

March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom

Mass marches were never accepted by presidential administrations in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. Army veteran marches on Washington in 1894 and 1932 had been met with tear gas and arrests.

In the summer of 1941, A. Philip Randolph, founder of the first Black union the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, was angry that World War II military spending was lifting whites out of the Great Depression, but black unemployment was ignored. He threatened President Franklin D. Roosevelt with a mass march by 100,000 black citizens for equal employment opportunity.

Roosevelt, like past presidents, brought all of his power to bear to try to stop the march. But Randolph was having none of it. A week before the march deadline, Roosevelt gave into the pressure and created the first national Fair Employment Practices Committee to address the issue of black unemployment. Randolph postponed the march — for what ended up being more than two decades.

The administration of President John F. Kennedy, like those in the past, was concerned about a March on Washington being proposed for August 1963. He felt the nation was on the verge of exploding and a march might be a catalyst to start rioting as had happened with marches in the South. Congress was even more terrified of the march.

President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson met with members of the March organizing committee to dissuade them because they thought it would hurt their efforts to persuade Congress to pass civil rights legislation. Randolph and Martin Luther King disagree with them. They felt a non-violent march would show their strength of numbers and would dramatize the civil rights issue in a positive way. The effort to stop the march only strengthened their resolve. The march was on.

The March on Washington represented a coalition of ten major civil rights and religious organizations. Each had a different approach and different agenda.



The "Big Six" organizers of the March were (left to right) John Lewis, of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); Whitney Young, Jr., of the National Urban League; A. Philip Randolph, of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Martin Luther King, Jr., of the South-

Now the time has come for preachers and everybody else to get to Washington and get this very recalcitrant Congress to see that it must do something and that it must do it soon, because...if something isn't done...our cities are going to continue to go up in flames...The extreme voices calling for violence will get a greater hearing in the black community.

So far they have not influenced many, but I contend that if something isn't done very soon to deal with this basic economic problem to provide jobs...then the extremists voices will be heard more and those who are preaching non-violence will often have their words falling on deaf ears...

We need a movement now to transmute the rage of the ghetto into a positive constructive force...

I can't see the answer in riots. On the other hand, I can't see the answer in tender supplications for justice. I see the answer in...militant non-violence that is massive...attention-getting enough to dramatize the problems, that will be attention-getting as a riot, that will not destroy life or property in the process. And that is what we hope to do in Washington...

— Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., excerpts of comments to Rabbi Gendler about the purpose of the March on Washington

ern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); James Farmer, of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); and Roy Wilkins, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Randolph was chosen as the leader for the march and he chose his assistant, Bayard Rustin, to organize the march. Rustin was a controversial choice because some thought him to be a communist. In return for the choice, Randolph, who thought it should be an all-black march, agreed to invite white religious and labor leaders to help organize, and their members to join the march.

They agreed to a date of August 28, 1963 with the march starting on the Mall at the Washington Monument and ending in front of the Lincoln Memorial. It would be a massive peaceful display of black and white citizens urging justice and equal rights.

The goal was to bring at least 100,000 people to attend. The word went out across the country through the media, in churches and civil rights meetings, and by word of mouth. They organized thousands of chartered trains and buses to move people from all over the country to Washington, D.C. Over 250,000 people arrived for the march, including 60,000 white participants.



They made plans for security to make sure white supremacist groups like the Nazis or the Ku Klux Klan could not disrupt the march and that no one who attended would cause trouble. On the day of the march, 3,900 police from Washington, D.C. and nearby suburbs and 2,000 National Guardsmen were called to duty, and several thousand U.S. troops were on standby in Maryland and Virginia.

A. Philip Randolph opened the speakers program in front of the Lincoln Memorial. He addressed the crowd as, "the advance guard of a massive moral revolution for jobs and freedom." He went on to express the 10 demands of the march (see What We Demand).

WHAT WE DEMAND*

1. Comprehensive and effective civil rights legislation from the present Congress—without compromise or filibuster—to guarantee all Americans

access to all public accommodations
decent housing
adequate and integrated education
the right to vote

2. Withholding of federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists.

3. Desegregation of all school districts in 1963.

4. Enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment—reducing Congressional representation of states where citizens are disfranchised.

5. A new Executive Order banning discrimination in all housing supported by federal funds.

6. Authority for the Attorney General to institute injunctive suits when any constitutional right is violated.

7. A massive federal program to train and place all unemployed workers—Negro and white—on meaningful and dignified jobs at decent wages.

8. A national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. (Government surveys show that anything less than \$2.00 an hour fails to do this.)

9. A broadened Fair Labor Standards Act to include all areas of employment which are presently excluded.

10. A federal Fair Employment Practices Act barring discrimination by federal, state, and municipal governments, and by employers, contractors, employment agencies, and trade unions.

*Support of the March does not necessarily indicate endorsement of every demand listed. Some organizations have not had an opportunity to take an official position on all of the demands advocated here.

As the speeches continued, the crowds swelled. City officials became fearful of violence. But this was a peaceful gathering. Many of the speakers encouraged the black people present to step up their civil rights protests. SNCC leader John Lewis' speech, though altered from its original draft, was still the most volatile. He prophesied that with their superior strength of numbers the black people would "splinter the segregated South into a thousand pieces, and put them back together in the image of God and Democracy."

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. gave the final speech. His "I have a dream" speech was full of hope, determination and purpose. It brought the quarter of a million people at the march to a fever pitch of excitement, and to tears.

Immediately following the march, the top 10 speakers met with President Kennedy. The march was successful beyond their wildest dreams and they used its power to push for a stronger civil rights bill.

Kennedy said of the march: "One cannot help but be impressed with the deep fervor and the quiet dignity that characterized the thousands who have gathered in the nation's capital from

across the country to demonstrate their faith and confidence in our democratic form of government..."

News of the peaceful, powerful march, and the words of the speakers, spread across the nation and the world. The march delivered a blow to segregation and the old order in the South from which it would never recover.

Resource: The Our Documents site of the National Archives includes the official March on Washington program available at www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=96.



"I Have a Dream"

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his historic "I Have a Dream" speech in front of hundreds of thousands of participants at the "March on Washington." At the end of his speech, he preached these words about his dream for America. Full text at: www.archives.gov/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of



our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania! Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado! Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California! But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia! Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that 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!"

Sixteenth Street Church Bombing

They called him Dynamite Bob. Robert Edward Chambliss, a Birmingham truck driver, was a member of the Alabama Ku Klux Klan. He stood outside the Sixteenth Street Church on September 15, 1963. The church had been the rallying point against Bull Connors police dogs and fire hoses.

It was only 18 days after the euphoric March on Washington and four hundred worshippers were at the church. There were four children in the basement changing their clothes.

At about 10:20 AM, fifteen sticks dynamite blew apart the basement, instantly killing Carole Robertson, Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley (ages 14), and Denise McNair (age 11), and injuring 20 others.

It took several years before Chambliss was convicted of

participating in the bombing.

Addie was standing by the window. Denise McNair asked Addie to tie the sash on her dress. I started to look toward them just to see them, but by the time I went to turn my head that way there was a loud noise. I didn't know what it was. I called out Addie's name about three or four times, but she didn't answer. All of a sudden, I heard a man outside holler, "Someone just bombed the 16th Street church." He came in, picked me up in his arms, and carried me out of the church. They took me over to the hospital... The doctor told me after they operated on my face that I had about 22 shards of glass in my face. When it was all over with, they took the patches off my eye and I had lost my right eye, and I could barely see out of my left eye. I stayed in the hospital about two and a half months. — Sarah J. Rudolph, older sister of Addie Mae Collins



The 24th Amendment

Poll taxes, fees that had to be paid in order to vote, were used in the South to discourage blacks from voting. In 1964, five states still retained a poll tax: Virginia, Alabama, Texas, Arkansas, and Mississippi. The 24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ratified January 23, 1964, states: The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax. Unfortunately southern poll taxes continued to be used to limit the black vote in elections for state and local officials.

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, signed into law by President Johnson on July 2, 1964, was a revolutionary piece of legislation in the United States that effectively outlawed egregious forms of discrimination against African Americans and women, including all forms of segregation. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 terminated unequal application in regards to voter registration requirements and all forms of racial segregation in schools, in the workplace and by facilities that offered services to the general public.

Title provisions of the Act

Title I: Barred unequal application of voter registration requirements and required that all voting rules and procedures be uniform regardless of race. Literacy tests were still allowed.

Title II: Outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion or national origin in hotels, motels, restaurants, theaters, and all other public accommodations engaged in interstate commerce; exempted private clubs without defining the term "private."

Title III: Prohibited state and municipal governments from denying access to public facilities on grounds of race, color, religion or national origin.

Title IV: Encouraged the desegregation of public schools and authorized the U.S. Attorney General to file suits to enforce said act.

Title V: Expanded the Civil Rights Commission established by the earlier Civil Rights Act of 1957 with additional powers, rules and procedures.

Title VI: Prevents discrimination by government agencies that receive federal funds. If an agency is found in violation of Title VI, that agency may lose its federal



President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and hands the pen to Martin Luther King, Jr.

funding.

Title VII: Prohibited discrimination by employers on the basis of color, race, sex, national origin, or religion.

Full text of Civil Rights Act of 1964 at:
www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=97

Freedom Summer

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) with CORE, the NAACP, and other civil-rights groups organized a massive African American voter registration drive in Mississippi known as "Freedom Summer" and the "Summer Project."

Over 1,000 out-of-state volunteers participated in Freedom Summer alongside thousands of black Mississippians. Most of the volunteers were young, most of them from the North, 90 percent were white and many were Jewish.

Organizers focused on Mississippi because it had the lowest percentage of African Americans registered to vote in the country, in 1962 only 7%. Many of Mississippi's white residents deeply resented the outsiders and any attempt to change their society. Locals routinely harassed volunteers. Newspapers called them "unshaven and unwashed trash." Their presence in local black communities sparked drive-by shootings, Molotov cocktails, and constant harassment. State and local governments, police, the White Citizens' Council and



the Ku Klux Klan used murder, arrests, beatings, arson, spying, firing, evictions, and other forms of intimidation to oppose the project and prevent blacks from registering to vote for achieving social equality. Over the course of the ten-week project:

- Four civil rights workers were killed & four critically wounded
- 80 Freedom Summer workers were beaten
- 1,062 people were arrested (volunteers and locals)
- 37 churches & 30 black homes and businesses were bombed or burned.



Until then I'd never heard of no mass meeting and I didn't know that a Negro could register and vote. Bob Moses, Reggie Robinson, Jim Bevel and James Forman were some of the SNCC workers who ran that meeting. When they

asked for those to raise their hands who'd go down to the courthouse the next day, I raised mine. Had it up as high as I could get it. I guess if I'd had any sense I'd a-been a little scared, but what was the point of being scared? The only thing they could do to me was kill me and it seemed like they'd been trying to do that a little bit at a time ever since I could remember

— Fannie Lou Hamer

Mississippi Burning

In Neshoba County, near Philadelphia, Miss., the bodies of three civil-rights workers—two white, one black—were found in an earthen dam, six weeks into a federal investigation backed by President Johnson. James E. Chaney, 21; Andrew Goodman, 21; and Michael Schwerner, 24, had been working to register black voters in Mississippi.

On June 21, 1964, they had gone to investigate the burning of a black church. They were arrested by the police on suspicion of arson, incarcerated for several hours, and then released after dark into the hands of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), who murdered them. Their bodies, beaten and shot, were recovered August 4.

Freedom Summer's Effect

Freedom Summer had a significant effect on the course of the Civil Rights Movement. It helped

break down the decades of isolation and repression that were the foundation of the Jim Crow system. Before Freedom Summer, the national news media paid little attention to the persecution of black voters in the Deep South and the dangers endured by black civil rights workers, but when the lives of affluent northern white students were threatened, the full attention of the media spotlight was turned on the state. This evident disparity between the value that the media placed on the lives of whites compared with blacks embittered many black activists. However, the volunteers consider that summer as one of the defining moments of their lives

In the five years following Freedom Summer, black voter registration in Mississippi rose from a mere 7 percent to 67 percent.

"We had a system where people were to call in every half hour or call at appointed times. And if the call didn't come, then within 15 minutes, whoever was receiving the call-ins was supposed to call the Jackson, MS [main] office. We had a security system we would then put into operation, which involved calling the FBI and calling the Justice Department and calling the local police... So we did that...and nothing was happening. ... We assumed that they were in real danger or dead. We...anticipated...violence, but I remember thinking, 'Boy, they [KKK] are really quick.' We had a lot of fear."

— Sandra Cason (Source: *Voices of Freedom*, Bantam, New York, 1990, p. 188-189.)

MISSING CALL FBI

THE FBI IS SEEKING INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DISAPPEARANCE AT PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI OF THESE THREE INDIVIDUALS ON JUNE 21, 1964. EXTENSIVE INVESTIGATION IS BEING CONDUCTED TO LOCATE GOODMAN, CHANEY, AND SCHWERNER, WHO ARE DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

ANDREW GOODMAN	JAMES EARL CHANEY	MICHAEL HERBERT SCHWERNER
		
NAME: White DOB: November 22, 1942 POB: New York City AGE: 21 years HT/WT: 5'10" / 170 pounds HAIR: Dark brown wavy EYES: Brown SCARS: None	NAME: Negro DOB: May 25, 1941 POB: New York City AGE: 23 years HT/WT: 5'7" / 175 to 180 pounds HAIR: Brown EYES: Green SCARS: Small scar on forehead	NAME: White DOB: November 6, 1939 POB: New York City AGE: 24 years HT/WT: 5'9" to 5'10" / 170 to 180 pounds HAIR: Brown EYES: Light blue SCARS: None

SHOULD YOU HAVE OR IN THE FUTURE RECEIVE ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WHEREABOUTS OF THESE INDIVIDUALS, YOU ARE REQUESTED TO NOTIFY ME OR THE NEAREST OFFICE OF THE FBI. TELEPHONE NUMBER IS LISTED BELOW.

DIRECTOR
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535
 TELEPHONE: NATIONAL 5242

Andrew Goodman, James Chaney, and Michael Schwerner

Bloody Sunday

The Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960 were aimed at supporting the rights of African Americans to vote. Black voter registration was low in southern states and counties due to discriminatory practices employed such as poll taxes and qualifying tests. Selma, in Dallas County, Alabama had a history of opposition to black voters' rights with only 2% of black residents registered to vote.

Reverend King, the SNCC, and the SCLC were invited by the Dallas County Voters' League, run by local black activists Amelia and Samuel Boynton, to make Selma a national focal point for a campaign for a strong federal voting rights statute.



Marchers Crossing the Edmund-Pettus Bridge, Sunday, March 7, 1965
 Credit: Library of Congress, New York World-Telegram and Sun Collection



Images of civil rights marchers in Selma being beaten by Alabama police March 7, 1965 horrified many Americans, including President Lyndon B. Johnson.
 Credit: Library of Congress

King and the other civil rights advocates knew Selma would prove a challenge because of the short temper of local Sheriff James G. Clark, Jr. They also knew his hostile tactics would increase news coverage and outrage across the country. Clark did not disappoint them.

As part of their efforts, they also engaged officials in the neighboring Town of Marion in Perry County. At a civil rights march there on February 18, 1965, an Alabama State Trooper shot and killed a black participant, Jimmy Lee Jackson.

Civil rights activists thought that a fitting response to his death would be a mass pilgrimage from Selma to the Alabama state capitol in Montgomery.

The 600 marchers started out on Sunday, March 7, 1965 led by SCLC Hosea Williams and SNCC chairman John Lewis. (King was preaching at his church in Atlanta.) When they reached the

other side of the Pettus Bridge on the edge of downtown Selma, they were blocked by scores of Sheriff Clark's lawmen and Alabama state troopers.

The marchers were instructed to turn around and walk back to Selma. When they didn't move they were attacked. Fifty marchers were hospitalized after police used tear gas, whips, clubs, and mounted horsemen against them. The gruesome incident was dubbed "Bloody Sunday" by the media and led to outrage across the country.

"The first 10 or 20 Negroes were swept to the ground screaming, arms and legs flying and packs and bags went skittering across the grassy divider strip and on to the pavement on both sides." The New York Times reported on March 8, 1965. "Those still on their feet retreated. The troopers continued pushing, using both the force of their bodies and the prodding of their nightsticks." The Times also described a makeshift hospital near the local church: "Negroes lay on the floors and chairs, many weeping and moaning."

Two weeks later on Sunday, March 21, after court approval for the march and with federalized National Guard troops for safety, a larger march of 3,200 started from Selma to Montgomery (the numbers were reduced to 300 along the way for practical issues of food and shelter). After walking 10 miles a day, sometimes in heavy rain, and camping in open fields in simple tents, they reached Montgomery four days later on March 25th, where they held a rally on the steps of the state capitol.

John Lewis said of the march: "I think we all walked those days with a sense of pride and...dignity. ...To me there was never a march like this one before, and there hasn't been one since."

The march is considered the catalyst for pushing through the Voting Rights Act of 1965 five months later.

Voting Rights Act of 1965



President Lyndon B. Johnson shakes hands with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. after signing the Voting Rights Act.

In a landmark victory in African Americans' quest for freedom and equality, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law on August 6, 1965. It prohibited the

denial or restriction of the right to vote, and forbade discriminatory voting practices nationwide such as forcing would-be voters to pass qualifying tests in order to vote.

Section 2 of the Act states: No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.

Read the Voting Rights Act of 1965 at:

www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=100

Martin Luther King, Jr., Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

On October 14, 1964, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was named the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. The October 15 New York Times quoted the civil rights leader: "I do not consider this merely an honor to me personally, but a tribute to the disciplined, wise restraint and majestic courage of



gallant Negro and white persons of goodwill who have followed a nonviolent course in seeking to establish a reign of justice and a rule of love across this nation of ours."

Black Power

Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and the Black Panthers

Not all African Americans were content with Martin Luther King's nonviolent approach to desegregation. Some thought that King's ways was too slow or not forceful enough. They wanted real change as quickly as possible. They thought an in-your-face approach would tell white people that they weren't going to settle for anything less than equal rights.



Malcolm X

Malcolm X

Malcolm Little (later Malcolm X and El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) was born in Omaha, Nebraska on May 19, 1925. At the time, Marcus Garvey's Back to Africa Movement was gaining momentum. Malcolm's father Earl was a Baptist minister who vocally supported Garvey's Black Nationalist move-

When my mother was pregnant with me, she told me later, a party of hooded Ku Klux Klan riders galloped up to our home... Brandishing their shotguns and rifles, they shouted for my father to come out. — Malcolm X

ment. Under the climate of racial repression in the 1920s, Little's father received death threats from the white supremacist group the Black Legion.

In 1929, the Little's home in Lansing, Michigan was burnt to the ground by the KKK. Two years later Earl Little's body was recovered across town on trolley tracks. Malcolm's mother, Louise, was devastated emotionally and the children were sent to live in foster homes and orphanages.

Despite these extreme hardships, Malcolm was a bright student who was elected class president. Yet over time he was discouraged by some teachers, including one who told him his dream of being a lawyer would never come true. He dropped out of school, moved to Boston to live with his half-sister, and got caught up in a life of crime; he was eventually arrested and convicted of burglary and sentenced to 10 years in prison in 1946.

In prison, Malcolm learned about the teachings of the Nation of Islam (NOI), led by Elijah

Power in defense of freedom is greater than power in behalf of tyranny and oppression, because power, real power, comes from our conviction which produces action, uncompromising action. — Malcolm X

Muhammad. Malcolm became a devoted follower of the NOI. He read widely during his time in prison, becoming familiar with religious and



Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X

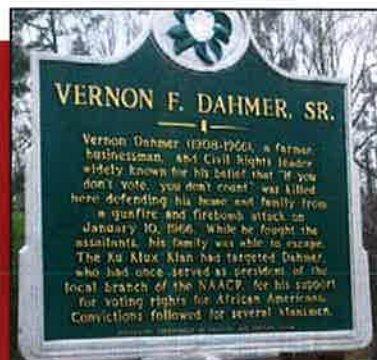
philosophical texts as well as history. He was paroled from prison in 1952 and took the surname "X" rather than keep what he left was a last name rooted in the legacy of slavery. He rose quickly into leadership roles in the NOI, moving to Harlem and serving as minister of Temple No. 7 there. He developed a scathing critique of white society and also of the mainstream Civil Rights Movement. Following from the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, he stressed the importance of blacks forming their own organizations and defending themselves against violence "by any means necessary." Malcolm

Vernon Dahmer, Sr.

My brother Dennis came and woke me up. He told me the house was on fire and he got me out of there. The house was engulfed in flames. My father was covered with smoke and soot, skin was hanging off his arms. My aunt carried him to the hospital. We waited for the fire truck to get there; it took about 35 or 45 minutes to get there and it was just six miles away. Let's just put it this way, they weren't in any hurry to get there. I knew what we were doing about

voter registration, but it never occurred to me that something like this would happen. We were just trying to help other people. — Harold Dahmer (Source: www.loc.gov/exhibits/civilrights/exhibit.html)

Harold had just returned home from the Army when the Ku Klux Klan firebombed his family's home in 1966. His father, Vernon



Dahmer, Sr., a voting rights activist, was severely burned and died from his injuries.

"The common goal of 22 million Afro-Americans is respect as human beings, the God-given right to be a human being. Our common goal is to obtain the human rights that America has been denying us. We can never get civil rights in America until our human rights are first restored. We will never be recognized as citizens there until we are first recognized as humans." — "Malcolm X, "Racism: the Cancer that is Destroying America," in Egyptian Gazette, Aug. 25 1964

X said, "Concerning nonviolence, it is criminal to teach a man not to defend himself when he is the constant victim of brutal attacks."

He adopted many of the tenets of the NOI, avoiding alcohol and drugs, and focusing on leadership. He married Betty Dean Sanders (Shabazz) in 1958, and traveled widely through the world including to Egypt, Nigeria and Ghana. A charismatic leader, Malcolm helped establish new mosques in several cities and became well-known by early 1960s.

But tensions between Malcolm and Elijah Muhammad developed as Malcolm became more and more popular; it was Malcolm who was credited with boosting membership in the NOI from 500 in 1952 to approximately 30,000 in 1963. By 1964, Malcolm left the NOI and established a new

organization called the Muslim Mosque, Inc. That year, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca and adopted the name El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. This journey was transformative. Upon his return, Malcolm adopted a message of unity and diversity for the world's peoples, creating an organization called the Organization of Afro-American Unity.

Malcolm planned to file a petition with the United Nations detailing the human rights violations against African Americans. His plans were cut short, however, when he was shot with gunmen connected to the NOI on February 21, 1965 at the Audubon Ballroom in New York City. He was dead at the age of 39, leaving behind his wife Betty and four children. Regardless of what people thought of him, few could deny that Malcolm X played a key role in the dialogue about race relations in the United States.



Stokely Carmichael

On June 16, 1966, Stokely Carmichael, the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), spoke at a

rally in Greenwood, Mississippi, and argued for Black Power. Carmichael defined this as "a call for black people in this country to unite, to recognize their heritage, and to build a sense of community". Carmichael also advocated that African Americans should form and lead their own organizations. The NAACP condemned "Black Power" as a "menace to peace and prosperity...no Negro who is fighting for civil rights can support black power, which is opposed to civil rights and integration." Martin Luther King believed that the term "Black Power" was "unfortunate because it tends to give the impression of black nationalism...black supremacy would be as

evil as white supremacy." Stokely Carmichael also adopted the slogan of "Black is Beautiful" and advocated a mood of black pride and a rejection of white values of style and appearance. This included adopting Afro hairstyles and African forms of dress. Due to his radical approach, he was replaced at SNCC and joined the Black Panther Party, which better fit his growing militant viewpoint. Carmichael eventually left America to live in Guinea, Africa. He continued to attack the evils of white power and the business system of America. Over time he faded from the news and died of cancer in 1988.

Black Panther Party

The Watts Riots in of 1965 revealed the anger and frustration of blacks in Los Angeles, and California, who were discriminated against for jobs, housing, and in politics. The police also used fear and intimidation to control blacks similar to the South. A police arrest was the catalyst for the riots. The six days of rioting by nearly 35,000 people from August 11 to 17, 1965 resulted in 34 deaths, 1,032 injuries, 3,438 arrests, and over \$50 million in property damage.

In 1966 Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, two students at Merritt College in Oakland, California, started the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. Focused on revolutionary nationalism and self-defense the Party aims were: self-determination, exemption of blacks from the military draft, and end to police brutality and murder.

Newton said, "We had seen Watts rise up... seen the police attack the Watts community after causing the trouble in the first place. We had seen Martin Luther King come to Watts in an effort to

calm the people, and we had seen his philosophy of nonviolence rejected. Black people had been taught nonviolence; it was deep in us. What good, however was nonviolence when the police were determined to rule by force? We had seen all this, and we recognized that the rising consciousness of Black people was almost at the point of explosion... Out of this sprang the Black Panther Party."

The Party's initial focus was on the activities and behavior of the Oakland Police Department toward blacks. They gained national attention when they walked into the California Capitol building carrying shotguns and pistols to protest gun legislation prohibiting the carrying of loaded guns. Party members were known for carrying guns in black neighborhoods to support self-defense.

Eldridge Cleaver, a radical activist, joined the Party in 1967, and became the chief publicist. His goal: "I wanted to send waves of consternation through the white race." (Years later, after leaving



Black Panther Party founders Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton stand in the street armed with a Colt .45 and a shotgun.

October 1966

Black Panther Party Platform and Program

What we want
What we believe

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our Black Community.
4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of the decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.
6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people.
8. We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.
10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

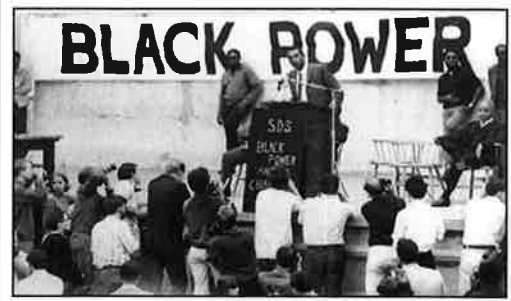
Source: Seize the Time

JUSTIN STAHLMAN/Collegian

the country to avoid criminal charges, he returned as a Christian anti-communist and became a Republican Party member.)

In addition to being known for its revolution-

ary rhetoric and violence, the Panthers became a national organization that operated food, education, and healthcare programs in poor African American communities.



"Black Power" Speech

Stokely Carmichael, July 28, 1966

There is a psychological war going on in this country and it's whether or not black people are going to be able to use the terms they want about their movement without white people's blessing. We have to tell them we are going to use the term "Black Power" and we are going to define it because Black Power speaks to us. ... We are going to build a movement in this country based on the color of our skins that is going to free us from our oppressors and we have to do that ourselves.

Everybody in this country is for "Freedom Now" but not everybody is for Black Power ... We have got to get us some Black Power. We don't control anything but what white people say we can control. We have to be able to smash any political machine in the country that's oppressing us and bring it to its knees... That's Black Power!

Excerpt - Full text at:

www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3401804839.html

Loving v. Virginia Supreme Court Decision

Interracial Marriage Under Jim Crow

In the South, Jim Crow laws and discrimination controlled every aspect of black life including marriage. Most southern states had laws forbidding inter-racial marriage.

In Florida the statute stated: "All marriages between a white person and a Negro, or between a white person and a person of Negro descent to the fourth generation inclusive, are hereby forever prohibited." Virginia had a similar law, which included a provision banning interracial couples who married in another state from returning to Virginia.

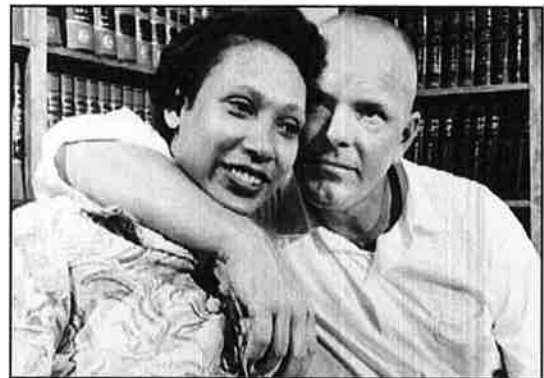
In 1958, deeply in love, a couple from Virginia, Mildred Jeter, a black woman, and Richard Loving, a white man, were married in the District of Columbia. The Lovings returned to Virginia, where they were charged with violating the state's statute banning interracial marriages. The Lovings were found guilty and sentenced to a year in jail. The trial judge agreed to suspend the sentence if the Lovings would leave Virginia and not return for 25 years.

To avoid jail, the Loving's agreed to leave Virginia and relocate to Washington, D.C. where they lived for 5 years and Richard worked as a bricklayer. The couple had three children. Yet they longed to return home to their family and friends in Caroline County, VA.

That's when the couple contacted Bernard Cohen, a young attorney who was volunteering at the ACLU. They requested that Cohen ask the Caroline County judge to reconsider his decision.

"They just were in love with one another and wanted the right to live together as husband and wife in Virginia, without any interference from officialdom. When I told Richard that this case was, in all likelihood, going to go to the Supreme Court of the United States, he became wide-eyed and his jaw dropped," Cohen recalled.

Cohen and another lawyer challenged the Lovings' conviction, but the original judge in the case upheld his decision. Judge Leon Bazile wrote: "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. ...The fact that he sepa-



rated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix."

The case was appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which on June 12, 1967 ruled unanimously in the Loving Decision, declaring that laws prohibiting interracial marriage are unconstitutional.

After the ruling, the Lovings moved back to Caroline County, VA to be near their families. Richard's life was cut short in a car accident in 1975.

(Source: NPR)

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Assassinated

Shortly after 6 p.m. on April 4, 1968, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was fatally shot at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn.

The day before, on the eve of a protest march for striking garbage workers in Memphis, Tenn., King gave his darkly prescient speech, "I've Been To The Mountaintop".

"Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with

you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land. And I'm happy, tonight, I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

(Full text at: <http://drmartinlutherkingjr.com>)

King received death threats constantly due to his prominence in the civil rights movement. He believed, and taught, that murder could not stop the struggle for equal rights. After the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy, he told his wife Coretta: "This is what is going to happen to me also. I keep telling you, this is a sick society."

James Earl Ray pleaded guilty to the crime in March 1969 and was sentenced to 99 years in prison.



The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate.... Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

(Excerpt from "Where Do We Go From Here?" Delivered at the 11th Annual SCLC Convention, August 16 1967)

Civil Rights Today



Great strides have been made in advancing the civil rights of African Americans. The 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution permanently provided freedom, citizenship rights, and the right to vote. Subsequent acts of Congress, provided greater civil liberties, due

process, equal protection under the laws, and freedom from discrimination and the rights to full legal, social, and economic equality.

The African American Civil Rights Movement led to great transformation in American society and also helped provide inspiration and blueprints for other movements among immigrants, Latinos, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, women, and gays and lesbians, among others. Americans from all backgrounds, including first generation immigrants, have used the organizing principals and tactics of the Civil Rights Movement to create their own social justice movements.

In 2008, and again in 2012, Barack Obama was elected as the 44th President of the United States of America. He opened his victory speech with these words, "If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer."

Despite these advances in American race

relations, inequalities continue. The 1954 Supreme Court Brown Decision aimed to eliminate segregation and the unequal status of education across the nation. Yet many schools in poor inner-city and rural neighborhoods are as segregated and unequal today as during the civil rights movement.

Today, many civil rights organizations continue to fight for equality for all Americans, regardless of race. Closing the digital divide, providing equal access to education and healthcare, and ensuring voting rights are among the key issues that continue to be debated today. The effort to ensure equal rights for all Americans is on-going.

Civil Rights Movement: Broadening the Lens

Extended Activity: From the suffragettes to the American Indian Movement to the Gay Rights Movement, there are many other groups of people who have fought for civil rights in America. Choose any other movement for civil rights or equality and research this issue or movement. Use the library and as many primary sources as possible in your research. Present your research to your class in a PowerPoint presentation, a short video, or any other format.