King cam as a REFORMER - RETRIEVE A DAMAGED SOCIETY

- COUNSELOR - INSIGHTS (INDEPTH)
- CONCERNED PARENT

Howard Thurman, the great mystic of this century  
Maarch On Washington

" Would the boundaries be as established after his coming. America would never be the same again .

HOWARD THURMAN - DREAMS

"As long as a man has a dream in his heart, he cannot lose the significance of living".

With all the trappings of Realism - Dreams can be rationalize as an escape for the human Spirit. No. When one ceases to Dream, he stops Hoping, stops Looking.

Dreaming is an Outlet that sustains Life, With no dreams, Life becomes a swamp.

Dreams do not have to produce great plans but pictures of Someday - they need not to be concrete.

Dreams, a quiet persistence in the heart that enables man to ride out the storms of his churning experiences.

Dreams are exciting, a whisper, the scenes moves to avoid monotony in life-- plays a melody to offset the dischords of life's experiences.

Dreams are not outward from the envirnoment... Deep within where the issues of life are determined.

The purpose is to use education to make a break between the occupation of the parents and those of their children.

The schools have been the historic routes of social mobility. But when Negroes and others of the underclass now ask that the schools play the same function for them, many within and outside the school system answer -that the schools cannot do the job.

They would impose on the family the whole task of preparing and leading youngsters into educational advance.

The full emancipation and equality of Negroes and the poor--comes at a time when education is more than ever the passport to decent economic positions.

THE JOB OF THE SCHOOL IS TO TEACH SO WELL THAT FAMILY BACCKGROUND IS NO LONGER AN ISSUE.

ECONOMIC-EMPLOYMENT

ECONOMIC EXPANSION cannot alone do the job of improving the employment of Negroes. It provides the base for improvement but other things must be constructed upon it, especially if

the tragic situation of youth is to be solved. In a booming economy Negro youth are AFFLICTED with unemployment as though in an economic crisis. They are the explosive outsiders of the American expansion.

#### VISIONS AND VIEWS

Text: Ezekiel 3:15 - 17

Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-a-bib, that dwelt by the river of Che'bar, And I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days.

And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

#### PROPHET AND A PREACHER - DESTINY & DIVINE INTERVENTION

Ezekiel was a Priest, from a priestly lineage, a mystic, and a writer of elaborate design - a rare combination of talents.

Dr. King was a Preacher, from a preacher's son, a prophet, an intellectual giant, a prolific writer, an orator.

Ezekiel was away from the daily trials of his people...  
He had been carried away into Babylonian exile with many other Judeans, probably between 589 and 583 B.C. Yet relegated with the ecclesiastical elite.

Dr. King was graduating from Boston University. Living a comfortable life of an intellectual elite.

Both received a Call, debated, finally accepted

Ezekiel - Carried within his heart "The Secret of his Call  
The sin of his own people produced a conflict  
of feelings in his mind  
His imple feelings of bitterness and indigna-  
tion feeled his man.

Martin - Got caught up in the neo orthodoxy of Reinhold  
Niebuhr - against liberalism, false optimism  
about man's essential nature - he return  
thinking to man's basic evil. He castigated  
pacifism as *simplistic position resting on*  
man's goodness. Saw no difference between  
violent & nonviolent resistance.

King had defended Rauschenbush - Now Nie-  
buhr's analysis appealed to him. He had been  
naive & sentimental about human nature.

King considered the vacillations of Americas  
Founding Fathers - enlightened - Age of Reason  
But

When it came to slavery & race - Low Road  
The prifying Power of Faith could not free  
man from distortion and rationalization.



Hegel - study showed King a Dialectical Process

"That growth comes through Pain and Struggle  
and that the Course of History moved towards universal Justice-- That the higher level of  
TRUTH IS FOUND IN A SYNTHESIS-

-- THAT RECONCILES AN ASSERTIBLE THESIS WITH ANOTHER CONTRADICTIONARY PROPOSITION-  
THE ANTI-THESIS.

Hegel - truth as a whole freed King from an either or choice in social concerns..

Synthesis - THE KINGDOM OF GOD - Man is capable of good and evil but GRACE is the cure, power  
to open up God arranged that they could See The View, Experience the View, Share the Pain in the  
valley of despair and hopelessness

1. GOD DOES NOT REVEAL THE ILLUMINATION OF THE VISION  
UNTIL YOU HAVE SEEN THE VIEW

2. VIEW - Survey, measure, assess

3. VISION - Seeing the Promise, beyond the possible  
Dreaming - we must dream

4. America has been committed to carrying out  
transactional application to the VIEW

ACCOMMODATE THE SITUATION

5. God called King to conduct TRANSFORMATIONAL

REJECT - THERMOMETER READINGS  
INJECT - THERMOSTATIC CONTROLS-REGULATE

Racism, Segregation, War

6. Ezekiel - VISION Of The Valley Of Dry Bones

7. King's - I Have A DREAM - WE NEED DREAMS

8. KING HAD AN ESCHATOLOGICAL VISION- MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE COMING OF THE LORD

9. JOHN ON THE ISLE OF PATMOS HAD A PEEP

10. Jesus - When sadness & death came-- In My Father's House are many mansions.