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Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Speech at Illinois Wesleyan University, 1966

President Bertholf and 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 have the privilege of coming once more to the campus of Illinois Wesleyan and the privilege of sharing with you in your lecture series. And I certainly want to express my appreciation to you for extending the invitation. I must apologize for being a little late getting here this evening, it so happened that we had a very important meeting in Chicago. And it was raining a little when we left Chicago and we were moving from the meeting where I had to speak, to get to the airport and my assistant, the Reverend Bernard Lee who is here, was driving us along and I noticed the car skipping around a bit in the midst of this rather slippery pavement. I had to say to Bernard to slow up a little bit. And I followed that up by saying that I would rather be Martin Luther King late than the late Martin Luther King.

But we are here and delighted to be here as your distinguished President has said, we are happy to be accompanied by Mrs. King, whom you have already met, and also by my dearest friend and close associate and perennial jail mate, the Reverend Dr. Ralph David Abernathy and his wife, to my left. You may stand.

There is a desperate and innocent poignant question on the lips of hundreds and thousands, yea millions of people all over our nation and all over the world. I get it a great deal as I journey around the country and other places and I am sure this question is on the lips of many here tonight. It is the question, are we really making any progress in race relations? I think that there are basically three answers that can be given to this question. One is the answer of extreme optimism. Now the extreme optimist would say in substance that we are making marvelous strides in race relations. They would point joyously to the marvelous developments that have taken place over the last few decades in terms of legislative advances. And from this they would conclude that the problem is just about solved now and that we can sit down comfortably on the wayside and wait on the coming of the inevitable. The second position that can be taken is that of extreme pessimism. The extreme pessimist would say that we have made only minor strides in race relations. They would contend that the deep rumblings of discontent that we hear over the nation, the resurgence of the Klu Klux Klan in some sections of the South and other sections of the North, and the rebirth of white citizens councils, all indicative of the fact that we have created many more problems than we have solved. And from this they would go on to argue that there can really be no real progress in race relations. And it is very interesting to notice that the extreme optimist and the extreme pessimist agree on at least one point. And that is that we can sit down and do nothing in this all-important area. The extreme optimist says do nothing because integration is inevitable. The extreme pessimist says do nothing because integration is impossible. But there is a third position that can be taken, namely the realistic position. The realist in race relations trying to answer the question of progress would seek to combine the trues of two opposites, while avoiding the extremes of both. And so the realist would agree with the optimist that we have come a long, long way, but he would seek to balance that by agreeing with the pessimist in that we have a long, long way to go. And it is this realistic position that I would

like to take as a basis for our thinking together this evening as we deal with the question of progress in race relations, and as we deal with the whole question of the future of integration. We have come a long, long way, but we have a long, long way to go before the problem is solved.

Now let us notice first that we have made meaningful strides. I think I should point out that the Negro himself has come a long, long way in reevaluating his own intrinsic worth. In order to illustrate this, a little history is necessary. You will remember that it was in the year 1619 when the first Negro slaves landed on the shores of this nation. They were brought here from the shores of Africa. Unlike the pilgrim fathers who landed at Plymouth a year later, they were brought here against their wills. Throughout slavery the Negro was treated in a very inhuman fashion. He was a thing to be used, not a person to be respected. The famous Dred Scott decision of 1857 well illustrated the status of the Negro during slavery. For in this decision, the Supreme Court of our nation said in substance that the Negro is not a citizen of the United States, he is merely property subject to the dictates of his owner. And it went on to say that the Negro has no rights that the white man is bound to respect. And with the growth of slavery, it became necessary to give some justification for it. It seems to be a fact of life that human beings cannot continue to do wrong without eventually reaching out for some thin rationalization to clothe an obvious truth, a wrong rather in the beautiful garments of righteousness. And this is exactly what happened. Even religion and the Bible were misused in order to crystallize the patterns of the status quo and justify the whole system of slavery. And so it was argued by some that the Negro was inferior by nature because of Noah's curse upon the children of Hamm, the Apostle Paul's victim became a watchword, servants be obedient to your master. Then one brother had probably read the logic of the great philosopher, Aristotle. You will remember that Aristotle did a great deal to bring into being what we now know as formal logic in philosophy. Formal logic has a big word known as dysteleogism. And dysteleogism has a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion. And so this brother decided to put his argument of the inferiority of the Negro in the framework of an Aristotelian syllogism. He came out with his major premise, all men are made in the image of God and then came his minor premise, God as everybody knows is not a Negro, therefore, the Negro is not a man. This is the kind of reasoning that prevailed.

While living with the system of slavery and then later segregation, many Negroes lost faith in themselves. Many came to feel that perhaps they were less than human. But then something happened to the Negro and circumstances made it possible and necessary for him to travel more—the coming of the automobile, the upheavals of two world wars, a great depression. And so his rural plantation background gradually gave way to urban industrial life. Even his economic life was gradually rising through the growth of industry, the influence of organized labor, expanded educational opportunities. And even his cultural life was gradually rising through the steady decline of crippling illiteracy. All of these forces conjoined to cause the Negro to take a new look at himself. Negro masses all over began to re-evaluate themselves. And the Negro came to feel that he was somebody. His religion revealed to him that God loves all of His children and that all men are made in His image. And that the basic thing about a man is not his specificity but his fundamentum, not the texture of his hair or the color of his skin, but his eternal dignity and worth. And so the Negro could now unconsciously cry out with the eloquent port, 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, the mind is the standard of the man. With this new sense of dignity and this new sense of self-respect, a new Negro came into being with a new determination to struggle, to suffer and to sacrifice in order to be free. And so in a real sense, we've come a long, long way since 1619. But not only has the Negro himself come a long, long way in reevaluating his own intrinsic worth. If we are to be true to the facts, we must say that the whole nation has come a long, long way in extending the frontiers of civil rights. There are so many things we could point to. As one who has lived in the South all my life, I can certainly point to this because it is so easy to see the change. Thirty years ago, even 25 years ago, a year hardly passed when numerous Negroes were not brutally lynched in the South by some vicious mob. But lynchings have about ceased today. At the turn of the century there were very few Negroes registered to vote in the South. By 1948 that number had leaped to about 750,000, by 1960 it had leaped to 1,300,000, by 1964 it had leaped to 2,000,196. And the Supreme Court of our nation rendered a decision known as the Plessy vs. Ferguson decision which established a doctrine of separate but equal as the law of the land. Of course we all know what happened as a result of the Plessy Doctrine. There was always a strict enforcement of the separate without the slightest intention to abide by the equal. The Negro ended up being plunged into the abyss of exploitation, where he experienced the bleakness of nag and injustice. Then in 1954 the Supreme Court of our nation examined the legal body of segregation and on May 17 of that year, pronounced it constitutionally dead. It said in substance that the old Plessy Doctrine must go, that separate facilities are inherently unequal and that to segregate a child on the basis of his race is to deny that child equal protection of the law. And so since that that decision we have seen many significant developments. Along with that we have seen other legislative developments which have brought us nearer to the goal of justice. In 1964 President Johnson signed a comprehensive civil rights bill which had been so ably recommended by the late President Kennedy. Then in 1965 President Johnson signed the new voting rights bill, which is now the law of the land. All of these things are significant. And so in a real sense, to put it figuratively in biblical language, we have broken lose from the Egypt of slavery and we have moved through the wilderness of separate but equal and now we stand on the border of the promised land of integration. And we have come a long, long way since 1896.

Now this would be a wonderful place for me to bring an end to my talk tonight. First, it would mean making a short speech and that would be a magnificent accomplishment for a Baptist preacher. But that would mean that the problem is about solved in America and that we really have nothing to be concerned about, we don't have much work to do. And it would be a marvelous thing if every speaker was able to talk about this problem in terms of a problem that once existed, but that no longer has existence. But I'm afraid if I stop now I will not be telling the total truth. I would be stating a fact, certainly, but not the whole truth. You see a fact is merely the absence of contradiction, but truth is the presence of coherence. Truth is the relatedness of facts. Now it is a fact that we have come a long, long way, but in order to get the whole truth, we've got to bring the other side into being. And if I stop at this point, I will leave you the victims of a dangerous optimism. If I stop here, I will allow us to end up with an illusion wrapped in superficiality. So in order to tell the truth, it is necessary to move on and say not only have we come a long, long way, but we have a long, long way to go all over America before the dream of brotherhood, before the ideal of integration is a reality. Now we need not look very far to make this point. We need only open our eyes, read our newspapers, look at our televisions and look around in our communities. And we know that we are not yet at the point where we

can boast of clean hands in the area of brotherhood. I mentioned the fact that lynchings have about ceased, but other things are happening, just as tragic. I can remind you of a fact tonight that over the last 18 months more than 13 or 14 Negro and white civil rights workers have been brutally murdered all across the South. And if one would look at the jury system, look at the courts, you would soon discover that in most cases nobody has even been convicted for all of these murders. This reveals that we have a long, long way to go. I mention the fact that we have made strides in voter registration and we have a new voting rights bill and this is marvelous. But there are still areas where Negroes who seek to register and vote confront economic reprisals and I submit to you tonight that in places like Lawrence County in Alabama, numerous counties in Mississippi, people have been put off, thrown off the land and put out of their little humble dwelling places, simply because they went down on the basis of the new voting rights bill and sought to register and become citizens by being registered voters.

This tells us that we have a long, long way to go. I mention the economic area and that figure \$30 billion sounded big. We must see the other side and that is a painful tragic side. And that is the fact that 42 percent of the Negro families of our country still earn less than \$2,000 a year, while just 16 percent of white families earn less than \$2,000 a year. Some 20 percent of the Negro families of our country earn less than \$1,000 a year, while just 5 percent of the white families earn less than \$1,000 a year. Eighty-eight percent of the Negro families of our country earn less than \$5,000 a year, while just 58 percent of white families earn less than \$5,000 a year. And so the Negro finds himself perishing on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. And the problem is becoming even more difficult today. For years we have been victimized with discrimination in many areas and on many levels, denied apprenticeship training, deprived of educational opportunities, facing discrimination in so many areas and this meant that so often we were limited to unskilled and semi-skilled labor. And now because automation and cybernation have come into being, these are the jobs that are passing away. And so while the nation stands in its most prosperous period, while the nation faces its lowest level of unemployment that it has over the last seven or eight years, unemployment among Negroes is at its highest level. And while the average for the nation is still around 4 percent and we turn to the Negro community the unemployment rate at times goes as high as 14 percent, which means there is a major depression within the Negro community economically. Now we can see the problems that this would bring about when people are deprived of economic security. They are deprived of the opportunity to educate their children. They are deprived of opportunity of getting proper medical care. They are deprived of the opportunity of being able to live in decent housing situations. They are deprived of the opportunity of having the basic necessities of life. And finally, they are deprived of the opportunity of respecting themselves. And so often out of self-hatred and out of embarrassment and out of humiliation, they lose motivation. And it is not enough to look at the effects of discrimination. It is necessary for a concerned and compassionate nation to look at the cause or the basis of the whole problem. For instance, there are those who can argue item for item about the fact that the Negro is culturally behind. And so they say we must not integrate certain areas of life whether it is in housing or schools or what have you, because the Negro is so far behind that he will pull the white race a generation behind.

And they go on to say you know the Negro is a criminal. He has the highest crime rate in any community. The arguments go on and on and on and on. Well if there are lagging standards in

the Negro community, and there certainly are, they lag because of segregation and discrimination. Criminal responses are environmental and not racial. Poverty, ignorance, social isolation, economic deprivation, breed crime whatever the racial group may be and it is a torturous logic to use the tragic results of segregation as an argument for the continuation of it. It is necessary for a great and a concerned nation to go back to the cause or basis for the problem. And we have a long, long way to go in order to make economic justice a reality all over this country. It means that there must be massive programs, training programs and massive public works programs in order to get the jobless on the job. And so that people can work, so that they are able to walk the earth with dignity and make an adequate income and they can stand before their families with that kind of creativity and that kind of creative response that will make the family a real and meaningful unit. And so in the economic area, we still have a long, long way to go. I mention the fact that we have come a long, long way in ending legal segregation. But I must point out the other side. If I can put it in figurative language, it may be true that the system of segregation is on its deathbed, but history has proven that social systems always have a last minute, a strong breathing power. And the guardians of the status quo are always on hand with their oxygen tents to keep the old order alive. And so in a sense segregation is still with us. Not in the open sense that it used to be with us, with legal sanction, but in the covert, in the subtle, in the defacto sense. And so even in the major cities of our country outside of the South, there is absolute segregation in so many situations. The Negro finds himself hovered up in crowded ghettos. And these ghettos are usually absolutely segregated. The Negro finds himself attending segregated schools which are almost always inadequately staffed, devoid of quality education. And then as we look into the whole problem of slum life, the total mental outlook of the individuals who live in the slums, we see deprivation, we see the destruction of personality. And all of these things reveal that before brotherhood is a reality, there is much that must be done.

So segregation is still with us. But if democracy is to live, segregation must die. For racial segregation is a consentient body politic which must be removed before our moral health can be realized. And we don't have long to do this. It is urgent to do it now because the shape of the world today no longer affords us the luxury of an anemic democracy. And we must not only do it because it will help the image of the United States, and it will certainly do that. We must not only solve this problem because it will be diplomatically expedient. We must not only seek to solve this problem because it will help us to appeal to Asian and African peoples, and it will certainly do that. We must not only seek to solve this problem to meet the communist challenge, and it will certainly do that. But in the final analysis, racial discrimination must be uprooted from American society because it is morally wrong. It must be uprooted from American society because it is sinful. And somewhere we have seen in all of the major religious faiths something that tells us that there is something immoral and sinful about segregation and discrimination. The late, great Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber used to talk about the I-it and I-thou relationship. And I say segregation is wrong because it substitutes an I-it relationship for the I-thou relationship. St. Thomas Aquinas used to talk about natural law and moral law and human law. And I say that segregation is wrong because it is based on human laws that are out of harmony with the natural, and the moral and eternal laws of the universe. Somewhere the late Protestant theologian, Paul Tillich, said that sin is separation. And what is segregation but an acquiescent affirmation of man's tragic estrangement, his terrible separation, his awful sinfulness. And the great challenge facing the nation today is to get rid of a system that is evil

and that is morally wrong. Now in order to get rid of this system, it will be necessary to develop massive action programs. The problem will not work itself out. In order to develop massive action programs, we've got to get rid of one or two myths that are quite prevalent and that we hear a great deal around various communities. One is what I often speak of as the myth of time. I'm sure that you've heard this. This is the argument that only time can solve the problem of racial injustice. Only time can bring integration into being. And so those who set forth this argument tend to say to the Negro and his allies in the white community, just be nice and just be patient and wait 100 or 200 years and the problem will work itself out. I think there is an answer to that myth. That is that time is neutral, it can be used either constructively or destructively. And I'm absolutely convinced that in so many instances the forces of ill will in our nation, the extreme righteous of our nation have used time much more effectively than the forces of good will. And it may well be that we will have to repent in this generation, not merely for the vitriolic words and the violent actions of the bad people who would bomb a church in Birmingham, Alabama but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people who sit around and say wait on time. Somewhere 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 co-workers with God. And without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the primitive forces of social stagnation. And so it is necessary to help time and to realize that the time is always right to do right. Now the other myth that we hear a great deal is a myth that says in substance that legislation can't solve the problem that we face in race relations because you can't change the heart. And so we must rely on education to solve the problem and not even look to any legislation. Now I guess there is some truth in this, at least a half-truth. We realize that if the problem is to be solved ultimately, if we are to have a truly integrated society, men and women must rise to the majestic heights of being obedient to the unenforceable. And I would be the first to acknowledge that. So it may be true that you can't legislate integration, but you can legislate desegregation. It may be true that morality cannot be legislated but behavior can be regulated. It maybe 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, religion and education will have to do that, but it can restrain him from lynching me. And I think that's pretty important also. And so that while legislation may not change the hearts of men, it does change the habits of men. And we see this every day. And certainly there is need for continuing legislative proposals to deal with many problems that we face in the housing area, in the job area, in the school area and all of the other areas where we face the continuation of segregation and discrimination. And so a strong action program will recognize the need for legislation to deal with many of the ills that we still face. And along with this, is the need for nonviolent direct action.

I'd like to take just a minute to say something about the philosophy of nonviolence because in our struggle this has been the most important undergirding philosophy. And I still believe that nonviolence is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom and human dignity. This method has a way of disarming 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 handle it. If he doesn't beat you wonderful. If he beats you, you develop the quiet 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 dear, some things so eternally true, some things so precious that they are worth dying for. And if a man has not discovered something that he will die for, in a sense he is not fit to live. And the nonviolent discipline says that there is power in this approach, precisely because it disarms the opponent and exposes his moral defenses. It also says that it is possible to work for moral ends through moral means. One of the great debates of history has been over the whole question of ends and means, and there have been always, there have been those that argue that the end justifies the means. This is where nonviolence would break within a system. It argues that the end justifies the means recognizing that the end is pre-existent in the means. The means represent the ideal in making and the end in process. And in the long run of history, destructive means cannot bring about constructive ends. And along with this is the growing realization that it is possible to take a stand against an unjust evil system without developing hatred and bitterness toward the perpetrators of that unjust and evil system. And so when nonviolence is true in its most genuine respect to its basic precepts, the love ethic has a place and a central place. Now I always have to stop and explain what I mean when I talk about love and this movement and in the nonviolent context because people raise a question all the time. What do you mean when you say love those who are oppressing you and love those who are exploiting you and those who are violently seeking to destroy you?

And certainly when I talk about love at this point I am not talking about emotional bosh. I am not talking about some sentimental or even some affectionate emotion. I am talking about something much deeper. It would be nonsense to urge oppressed people to love their violent oppressors in an affectionate sense. Fortunately the Greek language comes to our aid at this point. There are three words in the Greek language for love. There is the word eros. Eros is a sort of aesthetic love. Plato used to talk about it a great deal in his dialogues, the 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 all know about eros. We have read about it in all of the beauties of literature. We've experienced it in the sense that Edgar Allen Poe was talking about eros when he talked about his beautiful Annabelle Lee with the 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, bends with the remover to remove it is an ever fixed mark that looks on tempests and is never shaken. It is a star to every wondering bark. You know I can remember that because I used to quote it to my wife when we were courting. That's eros. Then the Greek language talks about philia, which is another level of love. It is a kind of intimate affection between personal friends. On this level you love because you are loved. You love the people that you like. This is friendship. And then the Greek language comes out with another word; it is the word agape. Now agape is more than romantic love. Agape is more than friendship. Now agape is understanding creative redemptive goodwill for all men. It is an overflowing love, which 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 is able to love the person who does the evil deed, while hating the deed that the person does. And he is able to love those persons that he even finds it difficult to like for he begins to look beneath the surface and he discovers that that individual who may be brutal toward him and who may be prejudiced was taught that way—was a child of his culture. At times his school taught him that way. At times his church taught him that way. At times his family taught him that way. And the thing to do is to change the structure and the evil system, so that he can grow and develop as a mature individual devoid of

prejudice. And this is the kind of understanding goodwill that the nonviolent resister can follow if he is true to the love ethic. And so he can rise to the point of being able to look into the face of his most violent opponent and say in substance, do to us what you will and we will still love you. We will match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. And do to us what you will, and we will still love you. We cannot in all good conscience obey your unjust laws because non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good. And so throw us in jail, and as difficult as that is, we will still love you. Bomb our homes and threaten our children and as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators and violence into our communities at the midnight hours and drag us out on some wayside road and beat us and leave us half-dead and we will still love you. But be assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And one day we will win our freedom but we will not only win freedom for ourselves. 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 meaning of the nonviolent creed. This is the meaning of the nonviolent ethic.

And it is my firm conviction that as we move on in the days ahead, we must work passionately and unrelentingly for first-class citizenship. We must never use second-class methods to gain it. In the South we must continue the struggle but now we must see that in the North it is necessary for a massive assault on all of the evils of ghetto and slum life in order to make justice and freedom a reality for all of God's children. For the legislative victories that we have gained over the last 10 years have served to rectify long standing evils of the South but they have done very little to penetrate the lower depths of deprivation and poverty of the Negro in ghettos of the North. And so by the thousands and by the millions, Negroes in the North find themselves frustrated and confused and sometimes bitter and in despair because of the slowness of progress and the failure of communities and its leadership to face the changes and make the necessary concessions to avoid the recurrence of those things that have developed and brought such dark night of social disruption as a Watts area of Los Angeles. And we must build a great America. It cannot be built on violence. It cannot be built on riots. And everybody must work hard to build a climate and to change the conditions that make for the bitterness and that make for the agony that cause individuals to turn to this kind of self-destruction. These are some of the challenges facing the future and I am convinced that if the challenges are met we can move into a brighter tomorrow. It means that there must be divine discontent. There are certain technical words within every academic discipline, which soon become stereotypes and cliches. Every academic discipline has its technical nomenclature. Modern psychology has a word that is probably used more than any other word in psychology. It is the word maladjusted. And certainly we hear this word a great deal. And I'm sure all of us want to live the well-adjusted life in order to avoid neurotic and schizophrenic personalities. But I must honestly say to you, as I've said before, there are some things in our nation and in our world of which I'm proud to be maladjusted, which I call upon all men of goodwill to be maladjusted until the good societies realize. I must honestly say to you that I never intend to become adjusted to segregation and discrimination. I never intend to adjust myself 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 and leave men by the thousands and millions smothering in an air-tight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society. I must honestly say to you that I never intend

to adjust myself to the madness of militarism in the self-defeating effects of physical violence. For in a day when Sputniks and Geminis are dashing through outer space, and the guided ballistic missiles are causing highways of death through the stratosphere, no nation can ultimately win a war. It is no longer a choice between violence and non-violence. It is either non-violence or non-existence. And the alternative to disarmament, the alternative to a greater suspension of nuclear tests, the alternative to a negotiated settlement of the crisis in Vietnam, the alternative to strengthening the United Nations and bringing all of the nations of the world into that United Nations, and thereby disarming the whole world may well be a civilization plunged into the abyss of annihilation. And our early habitat will be transformed into an inferno that even the mind of Dante could not imagine. And so I say that maybe our world is in dire need of a new organization, the International Association for the Advancement for Creative Maladjustment. Men and women who would be as 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 when the midst of an age amazingly adjusted to slavery could scratch across the pages of history words lifted to cosmic proportions, "We owe these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." As maladjusted as Jesus Christ who could look into the eyes of men and women around Galilean hills and say he who lives by the sword will perish by the sword. And through such maladjustment we would 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. May I say in conclusion that in spite of the difficulties ahead, in spite of the fact that we must work hard, I still have faith in the future. And I still have faith in America because I love America and I believe that we will continue to build a coalition of conscience that one day will solve this problem. We sing a little song in our movement and it has been our guiding faith. Sometimes we've been facing hooded perpetrators of violence; sometimes we face jeering mobs. Sometimes we face dogs and the gushing waters from fire hoses. Sometimes in crowded jail cells we join hands to sing it. And sometimes in just open mass meetings. But we could sing it as a hymn of faith. We shall overcome, we shall overcome, deep in my heart I do believe we shall overcome. And somehow I believe this because the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice. We shall overcome because Carlyle is right. No lie can live forever. We shall overcome because William Cullen Bryant is right, truth crushed earth shall rise again. We shall overcome because James Russell Lowell is right, truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne. Yet that scaffold sways the future. And behind the dim unknown standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own. And so 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 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.

Thank you.