

Towards Freedom

A multimedia presentation
of the speech the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
delivered at Dartmouth on May 23, 1962

As part of the 2003 Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, Michael Murray and Sarah Horton of Dartmouth's Academic Computing created a presentation designed to revisit Martin Luther King, Jr.'s time at Dartmouth and the turbulent times of the civil rights era. Their video presentation combines the original audio of the "Towards Freedom" speech with video and still images that chronicle Dr. King's life and times. The presentation venue is the same room as the original speech: 105 Dartmouth Hall. Professor William Cook contributed the audio recording, and the images and video are from various sources, including the Video Encyclopedia of the 20th Century. This presentation is also available on the web at www.dartmouth.edu/~mlk.

Following is a transcript of Dr. King's address, with introduction and notes by Patrick Walls, MALS '03.

In 105 Dartmouth Hall on the evening of May 23, 1962, an overflow audience of students and Upper Valley residents rose to their feet to welcome the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This event, a lecture on the state of the American civil rights movement was the highlight of the year's Great Issues Course, a core academic component for all graduating seniors of the classes of 1947 through 1966. Although this would be Dr. King's first and regrettably, last address to the student body, it was not his only visit to the Dartmouth community. As the result of the turbulence and upheaval of the civil rights era, Dr. King's Dartmouth lecture actually marked the College's third attempt to secure an address by his historic and influential American leader.** His words, their meaning, and the passion with which only Dr. King could deliver them profoundly influenced those who attended the evening lecture.*

Professor Lyons, members of the faculty, members of the student body at this great institution of learning, ladies and gentlemen: I need not pause to say how very delighted I am to be here on the campus of Dartmouth College and to have the privilege of being a part of your lecture series. And I can assure you that I regret it very much that circumstances in our struggle for freedom and human dignity in the South made it impossible for me to be with you on the other two occasions that I was to be here. But I am very happy that my criminal instincts were suppressed at least for a while so that I didn't have to be in jail this time and I could have the privilege of sharing with you on this occasion. I always consider it one of the rich and rewarding experiences of my life when I can take a brief break from the day to day details of our struggle to discuss the issues involved with college and university students across the nation. And so I am indeed privileged to have the opportunity to be here tonight. I have known of this great institution for quite some time and I've always had great respect and appreciation for the rich academic heritage of Dartmouth College and I am very happy to spend these few hours in this community.

I would like to use as a subject from which to speak this evening the future of race relations in the United States. There are three basic attitudes that one can take toward the question of progress in race relations. The first attitude that can be taken is that of extreme optimism. The extreme optimist would contend that we have made great strides in the area of race relations and he will point proudly to the gains that have been made in the area of civil rights over the last few decades. From this he would conclude that the problem is just about solved now and that we can sit down comfortably by 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 in race relations would contend that we have made only minor strides over the last few years. And he would argue that the deep rumblings of discontent from the South, the presence of federal troops in Little Rock, Arkansas, the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan and the birth of white citizens councils are all indicative of the fact that we are going backwards instead of forwards and that we are creating many more problems than we are solving. From this the extreme pessimist would conclude that there can be no real progress in the area of race relations.

Now it is interesting to notice that the extreme optimist and the extreme pessimist agree on at least one point: they both feel that we must sit down and do nothing in the area of race relations. 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 the area of race relations seeks to combine the truths of two opposites while avoiding the extremes of both. So the realist would agree with the optimist that we have come a long, long way but he would balance this by agreeing with the pessimist that we have a long, long way to go before this problem is solved. And it is this realistic position that I would like to use as a basis for our thinking together as we think of the future of race relations in the United States. We have made significant strides. We have come a long, long way. But we have a long, long way to go.

Now let us notice first that we have come a long, long way. One of the things I would like to mention at this point is that the Negro himself has come a long, long way in reevaluating his own intrinsic worth. In order to see this a little history is necessary.

You will remember that it was in the year 1619 when the first 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 will. Throughout slavery the Negro was treated in a very inhuman fashion. He was a thing to be used, not a person to be respected. He was merely a depersonalized cog in a vast plantation machine. The famous Dred Scott decision of 1857 well illustrated the status of the Negro during slavery. This decision, which was rendered by the United States Supreme Court said, in substance, that the Negro was not a citizen of this nation; he was merely a property, subject to the dictates of his own. 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 wrong into beautiful garments of righteousness. Philosopher/psychologist William James used to talk a great deal about the stream of consciousness. He says that one of the very interesting and unique things about human nature is that man is able temporarily to block the stream of consciousness and place anything in it that he wants to. And so we so often end up justifying the rightness of the wrong. This happened during the days of slavery. Even religion and the Bible were misused in order to Christianize the patterns of the status quo. And so it was argued from pulpits across the nation that the Negro was inferior by nature because of Noah's curse upon the children of Ham. The apostle Paul's dictum became a watchword: "Servants be obedient to your master." Then one of the brethren had probably read the logic of the great philosopher Aristotle. You know Aristotle did a great deal to bring into being what we now know as formal logic. He talked a great deal about the syllogism which had a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion. So this brother could put his argument in the framework of an Aristotelian syllogism.

He could say, "All men were made in the image of God," this was the major premise. Then came the minor premise: "God, as everybody knows, is not a Negro." Therefore, "The Negro is not a man."

This was the type of reasoning that prevailed.

Living with the conditions of slavery and then, later, segregation, the Negroes lost faith in themselves. Many came to feel that perhaps they were inferior. But then something happened to the Negro. Circumstances made it possible and necessary for him to travel more. The coming of the automobile, the upheavals of two world wars, the Great Depression. And so his rural plantation background gradually gave way to urban industrial life. 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 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 reevaluate themselves. 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. That the basic thing about a man is not his specificity but his fundamental; not the texture of his hair or the color of his skin, but his eternal dignity and worth. So the Negro can now unconsciously cry out with the eloquent poet: "fleecy locks and black complexion cannot forfeit nature's claim; skin may differ but affection dwells in black and white the same. Were I so tall as to reach the pole or to grasp the ocean and the sand. I must be measured by my soul; the mind is a standard of the man." With this new sense of dignity, this new sense of self respect, a new Negro came into being with a new determination to suffer and struggle and sacrifice in order to be free. So in a real sense we have come a long, long way since 1619.

But not only has the Negro come a long, long way in reevaluating his own intrinsic worth, the whole nation has come a long, long way in extending the frontiers of civil rights. If we are true to the facts we must admit this: fifty years ago, even thirty years ago, a year hardly passed when numerous Negroes were not brutally lynched by some vicious mob; lynchings have about ceased today. Fifty years ago, twenty five years ago, most of the states in the South used various methods to keep the Negro from becoming a registered voter. And one of the things they misused to do this was the tax system; so the poll tax became a reality in so many situations to keep the Negro from becoming a registered voter in the South. The poll tax has now been eliminated in all but four states in the South. And just a few weeks ago the Senate of the United States voted overwhelmingly to bring into being an amendment of the Constitution which would end the poll tax in federal elections. Even in voter registration we've seen some progress. At the turn of the century there were very few Negroes registered to vote in the South. By 1948, that number had leaped to 750,000; today it stands at more than 1,300,000—far from what it ought to be but this does represent some growth. In the area of economic justice we've come a long, long way as a nation, so that the average Negro wage earner of today makes ten times more

than the average Negro wage earner twelve years ago. The national income of the Negro is now about twenty-seven billion dollars a year, which is more than all of the exports of the United States and the national budget of Canada. This reveals that there has been some progress.

But probably more than anything else we've seen the walls of segregation gradually crumble in the United States. Now we know the history of segregation. It had its legal beginning in 1896. The Supreme Court of the nation rendered a decision known as the Plessy vs. Ferguson decision. And this decision established the doctrine of "separate but equal" as the law of the land. Of course, as a result of the Plessy doctrine, there was always a strict enforcement of the "separate" but not the slightest intention to abide by the "equal"; and so the Negro ended up still being plunged into the abyss of exploitation where he experienced a bleakness of nagging injustice.

Then something else happened. The Supreme Court of the nation rendered a new decision. On May 17, 1954, it examined the legal body of segregation and pronounced it constitutionally dead; 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.

Now when this decision was rendered, seventeen states and the District of Columbia practiced absolute segregation in the public schools. We have seen something of a change: fourteen of those states and the District of Columbia have made some move toward integrating their schools; most of them have been only token moves, but they have made some move toward integrating the schools. There are only three states now seeking to hold out in terms of massive, all-out resistance: the states of South Carolina, Alabama, and the great sovereign state of Mississippi have made no move. But this at least reveals to us that the old order of segregation is passing away and, in a real sense, the system of segregation is on its deathbed; the only thing uncertain about it is how costly, expensive, the nation will make the funeral.

We have come a long, long way since 1896.

Now this would be a wonderful place for me to stop talking and to end my lecture. Number one: it would mean making a short speech and this would be a magnificent accomplishment for a Baptist preacher; but, second, it would mean that the problem is about solved in the United States and we don't have anything to worry about. It would be a wonderful thing if every speaker in our nation could talk about this problem as a problem that once existed but no longer has existence in our nation. But if I stop at this point, I would merely be stating a fact and not telling the 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 it isn't the whole truth and if I stop at this point I will leave you the victims of a dangerous

optimism. If I stop at this point I'm afraid that I will leave you the victims of 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 before this problem is solved in our nation.

Now we need not look very far to see this. We can open our papers, we can turn on our televisions, we can look in our communities and we will see that we have a great deal to do before this problem is solved. I mentioned that lynchings have about ceased but other things are happening just as bad and human beings are still being stripped of their personhood all over the United States. There are still states in our nation which have their legislative halls ringing loud with such words as interposition and nullification. Violence is still being used against individuals who will take a stand for that which is just and that which is right. This reveals that we still have a long, long way to go. I mentioned that we had made some strides in the area of voter registration, the fact that we have 1,300,000 Negroes who are registered to vote in the South. But we must not overlook the fact that there are still approximately 10,000,000 Negroes in the South and almost 6,000,000 are eligible to vote; yet there are only 1,300,000 registered. Now some are not registered because of apathy or a lack of motivation, but all too many Negroes in the South are not registered to vote because of external resistance; because of economic reprisals being taken against Negroes who seek to register; because of all types of conniving methods still being used to keep Negroes from voting; because of complex literacy tests, with questions that a Ph.D. in any field couldn't answer, a person with a degree in law from any great law school in the nation. And then sometimes the questions become so difficult that nobody could answer; for who can answer the question, "How many bubbles do you find in a bar of soap?" and yet they tell me that in some places in Mississippi and Alabama these questions are asked when Negroes go to register. Sometimes they would ask, "How many windows do you find in the courthouse?" but I don't know how many windows are in my own house and I'm sure I don't know how many are in the courthouse. But these things are still being done to keep Negroes from becoming registered voters in the South. This reveals that as a nation we have a long, long way to go.

Just the other day I opened the Atlanta Constitution. At the top of the page was this headline: "Literacy Bill Dies in Senate." Now I said to myself, this is tragic. It is tragic when a nation cannot have its highest legislative body guarantee in all of its citizens the right to vote. Many Negroes cannot vote today because of these complex literacy tests. In fact there are situations where persons with A.B. and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees can't vote. This was true in Tuskegee, Alabama, where they had on the witness stand, the Civil Rights Commission when it had its hearing in Alabama, several persons who were on the faculty at Tuskegee Institute with Ph.D. degrees who could not register because they were not literate enough. This reveals that we have a long, long way to go before justice is a reality.

I mentioned economic justice and the fact that we've made some strides here; but we must also see the other side. Forty-two percent of the Negro families of the United States still earn less than \$2,000 a year while just 16 percent of the white families in the United States earn less than \$2,000 a year. Twenty percent of the Negro families of America still earn less than \$1,000 a year while just 6 percent of the white families earn less than \$1,000 a year. Eighty-eight percent of the Negro families of America still earn less than \$5,000 a year while just 58 percent of the white families earn less than \$5,000 a year. This reveals that we have a long, long way to go before economic justice is a reality.

There are still areas in our nation where Negroes are denied the right to work. There are still instances where industries receive billions of dollars in government contracts and yet discrimination stands as a notorious reality. And in so many instances the Negro is still the last hired and the first fired. And in these days of automation, the Negro of the past has been limited to unskilled instead of skilled labor, he is the first one to suffer. He has been often denied apprenticeship training. And all of these things continue to exist which means that we have a long, long way to go in the area of economic justice.

But even before the barriers of racial segregation are broken down we will have to do a great deal. Now I mentioned a few minutes ago that the system of segregation is on its deathbed. But history has proven that social systems have a great last-minute breathing power and the guardians of the status quo are always on hand with their oxygen tents to keep the old order alive. So segregation is still with us. It's still confronted in the South in its glaring and conspicuous forms. We still confront it in the North in its hidden and subtle forms. But all men of goodwill realize today that if democracy is to live, segregation must die. Segregation is a cancer in the body politic which must be removed before our moral and democratic health is realized. Therefore we are challenged to work passionately and unrelentingly all over the nation to do away with this unjust system of segregation and discrimination.

We don't have long to grapple with this problem. Now I'm aware of the fact that there are those individuals who are saying to us, saying to all of those who are struggling to end segregation and discrimination, "slow up for a while, cool off, you're pushing too fast." Or they're even saying at times, "adopt a policy of moderation." Well, if moderation means moving on toward the goal of justice with wise restraint and calm reasonableness, then moderation is a great virtue which all men of goodwill must seek to achieve during this tense period of transition. But if moderation means slowing up in the move for justice and capitulating to the undemocratic practices of the guardians of the deadly status quo, then moderation is a tragic vice which all men of goodwill must condemn. The fact is we can't afford to slow up. We have our self respect to maintain. But even more than that because of our love for America, we can't afford to slow up.

There are approximately 2,800,000,000 people in the world. The vast majority of these people live in Asia and Africa. For years, most of them

have been dominated politically, exploited economically, segregated and humiliated by some foreign power. Today many of these people are gaining their independence. More than 1,700,000,000 of the former 1,900,000,000 colonial subjects have their independence today and they are saying in no uncertain terms that racism and colonialism must go by the wayside before its too late. Now I must hasten to say that we must not seek to solve this problem in the United States merely to meet the Communist challenge, as important as that is. We must not seek to do it merely to appeal to Asian and African people. In the final analysis, racial discrimination must be uprooted from American society because it is morally wrong. Racial segregation must be removed from this society because it stands against all of the noble precepts of our Judeo-Christian heritage. It must be ended because segregation substitutes an I/It relationship for the I/Thou relationship, relegates persons to the status of things. So in the final analysis, we must solve this problem not merely because it is diplomatically expedient but because it is morally compelling. Now if the problem is to be solved, many agencies must work together. Many forces must give leadership. I would like to mention some of the areas of leadership, some of the agencies that must furnish leadership, if we are to move on from a segregated to a desegregated and finally an integrated society.

I would like to say first that the federal government must use all of its Constitutional authority to implement the law of the land. There is need for strong, forthright leadership from the federal government. If we look back over the last ten years, we must honestly admit that the kind of consistent, forthright leadership needed this hour has come only from the Judicial branch of the government. The Legislative and Executive branches have been all too silent, apathetic, and sometimes hypocritical. If this problem is to be solved, all branches of the government must work in a consistent, determined manner.

This means that we must get rid of two myths that often linger around. One is the myth of time. There are people who say that the federal government can't do anything about this problem. Only time can solve the problem. I'm sure that this argument continues to move around. There's the idea that if the Negro and his allies in the white community will just be patient and just wait, maybe in a hundred or two hundred years, time will solve the problem. Well the only answer that we have for those who have given themselves to the myth of time is that time is neutral. It can be used either destructively or constructively. At points I think that the people of ill will have used time more effectively than the people of goodwill. It may well be that we who have repented this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people, somewhere along the way of life we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. Evolution may be true in the biological realm; and at this point Darwin is right. But when a Herbert Spencer seeks to apply to the whole of society, there is very little evidence for it. Human progress is construed of tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals. Without this hard work, time itself becomes the ally of the insurgent and primitive forces of irrational emotionalism

and social stagnation. We are always challenged to help time and to realize that the time is always right to do right.

There is another myth that tends to linger around and for lack of a better term I call it the myth of educational determinism. It is the idea that only education can solve the problems which we face in human relations, so there is no need to talk about Executive Orders from the President of the United States or about legislation. It's only through the slow process of education and changing attitudes that this problem will be solved. Well, there's an element of truth in this because education does have a great role to play in changing attitudes. But this is a half-truth. It is not either legislation or education; it is both legislation and education. It may be true that morality cannot be legislated but behavior can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me; religion and education will have to do that. But if it keeps him from lynching me, and I think that's pretty important also.

It may be true that legislation cannot change the heart, but it can restrain the heartless. And this is what we often do through legislation. We must depend on education and religion to change bad internal attitudes, but we need legislation to control the external effects of those bad internal attitudes. So there is a need for civil rights legislation. And it is tragic indeed that in this session of Congress there will be no civil rights legislation. There's also need for Executive Orders from the President of the United States. There is a great deal the president can do with a stroke of the pen.

One of the big problems we confront in the nation today is housing discrimination. And this may be the root, this may be the source of the overall problem: as long as there is residential discrimination there will be de facto segregation in the public schools, in recreation facilities, in churches, and every other area of life. The president can do a great deal to bring an end to housing segregation overnight. Most financing for housing situations falls under the category of the federal government, either through FHA, PHA, Urban Renewal, or Veterans Loans. With a stroke of the pen, the president could issue an Executive Order, making it powerfully clear that there can be no discrimination in federally assisted housing.

And I would also like to say that the time has come for the President of the United States to issue an Executive Order declaring all segregation unconstitutional on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. This would be something of a second Emancipation Proclamation. Just last week I presented President Kennedy a document of some 130 pages strongly urging him to issue such an Executive Order and trying to show that he has both the power and the duty to issue such an Executive Order. And I am more convinced than ever before that this is a possibility.

Now the first Emancipation Proclamation freed the Negro from the bondage of physical slavery. It was an Executive Order from President Abraham

Lincoln. Almost a hundred years later the Negro still confronts a form of slavery because segregation is nothing but slavery covered up with such niceties of complexity. And it is not too much to ask the President of the United States, almost one hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation, to issue an Executive Order declaring all segregation unconstitutional on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment of our Constitution. In short, there is need for strong, forthright, positive leadership from the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judicial branches of the government.

I would also like to mention that there is need for leadership from the moderates in the white South. I would say to you this evening that there are many more white people of goodwill in the South than we are able to see on the surface. Many of them are silent today because of fear; fear of social, political, and economic reprisals. Would God grant that something will happen, so that the people of goodwill in the white South will rise up and take over the leadership in this period of transition, and open channels of communication.

Men often hate each other because they fear each other, and they fear each other because they don't know each other. They don't know each other because they can't communicate with each other, and they can't communicate with each other because they are separated from each other. And I think one of the great tragedies of life is that more often men seek to live in monologue rather than dialogue. And there is the danger that this will happen in society. So there is need for leadership from the people of goodwill in the white South.

There's also a need for leadership from religious institutions if this problem is to be solved. And it is tragic indeed that we have not been able to see this leadership over the last few years as we've struggled to make integration a reality. We must face the appalling fact that all over the United States men stand at eleven o'clock on Sunday morning to sing, "In Christ there is no East or West." They stand in the most segregated aisles of America. The church is the most segregated, major institution in the United States; and the most segregated school of the week is the Sunday school. This means that all too many Christians have had a high blood pressure of creeds and an anemia of deeds. Thank God we're beginning now to shake the lethargy from our souls and here and there individuals are coming to see that we must take a stand on this all-important issue. And I think when the church takes a stand the transition from a segregated to an integrated society will be much smoother.

But even after mentioning all of these areas, the need for leadership from these sources, I would like to mention another which is all-important. If this problem is to be solved, the Negro himself must be willing to suffer and sacrifice and take a stand. As I have said so often, the Negro must not feel that others will be and should be more concerned about his citizenship rights than he happens to be concerned himself. And so the Negro has not only a challenge, but a responsibility to furnish leadership in terms of standing up against the system of segregation and discrimination. We must continue to work through

the courts. We must continue to work for meaningful legislation. But even after working for legislation and working through the courts, we must come to see that a court order can only declare rights, it can never deliver them. And only when the people themselves begin to act, are rights which are written on paper given life blood. So every Negro must somehow become a creative obstetrician presiding at the birth of a new age, willing to stand up against the system in a creative manner. And so we must supplement what is done through the courts and through legislation with nonviolent, direct action.

Now this method has many advantages that I would like to mention for the moments left. And I would like to mention it because it has been used in such a creative way in the struggle all across the South. First, it has a way of disarming the opponent, exposes his moral defenses. It weakens his morale and, at the same time, it works on his conscience. He just doesn't know what to do and how to handle it. If he seeks to beat you, you develop the power and the capacity to accept that without retaliating. If he doesn't beat you, fine. If he doesn't put you in jail, well, that's wonderful. Nobody just loves to go to jail. But if he puts you in jail, you go in and transform the jail from a dungeon of shame to a haven of freedom and human dignity. Even if he tries to kill you, you develop the quiet courage of dying if necessary without killing. And there is something about this approach that disarms the opponent and he just doesn't know how to handle it.

There is another thing about it on the moral end that makes it possible for the individual to struggle to secure moral ends through moral means. As you know, one of the great debates of history has been over the whole question of ends and means. And there have been those individuals from Machiavelli on down who argued that the end justifies the means. Sometimes whole systems of government will go out with this theory. I think this is one of the basic weaknesses of Communism. It lives with the idea that the end justifies the means; so we can read Lenin saying on one occasion that, "...violence, deceit, and even lying are justifiable means bringing about the end of the classless society." And this is where nonviolent resistance breaks with Communism and any other system which would argue that the end justifies the means. Because, in the final analysis, the end is preexistent in the means, and destructive means and the long run of history cannot bring about constructive ends. And so the power of nonviolent resistance is that it provides a way for individuals to struggle and to secure moral ends through moral means.

There is another thing about it that makes it possible for individuals involved to stand up with zeal and determination and courage against an unjust system, yet maintain an attitude of active goodwill and love for the perpetrators of that unjust system. Now I'm sure that we hear a great deal about the love ethic and the movement that is taking place in our struggle for freedom. Sometimes people stop me along the way and say, "What do you mean when you say 'Love those people who are oppressing you and those people who are opposing you and those people who are using violence against

you and threatening your children'? How can you love such people?" Well, I'm not talking about emotional bosh when I talk about love in this point or just a sentimental outpouring. It is something much deeper.

Fortunately, the Greek language comes to our aid in seeking to define the meaning of love in this context. There are three words in the Greek language for love: one is the word "eros." Eros is the sort of aesthetic love. Plato talks about it a great deal about it 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 know about eros, we have experienced it, we have read about it all of the days of literature. So, in a sense, Edgar Allan Poe was talking about eros when he talked about his beautiful Annabel Lee, with a love "surrounded by the halo of eternity." In a sense, Shakespeare was talking about eros when he said, "Love is not love/Which alters when it alteration finds,/ Or bends with the remover to remove:/...it is an ever-fixed mark,/ That looks on tempests, and is never shaken,/It is the star to every wandering bark..." You know I can remember that because I used to quote it to my wife when we were courting. That's eros.

The Greek language talks about "philos," which is another level of love, it's a sort of intimate affection between personal friends; it is a reciprocal love. So on this level you love those people that you like, those people whose ways appeal to you. This is friendship.

Then the Greek language has another word, the word "agape." Agape is more than aesthetic or romantic love, agape is more than friendship. 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. When one arises to love on this level, he loves a person who does an evil deed while hating the deed the person does. And I believe that this kind of love will lead us through this period of transition, this kind of creating, understanding goodwill.

I think this is what Jesus of Nazareth meant when he said, "Love your enemies," and I'm so happy he didn't say, "Like your enemies," because it's pretty difficult to like some people. Like is a sentimental, affectionate sort of thing and it's difficult to like somebody who's bombing your home, and who's threatening your children, and who's throwing you in jail. It's difficult to like some of the senators and congressmen in Washington, the things they're saying about Negroes and members of other minority groups, and some of the things they are doing... It's difficult to like them and to like what they're doing, but Jesus said, "Love them," and love is greater than like. Love is understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill for all men. This is what nonviolence says. It says that the love ethic is a possibility in the struggle for freedom and human dignity.

This method is not at all new. It is not at all an unsuccessful precedent. Mohatmas K. Ghandi used it in a magnificent manner, to free his people from the political domination inflicted upon them for years. And it has been used in

a marvelous way by thousands and thousands of Negro students all over the South. They have been able to say, in substance, that they stood up against the unjust system: "We will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will and we will still love you. We can not 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; we will still love you. Bomb our homes and threaten our children and we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities at midnight hours and drag us out on some wayside road and beat us and leave us half dead and, as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send your propaganda agents around the country and make it appear that we are not fit morally, culturally, or otherwise for integration and we will still love you. Be assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. One day we will win our freedom. We will not only win freedom for ourselves, we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory."

This is the message of the nonviolent resister, as he stands before the opposition. And the students have taken this method. They have been able to bring about integration at lunch counters in more than 150 cities of the South. Through the Freedom Ride movement they have been able to bring about integration in bus terminals all over the South so that segregation in public transportation is almost nonexistent all over the South. And this has happened within the last six months. And I submit that this is nothing less than revolutionary. It is the power of nonviolent resistance in this struggle. And I believe that, with this method, we will be able to move out and transform the social situation. I believe also it will help us to go into the new age with the proper attitude. For as I have said all over this country, we must go into the new age with the desire to make democracy real for everybody. This is why I said that the Negro must not seek to rise from a position of disadvantage to one of advantage, thus subverting justice. We must not seek to substitute one tyranny for another. Black supremacy is as dangerous as white supremacy. God is not interested merely in the freedom of black men and brown and yellow men, but God is interested in the freedom of the whole human race and the creation of a society where all men will live together as brothers, and every man will respect the dignity and the worth of human personality.

So nonviolent resistance will give us a creative way to struggle with determination until this system is broken down and yet struggle with the right attitude so that we will work passionately and unrelentingly for first-class citizenship and never use second-class methods to gain it. With this method and the other agencies working together, I believe that we will be able to transform the jangling discourse of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.

This problem will not be solved until enough people all over our country come to see that it is morally wrong to practice racial segregation and

discrimination. And I say "all over this country" because no section of the United States can boast of clean hands in the area of brotherhood. It is one thing to rise up with righteous indignation when the Negro is lynched in Mississippi, or when a bus of Freedom Riders is burned in Anniston, Alabama. But a white person of goodwill in the North must rise up with as much righteous indignation when the Negro cannot live in his neighborhood simply because he's a Negro; or when a Negro cannot get a position in his particular firm; or when a Negro cannot join his particular fraternity; cannot join a particular academic society. In other words, there must be a sort of divine discontent if this problem is to be solved.

You know there are certain technical words within every academic discipline which soon become stereotypes and clichés; every academic discipline has its technical nomenclature. Modern psychology has a word that is probably used more than any other word in modern psychology. It is the word "maladjusted." Maladjusted. This word is already the pride of modern child psychology. And suddenly we all want to live the well-adjusted life in order to avoid neurotic and schizophrenic personalities. But I say to you, in my conclusion, that there are certain things within our social order and in the world to which I'm proud to be maladjusted. To which all men of goodwill must be maladjusted until the Good Society is realized. I never intend to adjust myself to segregation and discrimination. I never intend to become adjusted to religious bigotry. I never intend to adjust myself to the madness of militarism and the self-defeating effects of physical violence. In the day when Sputniks and Explorers are dashing throughout space and guided ballistic missiles are carving highways of death through the stratosphere, no nation can win a war. The alternative to disarmament, the alternative to suspension of nuclear tests, the alternative to strengthening the United Nations and disarming the whole world may well be a civilization plunged into the abyss of annihilation.

So I say the world is in desperate need of maladjusted men and women. Maladjusted as the prophet Amos, who in the midst of the injustices of his day could cry out in words echoing across the centuries: "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." As maladjusted as Abraham Lincoln, who in the midst of an age amazingly adjusted to slavery, had the vision to see that this nation could not exist half slave and half free. As maladjusted as Thomas Jefferson, scratching across the pages of history words lifted to cosmic proportions, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." And I believe that through such maladjustment we will be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of man's inhumanity to man, into the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice. If we will but do this, we will be participants in the creation of a new society, the creation of a great America. This will be the day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last, free at last, thank God almighty, we are free at last."

**Founded under the leadership of Dartmouth President John Sloan Dickey, the year-long Great Issues Course, a requirement for all seniors, investigated issues of critical national and international importance of the day.*

***In April 1960, following several months of orchestration by Fred Berthold, the Dean of the Tucker Foundation, and Professor Hugh Morrison, Great Issues Course Director, an unexpected court action against Dr. King from the state of Alabama forced him to cancel his scheduled May 15th and 16th appearances at Dartmouth. Shortly thereafter, he was acquitted on all charges of income tax evasion.*

A year later, following several months of careful coordination, Dr. King again was scheduled to present a lecture to the Great Issues Course, as well as to deliver a Sunday sermon at Rollins Chapel. Although Dr. King did arrive in Hanover as scheduled on the weekend of May 20th, the weekend marked the beginning of mass rioting in the South as hundreds of freedom riders, protesting segregationist policies of southern bus terminals, arrived in Montgomery, Alabama and were met by angry mobs. During the first night of violence, more than two dozen civil rights activists were severely beaten, prompting Dr. King to terminate his Dartmouth agenda and return to Alabama to resume leadership of the Freedom Rider movement.

Finally, on May 23, 1962, more than three years after the College had first approached Dr. King about visiting the campus the persistent efforts of Dean Berthold and Professor Morrison finally bore fruit. That evening, Dr. King electrified the audience in 105 Dartmouth Hall, spotlighting not only the rampant racism of the American South, but also the many inequalities to which African-Americans were subjected nationwide.

