



BASIC FIELD TRAINING COURSE

Trainee Guide

*Leadership and Ethical Lessons
Learned: US Holocaust
Memorial and Museum &
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Memorial*

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Values and Principles..... 6

Ethical Public Service 9

Shaping the FBI..... 10

Legal and Ethical Processes..... 11

Reflection Questions 12

Summary / Conclusion..... 13



US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

Covid-19 Pandemic Impact

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, trainees will no longer travel to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in DC. Instead, the Holocaust Museum will provide a distance learning version of their program, and trainees will visit two visitors' websites for a virtual view of the MLK Memorial to develop an understanding of the Memorial's purpose and its significance for law enforcement.

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

INTRODUCTION

Lesson Overview

Integrated classes of New Agent Trainees (NATs) and New Intelligence Analyst Trainees (NIATs) will explore key concepts bearing upon the development of personal and professional judgment, ethical decision-making, and leadership in the context of the Holocaust and Civil Rights Movement using the example of Martin Luther King Jr.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The Holocaust Museum program draws on lessons learned from the Holocaust to challenge law enforcement officers to examine their relationship with the public, and explore issues related to the personal responsibility of officers to administer their authority in an ethical manner. This lesson also encourages Special Agents and Intelligence Analysts to see themselves as defenders of the Constitution and guardians against a repeat of the horrors of the Holocaust.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

The NATs and NIATs will explore the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in relation to the complex nature of the FBI's response to the non-violent political action of the Civil Rights Movement era. Through facilitated discussions with FBI leaders and unique experiences at the MLK Memorial, trainees will critically examine the judgment and decision-making process of the civil rights leader, government officials, including leaders of the FBI, and ordinary Americans during this turbulent, but transformative period. Trainees will develop an understanding of how the important "lessons learned" from the challenges of that historic period have provided a basis for the FBI's core values (Obedience to the Constitution, Respect, Compassion, Fairness, Integrity, Accountability, Leadership, and Diversity). Trainees will also consider problematic issues similar to those confronting the Bureau during the Civil Rights Movement and propose practical strategies for action consistent with the core values and leadership principles they have learned.

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

Prerequisite Videos:

- *The Path to Nazi Genocide ~ 38 minutes*
- *Eyes on the Prize: No Easy Walk (Video) ~ 47 minutes*

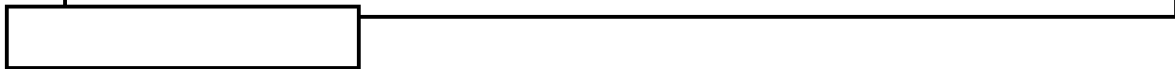
Prerequisite Documents to Review

- *How the FBI Tried to Block Martin Luther King's Commencement Speech, The Atlantic, June 11, 2014 (Article)*
- *Letter from Birmingham Jail (Document)*
 - Note: This document, written while Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. sat in jail after being arrested in Birmingham for leading a nonviolent demonstration, is a response to an open letter written by eight clergymen criticizing Dr. King for the demonstrations.

- *Demonstrating Leadership SDG*

This self-directed study is for trainees to become familiar with the FBI's Leadership Competency Model (LCM), so that they can apply the skills and abilities within the model to their own leadership styles.

- *Note: Prerequisite readings and videos are located on Blackboard and can also be found on*



b7E

LESSON GOAL

The goal of this lesson is for you to examine how the events of the Holocaust and the challenges of the Civil Rights Movement provided a basis for the FBI's Core Values (*Obedience to the Constitution, Respect, Compassion, Fairness, Integrity, Accountability, Leadership, and Diversity*) and our guiding leadership principles.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

Via lecture and self-directed study, trainees are introduced to the overall structure and mission of the FBI. This includes a discussion of each of the major divisions/sections, such as Counterintelligence, Counterterrorism, Criminal, Cyber, Directorate of Intelligence, and Weapons of Mass Destruction. Trainees will also have access to FBI Center Stage, an online

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

repository of information, videos, and frequently asked questions regarding each of the FBI's Divisions. Trainees begin to learn about the various FBI employee roles and how they support the FBI's overall mission. Via self-directed study, trainees are introduced to the FBI Core Values and the FBI Leadership Competency Model, which are reinforced throughout the curriculum.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

INT: This ELO includes short quizzes on content covered in this ELO.

OBJECTIVES:

Terminal Learning Objective

INT: Given a series of written scenarios related to investigative activities and access to the DIOG, FBI policy guides, and legal references, describe the authorized investigative method with 80% accuracy on a knowledge check.

Enabling Learning Objective

INT: Given access to trainee notes and lesson materials, describe the organization and core values of the FBI in accordance with appraisal guidelines.

CONNECTION OF CONTENT TO JOB ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

As a representative of the FBI, you will always be subject to public scrutiny. The FBI enjoys a reputation as one of the finest law enforcement organizations in the world. When you show up, people expect a high standard of ethical behavior in terms of your personal and professional morals, character, and values. It is essential that you understand and adhere to the legal and ethical obligations of your role as a Special Agent or Intelligence Analyst.

MLK Memorial Tour

View the MLK Memorial on the [National Parks MLK page](#) and the gallery on the [DC MLK Visitor's page](#).

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

TOPIC ONE

Values and Principles

FBI Core Values

"Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny." (Mahatma Gandhi)

Our core values are the foundation of our organization and should be incorporated into everything we do. They characterize who we are and what we believe in as an organization. Ask yourself, "Am I living these ideas?" Our core values guide us in how we conduct ourselves as representatives of the FBI.

Rigorous Obedience to the Constitution - *Obedience to the Constitution requires each of us to know the laws that govern what we do, to ask questions if we don't fully understand what the law requires, and to voice our concerns if we think something is amiss. How we accomplish our mission is just as important as whether we accomplish it. Upholding the Constitution and the rule of law is always more important than the outcome of any single interview, search for evidence, or investigation.*

Respect - *We respect the dignity of every individual with whom we come into contact. We recognize and protect the personal dignity, privacy, and rights of everyone: our fellow workers, law enforcement and intelligence community partners, persons with whom we do business, members of the public, victims and, yes, even suspects and adversaries. We do not engage in or tolerate discrimination or mistreatment of anyone, regardless of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national or ethnic origin, disability, or health. Respect is critical to obtaining trust; trust is critical to obtaining cooperation. Without cooperation, we cannot do our jobs.*

Compassion - *All FBI employees interact with people; many interact with people in distress: victims, witnesses, fellow employees, suspects, adversaries, and their families. Each of us and each of the individuals with whom we interact experiences a wide range of human emotion at such times – from fear, pain, and sorrow to anger, depression, and guilt. We understand those emotions and, while maintaining our professionalism at all times, extend our care and concern whenever possible. We treat others as we would want to be treated in the same circumstances.*

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

Fairness - We all know that life isn't fair. We deal daily with people who don't play fair, don't play by the rules, and may not even acknowledge that there are rules. Yet, ours is a society dedicated to the rule of law. We enforce that law without fear or favor. There are no exceptions; no one is above or outside the law. We treat similarly situated people similarly each time, every time. We don't play favorites. We don't extend preferential treatment. We wield power that can profoundly affect people's lives but we do so in a just, honest, and ethical manner. Our legitimacy as a law enforcement agency depends on this core value.

Integrity - Integrity speaks to an individual's and an institution's honesty, sincerity, and guiding principles. It means discerning right from wrong and acting on the right. In the FBI, integrity is the value that binds together the very fabric of our institutional identity. It defines us and what we stand for; it is how we operate and how we measure our success. Integrity is part of our motto; it is the touchstone for everything we do.

Accountability – We are responsible for and take ownership of the decisions we make. We don't blame others if something goes awry. We live in a complex world and perform in a complex environment. Change is relentless, making it tempting to blame others for errors and missteps. We don't yield to that temptation in the FBI. We are responsible. We accept the consequences. As Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here."

Leadership –We believe that leadership means having a vision, working with and guiding others to support that vision, and treating others in a manner that promotes respect, cooperation, professionalism, loyalty, and trust. We believe that successful leaders define their priorities and allocate resources to achieve their goals. They acknowledge those who make their successes possible, are enthusiastic about their work, and share their enthusiasm with those around them. They also look for ways to help others succeed. In short, the best leaders earn respect and become leaders by treating others with dignity and by demonstrating knowledge, compassion, fairness, and integrity. Simply put, effective leaders internalize the FBI core values and apply them to all aspects of their professional lives. Every FBI employee has the potential to become a great leader.

Diversity –We are a nation comprised of many races, creeds, cultural backgrounds, and perspectives. Our individual backgrounds reflect the variety that is the backbone and strength of our country. Historically, we as a nation have struggled with inclusion and disenfranchised our citizens along the way. Our own institution has made mistakes that must be acknowledged and remembered lest we be tempted to go down those roads again. We must recognize that we are better able to serve our communities when we ourselves have a fuller understanding of one another's history and perspective. Diversity makes us stronger. It makes us more effective as an organization. We can make better decisions when we consider different perspectives and bring our collective experiences to bear. The FBI is committed to embracing diversity, and to creating and sustaining a workforce that reflects all segments of American society.

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

FBI Leadership Principles

Demonstrating Leadership

In your Demonstrating Leadership Self Directed Study Guide, you were introduced to the FBI's Leadership Competency Model (LCM).

The LCM Categories are:

- Personal Characteristics and Values
- Leading People
- Managing Work

Leadership, according to the FBI's competencies, is defined as the ability to motivate and inspire others; to develop and mentor others; to gain the respect, confidence and loyalty of others; to articulate a vision; to give guidance; and to direct others in accomplishing goals.

Combining strong personal characteristics and values, with the ability to lead people and manage work while mitigating problems, creates an effective FBI leader.

As a new hire, we would like you to focus more on the first category of the LCM, Personal Characteristics and Values. This category is an important first step in your overall development as a future leader in the FBI.

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

TOPIC TWO

Ethical Public Service

Holocaust: Law Enforcement and Society

The Holocaust Museum program will lead you through the museum using short videos, artifacts, and facilitated discussions.

Examining the Function and Role of Nazi Germany: A Historical Photograph Analysis Exercise

Museum Historians guide trainees virtually through an exercise in which they analyze historical photographs that illustrate the challenges that police officers faced, and decisions they made, in Germany during the Nazi era. Trainees examine motivational factors and the role of individual choices, as well as the changing purpose of law enforcement while functional duties remain the same.

Anti-Defamation League Contemporary Conversation

A facilitated interactive activity delivered by the Anti-Defamation League. Special Agents and Intelligence Analyst describe: the perception that the public has of them, their ideals about how the profession should be perceived, their core responsibilities and values, and the challenges they face in trying to realize their ideals and adequately balancing the twin duties of order maintenance and defense of individual liberty.

The [Law Enforcement and Society: Lessons of the Holocaust](#) is also available on the Museum website as part of the Museum's Law Enforcement and the Holocaust virtual program.

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

TOPIC THREE

Shaping the FBI

The FBI and Martin Luther King Jr.

Take home from Eyes on the Prize and Letters from Birmingham

The Civil Rights Movement was a mass movement brought on to secure the civil rights of black people. Dr. King was arguably the most prominent Civil Rights activist. He was said to have galvanized the Civil Rights Movement, which later resulted in the passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act.

Across the South, racial segregation was being radically challenged. As you saw in the video, protests against segregation garnered greater media attention and rapidly evolved into a recognizable, large-scale national movement. Local and state police strictly enforced segregation laws and a variety of obscure local ordinances with the intent to neutralize constitutionally-protected free speech and the rights of protestors to assemble peaceably. Under Jim Crow laws, blacks were treated as second class citizens. In many instances, brutalized and even killed because of the color of their skin. Local law enforcement was conspicuously absent or inactive when African-Americans and white supporters were attacked and beaten. The determination and increasingly brutal tactics of law enforcement to suppress protests thrust the struggle for civil rights onto the world stage and shook the conscience of many Americans.

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

TOPIC FOUR

Legal and Ethical Processes

The Attorney General's Guideline (AGG) and the Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)

The AGG and DIOG state:

“DIOG Section 4.1.3 Every FBI employee has the responsibility to ensure the activities of the FBI are lawful, appropriate, and ethical as well as effective in protecting the civil liberties and privacy of individuals in the United States.”

The DIOG and AGG act as a tool to balance how we conduct investigations and help prevent the same leadership decisions (mistakes) of the past from reoccurring without the appropriate predication and justification. These two guiding documents align FBI operations.

“We who enforce the law must not merely obey it. We have an obligation to set a moral example, which those whom we protect can follow. Because the FBI's success in accomplishing its mission is directly related to the support and cooperation of those we protect, these core values are the fiber which holds together the vitality of the institution” (Director Comey).

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

TOPIC FIVE

Reflection Questions

QUESTION #1:

After viewing the *Eyes on the Prize* video, what did you learn about the Civil Rights Movement? What was going on during this era?

QUESTION #2:

During the video you heard Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr speak several times. What was Dr. King's role in the Civil Rights Movement?

QUESTION #3: From your reading of the *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, as a leader, why do you think Dr. King was so effective during the Civil Rights Movement?

QUESTION #4: In this article, what was the Bureau's basis for trying to prevent Dr. King's commencement speech at Springfield College?

QUESTION #5: Overall, the Civil Rights Movement was mostly characterized by three major events. What do you think they were?

QUESTION#6: How does the Attorney General's Guidelines (AGG) and the Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG) play an important role in ensuring that our investigative process is ethically and legally sound?

US HMM & MLK MEMORIAL

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Hopefully, we have shed critical light about two events with historic significance. We hope examining and discussing them provided perspective to apply sound judgment in the decisions and actions that you will make throughout your FBI career.

Identifying and evaluating long-standing, complex situations objectively, and with clarity will always be an important requirement of your job.

The role you are about to take will not be an easy task. However, your individual character and courage will play a critical part in all that you encounter. The American people will expect you to be competent in the decisions you make. They expect you to be professional, courteous, and the voice of reason. And, as we (the FBI) head into the future as an intelligence-driven, threat-based agency, it will be the collaborative efforts of you working together as Special Agents and Intelligence Analysts to develop and use the tools you have been taught.

UNCLASSIFIED

Holocaust Museum and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Trip Agenda Basic Field Training Course

Overview

Integrated classes of New Agent Trainees (NATs) and New Intelligence Analysts Trainees (NIATs) will explore key concepts bearing upon the development of personal and professional judgment, ethical decision-making, and leadership in the context of the Holocaust and Civil Rights Movement using the example of Martin Luther King Jr.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The Holocaust Museum program draws on lessons learned from the Holocaust to challenge law enforcement officers to examine their relationship with the public, and explore issues related to the personal responsibility of officers to administer their authority in an ethical manner. This lesson also encourages Special Agents and Intelligence Analysts to see themselves as defenders of the Constitution and guardians against a repeat of the horrors of the Holocaust.

Agenda

- 7:00 am: Depart from FBI Academy to Holocaust Museum
- 8:15 am: Arrival and Introduction and Orientation
Overview of program schedule, rationale of the program, and setting the context for the guided tour, film clip: Nazi Rise to Power
- 8:30 am: Guided Tour of the Permanent Exhibition: *The Holocaust*
Tours are interactive and have a participant-to-tour guide ratio of 8:1
- 11:00 am: Return from tour/break (built in as buffer if guides are late returning from the tour)
- 11:15 am: Reflections
- 11:30 am: History of LE/Photo Analysis
Examining the Function and Role of Police in Nazi Germany: A Historical Photograph Analysis Exercise
A Museum Historian guides trainees through an exercise in which they analyze historical photographs that illustrate the challenges that police officers faced, and decisions they made, in Germany during the Nazi era. Trainees examine motivational factors and the role of individual choices, as well as the changing purpose of law enforcement while functional duties remain the same.

12:00 pm: ADL Contemporary Conversation

A facilitated interactive activity delivered by the Anti-Defamation League. Special Agents and Intelligence Analyst describe: the perception that the public has of them, their ideals about how the profession should be perceived, their core responsibilities and values, and the challenges they face in trying to realize their ideals and adequately balancing the twin duties of order maintenance and defense of individual liberty.

12:30 pm: Boxed lunch

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

The NATs and NIATs will explore the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in relation to the complex nature of the FBI's response to the non-violent political action of the Civil Rights Movement era. For example, after the Emmett Till murder trial and acquittal of his killers, his mother Mamie Till pressed the Federal Government to re-open the case. "Despite thousands of letters protesting the Mississippi's handling of the murder, President Dwight Eisenhower and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover ruled out federal investigation." Through trainee group discussions based on experiences at the MLK Memorial and the knowledge gained from the pre-requisite readings and videos, trainees will critically examine the judgment and decision-making process of the civil rights leaders, government officials, including leaders of the FBI, and ordinary Americans during this turbulent, but transformative period. Trainees will develop an understanding of how important "lessons learned" from the challenges of that historic period provided a basis for the FBI's core values (Obedience to the Constitution, Respect, Compassion, Fairness, Integrity, Accountability, Leadership, and Diversity). Trainees will also consider problematic issues similar to those confronting the Bureau during the Civil Rights Movement and propose practical strategies for action consistent with the core values and leadership principles they have learned.

Agenda

1:15 - 1:45 pm Travel to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

1:45 - 2:30 pm Main Sculpture Overview (*Stone of Hope*)

Quote Discussion

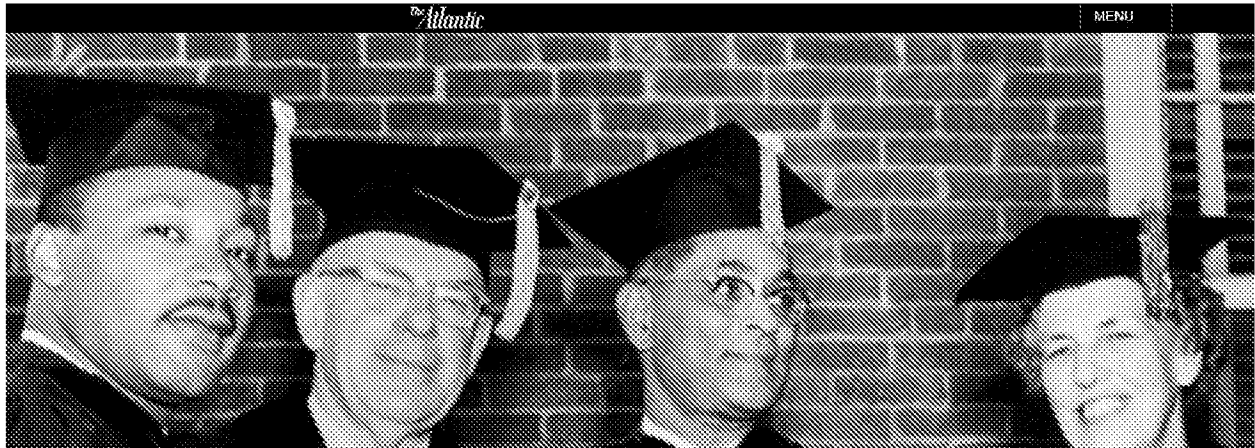
Fourteen quotes are engraved on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and come from Dr. King's earliest work in civil rights to the days of advancement in the 1960s. These timeless quotes reflect the inspirational power of Dr. King's words. Within their assigned groups, trainees will select a quote and reflect upon the historical relevance, meaning, and how the words apply to the FBI's Core Values and to their role as an FBI employee.

Based on the prerequisite videos and readings and the fourteen quotes engraved on the Memorial, trainees will engage in a brief overview of the Civil Rights Movement; discuss Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s role in the Civil Rights Movement; and discuss the FBI's Core Values and Leadership Competency Model

2:45 - 3:15 pm: Law Enforcement Memorial

3:15 - 4:30 pm: Travel to FBI Academy

UNCLASSIFIED



AP Photo

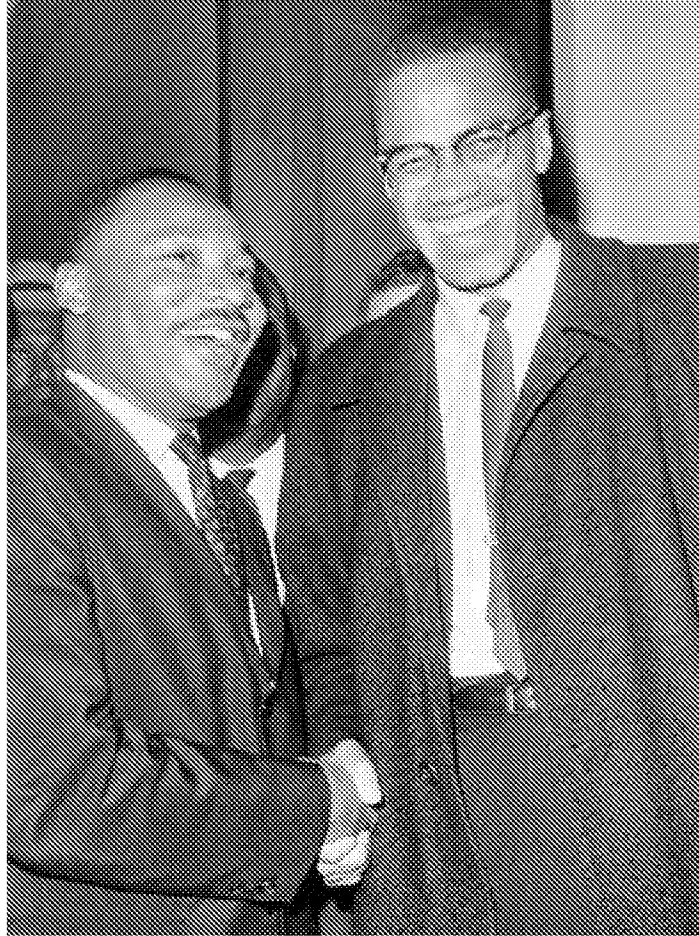
How the FBI Tried to Block Martin Luther King's Commencement Speech

The untold story of a government plot, a maverick college president, and the most important figure of the civil rights era

Martin Dobrow
June 11, 2014

Their one and only meeting lasted barely a minute. On March 26, 1964, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X came to Washington to observe the beginning of the Senate debate on the Civil Rights Act. They shook hands. They smiled for the cameras. As they parted, Malcolm said jokingly, "Now *you're* going to get investigated."

That, of course, was well underway. Ever since Attorney General Robert Kennedy had approved FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's request in October 1963, King had been the target of extraordinary wiretapping sanctioned by his own government. By this point, five months later, the taps were overflowing with data from King's home, his office, and the hotel rooms where he stayed.



Henry Griffin/AP Photo

The data the FBI mined—initially about King’s associations with Communists and later about his sexual life—was used in an attempt to, depending on your point of view, protect the country or destroy the civil rights leader. Hoover and his associates tried to get “highlights” to the press, the president, even Pope Paul VI. So pervasive was this effort that it extended all the way to the small campus in Western Massachusetts, Springfield College, where I have taught journalism for the past 15 years.

In early 1964, King was invited by Springfield President Glenn Olds to receive an honorary degree and deliver the commencement address on June 14. But just days after King accepted the invitation, the FBI tried to get the college to rescind it. The Bureau asked Massachusetts Senator Leverett Saltonstall, a corporator of Springfield College, to lean on Olds to “uninvite” King, based on damning details from the wiretap.

“I’m trying to wait until things cool off,” King said, “until this civil rights debate is over—as long as they may be tapping these phones, you know.”

King’s biographers have recorded little about this episode. Neither David Garrow nor Taylor Branch—who both won Pulitzers for books about King—ever mentioned Glenn Olds by name or title. Saltonstall is relegated to a one-sentence footnote in Garrow’s

The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr., a groundbreaking 1981 book that unmasked the Bureau's extensive surveillance of the civil rights leader. In the hardcover edition of Branch's 2006 book, *At Canaan's Edge*, the third volume of a towering trilogy about America in the King years that took more than two decades to create, the renowned historian wrote that Saltonstall had "helped block an honorary degree at Springfield College, by spreading the FBI's clandestine allegations that King was a philandering, subversive fraud."

There was just one problem with this lively statement. Nobody blocked an honorary degree for Martin Luther King at Springfield College.

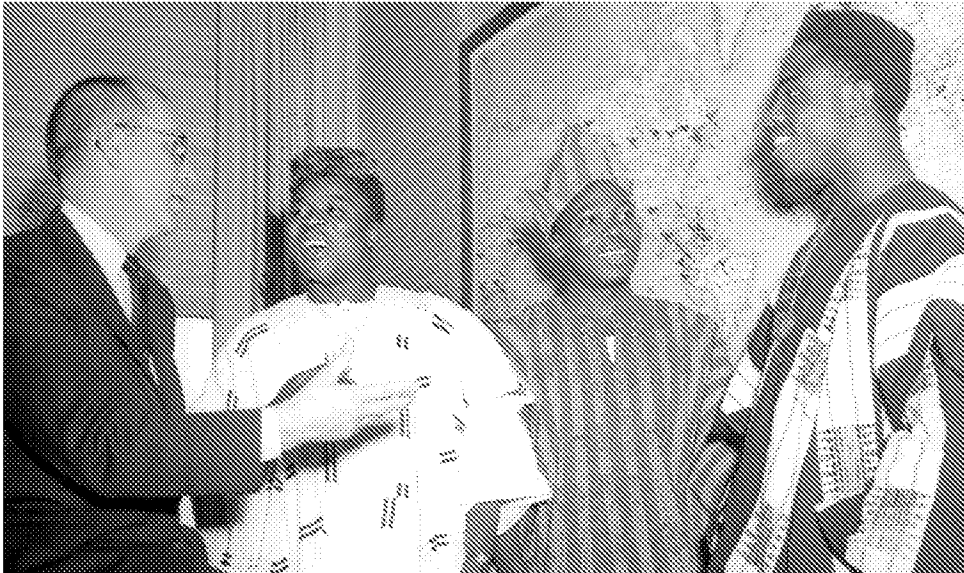
It was a small lapse by a formidable researcher and masterful storyteller. But lurking beneath this mistake is a great and almost entirely untold story about the most important figure of the civil rights era and a maverick college president facing his moment of truth.

The students in Springfield's class of 1964 lived a Forrest Gump-like connection with U.S. history. Born just after the attack on Pearl Harbor, they came to college at the dawn of a new decade. In the fall of their freshman year, Massachusetts' native son John F. Kennedy appeared at a rally in downtown Springfield one day, and got elected president of the United States the next. In the fall of their senior year, they flocked to the few black-and-white televisions on campus to join America's grim vigil when JFK was shot. The following June, they expected to turn their tassels from right to left in the presence of Martin Luther King.

For most of their college days, there was an innocence to this group of American youth, at a time just before the '60s became The Sixties. During their freshman year, they wore beanies. Their social worlds included hootenannies, panty raids, and carefully regulated visiting hours in single-sex dorms, with strict rules of "doors open, feet on the floor." Many students of the almost exclusively white class learned *The Twist* from Barry Brooks, a popular "Negro" student from Washington, D.C., who earned election to the Campus Activities Board.

These students, at the tail end of the so-called "Silent Generation," were less inclined to question authority or conventional wisdom than their younger siblings would later be. They'd also chosen to attend Springfield College, an old YMCA school, known as the birthplace of basketball and best regarded at the time for producing wholesome teachers of physical education. "It was," says Barry Brooks, "sort of an apple pie kind of place."

Members of the class were only vaguely familiar with Glenn Olds, who served as college president from 1958 to 1965. He was a trim and conservatively dressed man with receding blond hair and an engaging grin. He sometimes hosted groups of students at his on-campus house, serving apples, cheese, and water. He never drank alcohol or caffeine. He began each morning with calisthenics.



Glenn Olds meets with Nigerian students at Springfield College in 1963. (Springfield College Archives)

But there was nothing drab about him. Olds was a man marked by dazzling dualities. Raised by a Mormon mother and a Catholic father, he became a Methodist minister. Working from a young age as a logger and a ranch hand, he went on to get a Ph.D. from Yale, penning his dissertation on “The Nature of Moral Insight.” While at Springfield, he maintained an office in Washington, working on progressive programs for Democratic presidents—the Peace Corps for Kennedy and VISTA for Johnson—but later worked full-time for Nixon (and even later got fired by him). He was married three times and divorced twice—all to Eva Belle Spelts, a former “Ak-Sar-Ben Princess” from Nebraska. They are buried together on a mountainside in Oregon.

Glenn Olds would later go on to take over the presidency at Kent State in 1971, the year after National Guardsmen shot and killed four students who were protesting the Vietnam War. In 1986, without any experience as a political candidate, he would run as a Democrat for U.S. Senate from the state of Alaska, getting 45 percent of the vote, but losing to incumbent Frank Murkowski, whose daughter holds the seat to this day.

Olds could be an intimidating man. As a youngster in Oregon, he made money for his family by starring in “curtain raisers” at boxing matches. According to his son, Dick Olds, the founding dean of the UC-Riverside Medical School, Glenn never lost his swing. “I still remember vividly an event that occurred at Springfield College,” says Dick, who lived on campus from age 8 to 15. “There was a drunk guy in the student union. He was yelling stuff and knocking some things on the ground. My father went over to talk to him

and tell him that he needed to leave. The guy took a swing at my dad. My dad knocked him out, down on the floor, one punch. I'd never seen anything like that."

But Glenn Olds was also an ardent pacifist. As a senior at Willamette University, he stood with other clergy on the night of the Pearl Harbor attack, preventing marauders from charging into a Japanese-American farming enclave at Lake Labish. He sought religious exemption from the war as a conscientious objector—even as both of his brothers fought, one of them coming home wounded from Okinawa. In 2004, two years before his death, Olds told me that he had been disowned by his father, Glenn Olds Sr.: "He'd rather see a son of his dead than refuse to put on the uniform." That did not dissuade him. "I took the pacifist position to be essentially the one Jesus took," Olds said. "I thought I was on good historic ground."

Olds recalled Hoover's deputy playing him a tape "filled with vulgarity. I said, 'If you go public with this, I'm happy to hear it. Otherwise I don't want to hear any more of it.'"

During summers, Olds offered the Springfield campus as a site for Peace Corps training. At the 75th anniversary of the college in 1960, he brought in speakers who were renowned pacifists: Aldous Huxley, Margaret Mead, and Norman Cousins. So it was no real surprise when he sought out Martin Luther King as a commencement speaker in 1964.

"One may well ask, 'How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?' The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are just laws, and there are unjust laws."

By this point, King had been established as a paragon of pacifism, and his movement had started to gain national traction. Just a year before, in the spring of 1963, the fire hoses and gnashing dogs of Bull Connor's Birmingham, juxtaposed with the quiet dignity of black children and teenagers, had awakened much of America to the brutality of racism. A few months later, on a hot day in late August, the March on Washington had not devolved into a blood bath as some leaders feared. Instead it had become a beacon of peace and unity.

But there was, of course, the backlash. One day after President Kennedy first introduced the Civil Rights Act, Medgar Evers was killed by a white supremacist. And just 18 days after the March on Washington, four young girls in white dresses were murdered by a dynamite blast in a Birmingham church.

Two months after that, Martin Luther King watched the Kennedy assassination from a television in his Atlanta home. Turning to his wife Coretta, he said, "This is what's going to happen to me. This is such a sick society."

Glenn Olds had a couple of connections with the civil rights leader. One was through Andrew Young, King's close friend and a top associate with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Olds had come to know Young at a youth leadership

conference and on a Methodist preaching tour. The other connection was through a fellow college president in Massachusetts, Harold Case of Boston University, where King had gotten his doctorate. Olds apparently made his first contact with King in mid-March. A surviving letter in the Springfield College archives from Director of Public Information George Wood is dated March 24, 1964. Addressed to King at his home on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, the letter starts out:

Dear Mr. King,

The office of Dr. Glenn A. Olds, our president, has just informed me that you have accepted the invitation to be our Commencement speaker on Sunday, June 14, 1964.

The letter deals with logistical matters and also asks for "a current biography and as many glossy photographs of you as can be spared."

INFORMATION FROM RECIPIENT OF HONORARY DECREE

Name (in full as you would like it to appear on Diploma and program)

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Do you wish the College to provide: Gown? yes Cap? yes

If so, indicate: Height 5 ft 7 in. Chest Size: weight 155 lbs.

Hat Size: 7 1/4

Do you wish hotel reservations? yes. reservations for Dr. and Mrs. King
and Rev. Bernard Lee

Number in party 3 Time of arrival (will wire this information
to you in a few days)

Martin Luther King's completed cap and gown order form (Springfield College Archives)

Two days later, *The New York Times* reported that Olds and two others had been "named today to develop plans for key parts of the Administration's anti-poverty program, now pending in Congress."

That was also the day Malcolm X and King had their chance encounter in Washington. Malcolm was at a crossroads, 18 days after breaking from the Nation of Islam and 18 days before embarking on his pilgrimage to the Mideast. King was at the apex of his fame. He knew that the stakes surrounding the Civil Rights Act were high. All the restraint he had called for, all the belief in the American system, all of his credibility about the arc of the moral universe bending toward justice was invested in the passage of this law, widely regarded as the most important in the 20th century.

He knew it would not be easy. Just four days later, Southern senators launched what would prove to be an epic 10-week filibuster of the bill. Georgia's Richard Russell publicly proclaimed, "We will resist to the bitter end any measure or any movement which would have a tendency to bring about social equality and intermingling and amalgamation of the races in our states."

Far more secretively, just three days after that, the FBI turned its attention to keeping Martin Luther King away from Springfield College.

The initial April 2, 1964, memo from F.J. Baumgardner to Head of Domestic Intelligence W.C. Sullivan was heavily redacted when it was declassified years later, but it still spelled out the plan quite clearly. According to Baumgardner, the FBI had learned that both Springfield and Yale were considering King for honorary degrees. He said the Bureau was "initiating appropriate checks as to the availability of such established and reliable sources at these institutions which would permit the heading off of the conferring of honorary degrees to King." The strategy had already "prevented King from getting an honorary degree from Marquette University."

Baumgardner said the plan had been approved by J. Edgar Hoover: "The Director noted 'OK' relative to these intentions of ours."

The name of the "established and reliable" source—the person who would be sent to intercede at Springfield College—is redacted in every instance except one. That momentary lapse by the person with the dark black marker fills in the critical puzzle piece: "It should be made clear to *Saltonstall* [emphasis added] that the information is being given him in the strictest of confidence with the thought that he might desire to use it in preventing King from receiving an honorary degree from Springfield College and thus save that institution from embarrassment because of King's connections and character."

RECOMMENDATION:

If approved, DeLoach should personally orally brief [REDACTED] in accordance with the attached "Secret" summary indicating King's communist connections and [REDACTED] (This is the same summary we previously used in the Marquette University situation). It should be made clear to Saltonstall that the information is being given him in the strictest of confidence with the thought that he might desire to use it in preventing King from receiving an honorary degree from Springfield College and thus save that institution from embarrassment because of King's connections and character. It should be emphasized to [REDACTED] that under no circumstances may this information ever be attributed to the Bureau. b7(c)

A key name is accidentally revealed in an FBI memo from April 2, 1964, which details the plan to block King's commencement speech. (Springfield College Archives)

So who was this Leverett Saltonstall? He was 71 at the time, a World War I veteran in the midst of his fourth and final term as a Republican senator from Massachusetts. He was Boston Brahmin to the core: he had Mayflower ancestry, and was the 10th generation of his family to attend Harvard, where he rowed crew and played hockey.

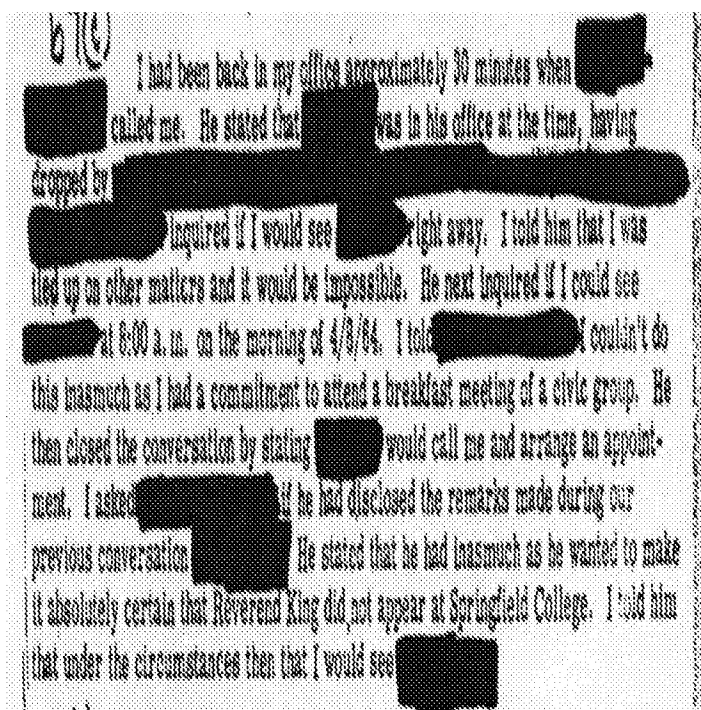
On April 10, 1944, when Saltonstall was a third-term governor of Massachusetts, he had been featured on the cover of *Time*. That article had described him in memorable fashion:

His engagingly homely face is his No. 1 political asset, with its drooping eyelids, lean cheeks, long nose, wide-spaced teeth, and the famed 'cow-catcher chin.' That reassuring face has been termed 'a well-worn American antique' and 'the most distinctive face in U.S. public life.' Deviousness would have a hard time finding a hiding place there. It is a face New Englanders trust.

As a corporator for Springfield College—an elected but largely ceremonial role once played by John F. Kennedy (the 1956 commencement speaker)—Saltonstall was seldom consulted on college business. But in this instance, he was brought deeply into the drama, as detailed by a second FBI memo—a fascinating one penned the evening of Wednesday, April 8, by Cartha "Deke" DeLoach, one of Hoover's top associates.

DeLoach wrote that he had met with Saltonstall on April 7, and that the senator's response to the wiretap details on King had been stark. He "was shocked to receive this information. He stated it was hardly believable. He said if it were not for the integrity of the FBI, he would disbelieve such facts."

DeLoach reported that the senator felt "duty bound" to share the information with Glenn Olds, whom he "described ... as a very outstanding individual who could be trusted implicitly." (Olds' name is redacted throughout, but obvious through context.)



An FBI memo from April 8 recounts a meeting with college president Glenn Olds. Click the image above to view the full memo in a new window. (Springfield College Archives)

Saltonstall did indeed meet with Olds later that day, and he spread the FBI's dirt on King—but apparently had some misgivings about doing so. He called the Bureau right back and asked if DeLoach would be willing to meet directly with Olds. DeLoach agreed to meet with the Springfield president at the FBI office on April 8 at 4 p.m.

According to DeLoach's memo, Olds "opened the conversation by stating that he fully recognized the necessity to keep the information concerning King in strict confidence." Olds was "very shocked" by the information provided by Saltonstall, who "had insisted that Reverend King be prevented from making the commencement address at Springfield College."

Despite this insistence, Olds "stated that due to the fact that he will keep this information confidential, it would be impossible ... to 'uninvite' King to make the appearance at Springfield College."

Though he didn't deliver the goods, Olds did leave the door ajar. A few sentences later, DeLoach reported that Olds "said he wanted to think about the possibility of preventing King from making the address but at this step of the game he did not see how it could be done."

Before leaving, Olds "expressed a desire to shake hands with the Director some day" and indicated that Springfield College had extended to Hoover "two invitations in the recent past to receive an honorary degree and make the commencement address."

When I spoke to him 40 years later, in 2004, Olds—then a man of 83 with some health issues—claimed that he had received a follow-up call in which DeLoach played some of the wiretapped material: "Hoover's deputy called me to dissuade me from giving him a degree. He started to play a tape, ostensibly of King. It was filled with vulgarity. I said, 'Are you willing to go public with this? If you go public with this, I'm happy to hear it. Otherwise I don't want to hear any more of it.' He said, 'God, we can't go public.' So I hung up on him."

Whether or not it went down exactly that way is hard to know, but there is at least one piece of evidence to suggest that Olds struggled under the pressure. A typed April 15 memo on onion-skin paper from Springfield College's Director of Public Information George D. Wood Jr., addressed to Olds and cc'd to four other administrators, stated:

At our staff meeting of Public Affairs held Tuesday, April 14 it was indicated that there was still some doubt that an honorary degree will be awarded to Dr. Martin Luther King during Commencement Exercises held here on June 14, 1964...

It is my belief that not to accord him the honorary degree will constitute an error of omission that—in the light of current national interest—could result in much unfavorable criticism of the College, not only from various minority groups, but from many other groups and factions across the land.

As one concerned with the interpretive and public relations aspects of the College—especially concerned with respect to the events of June 14, which will find great attention focused on the institution—I urge that Dr. King be awarded an honorary degree in the company of other distinguished persons who will be so honored that day.

Olds was certainly not the first leader to ever waver on a challenging issue of principle. He thought it through again and again, trying his best to tap into his old dissertation about "The Nature of Moral Insight." It's impossible to know how much sleep he lost, how many soul-searching questions he posed.

But a couple of days later, on April 17, his decision had been made. The front-page headline of the Springfield student newspaper proclaimed: "World Famous Civil Rights Leader to Speak at June Commencement." Martin Luther King was signed, sealed, and all but delivered to present the commencement address on June 14, 1964.

Until he was arrested in St. Augustine, Florida, on June 11.

King had arrived in St. Augustine in May as the filibuster for the Civil Rights Act dragged on and on. He needed a cause that would dramatize injustice and the perils of segregation, and he got more than his money's worth in St. Augustine. The small seaside tourist attraction was brimming with symbolism. It was the nation's oldest city, continually occupied since the Spanish arrived in 1565. Much of the black population lived in a section known as Lincolnville. And the center of the historic district was La Plaza de la Constitucion, where an open-air pavilion dating back to the early 19th century is known to this day as the slave market.

The Ku Klux Klan presence was intense in St. Augustine. King learned about the racial strife from Robert Hayling, a dentist and youth leader of the local NAACP, who had been captured, beaten, and almost burned alive at a Klan rally the previous September. Hayling had appealed to King and his organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, to come to St. Augustine for a campaign of direct action.

The level of violence was startling. Nighttime marches from Lincolnville to the slave market were intercepted by white supremacists, who had gathered to hear from a fiery trio. Traveling Klan "minister" Connie Lynch proclaimed, "Hitler was a great man" and described the outside agitator of choice as "Martin Lucifer Coon." J.B. Stoner, a future lawyer for James Earl Ray, thundered, "We won't be put in chains by no civil rights bill!" And local leader Hoss Manucy, head of the Klan-affiliated Ancient City Hunting Club, told *Harpers* magazine, "My boys are here to fight niggers!"

The Klansmen greeted the protesters with blackjacks, bricks, and bicycle chains. One night, Andrew Young was knocked to the ground and savagely kicked in the back and the groin. Young told me this year at a civil rights conference in Austin that St. Augustine was unique in the movement in one respect: "It was the only place where our hospital bills were greater than our bond bills."

When King came down to St. Augustine, he was moved from place to place for his own protection. On May 28, the address of a cottage that had been rented for him was printed in the local paper; that night someone blasted it with gunfire, though King was not there. (A photo of him pointing to a bullet hole in a sliding glass door has become the St. Augustine movement's most enduring image.)



Martin Luther King investigates a bullet hole in the glass door of his rented cottage in St. Augustine on June 5, 1964. (Jim Kerlin/AP Photo)

Years later, the reporter Marshall Frady drew a memorable portrait of King during this period. Escaping from one evening's mayhem, Frady wrote, "I happened to glimpse, in the shadows of a front porch, all by himself and apparently unnoticed by anyone else, King standing in his shirtsleeves, his hands on his hips, absolutely motionless as he watched the marchers straggling past him in the dark, bleeding, clothes torn, sobs and wails now welling up everywhere around him—and on his face a look of stricken astonishment." He describes the man he observed in St. Augustine as "extraordinarily harrowed."

King no doubt felt that the viability of his treasured nonviolence was in jeopardy as never before. Just one breach down in St. Augustine—no matter how understandable amid the provocation—could, in the gathering age of television, torpedo the Civil Rights Act. At a press conference on June 5, King said, "We have worked in some difficult communities, but we have never worked in one as lawless as this." He also wired President Johnson to request federal protection, saying, "All semblance of law and order has broken down in St. Augustine."

A reporter observed King standing alone in the dark, watching the bloodied protesters with "a look of stricken astonishment."

On June 11, the day after the filibuster was finally broken, King kept the media's attention on the still-pending Civil Rights Act when he attempted to order food at the whites-only Monson Motor Lodge. It was the hottest day of the year, according to records from nearby Jacksonville: The sunshine blazed, the humidity was thick, the air difficult to breathe. King was arrested, along with 16 others, and under the watchful eye of segregationist sheriff L.O. Davis, he spent the night in the sweltering confines of St. John's County Jail.

The next day, June 12, King was indicted on charges that included violating Florida's "unwanted guest law." He spent a few hours testifying to a grand jury about the racial climate in St. Augustine. Then he was whisked away in the back of a highway patrol car, sitting next to a German shepherd—transferred to the Duval County Jail 40 miles north in Jacksonville, apparently for his own safety.

King was still behind bars on Saturday, June 13. The commencement at Springfield College, more than 1,000 miles north, was scheduled for the next day.



The manager of the Monson Motor Lodge restaurant blocks Martin Luther King and Ralph Abernathy at the door as they try to enter with a group on June 11, 1964. (AP Photo)

Glenn Olds was stewing. As he followed the news of King's incarceration through newspaper accounts, he worried that he was going to have to find another commencement speaker in a hurry. In our 2004 interview, he told me he had contacted St. Augustine Mayor Joseph Shelley and pleaded with him for King's release.

"This is a very big thing for us at Springfield," Olds remembered telling the mayor. When Shelley balked, Olds snapped that he would send college trustee Julian Sprague down to Florida in a private plane to have King record the graduation speech from behind bars. "We will broadcast King's commencement address, not only to our students, but

you will have a real national audience,” Olds said. “This will give you some real visibility. You’re holding King because he sat at a lunch counter ... in America!”

Olds also told me that after the arrest he received a call from one of Springfield College’s largest benefactors, a local businessman poised to make a \$1 million donation to the school. He insisted that Olds come down to his house. “His jowls, I can still see them,” Olds recalled. “He was shaking with such rage: ‘I’ve just been told you’re giving that goddamned black man an honorary degree.’” The donor allegedly opened a desk drawer, yanked out a check, and tore it up in front of Olds’ face.

These are colorful stories, if hard to verify. This much is indisputable, though: Martin Luther King was released from jail on \$900 bond on June 13. On Sunday, he landed at Bradley Air Field, along with Coretta Scott King and SCLC aide Bernard Lee. They were greeted by education professor Robert Markarian, who drove them back to Springfield. They arrived on campus, where King donned his academic regalia (a size 7 ¼ cap, and a gown to fit his 5-7, 168-pound frame, according to archival records).



Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King walk across the Springfield campus with SCLC aide Bernard Lee. (Jeanne Haley/Springfield College Archives)

The Springfield-Union reported that the college had received “scores of telephone threats” and that police had led bomb-sniffing dogs around campus in the morning. The paper also claimed that members of a Black Muslim group had distributed papers outside the Alumni Field House warning, “The next chapter may not be nonviolent.”

Inside the jam-packed building, King was introduced by Glenn Olds and then spoke for half an hour. He thanked Olds, complimented the college, and briefly referenced his time in jail in Florida (“I need not pause to say how very delighted I am to be here this afternoon. I must confess that I felt about this time yesterday afternoon that I wouldn’t be here”). He spoke about segregation (“the Negro’s burden and America’s shame”), about pacifism (“it is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence; it is either nonviolence or non-existence”), and about the importance of leading a moral life (“it’s always the right time to do right”). He referenced Jesus and Gandhi. He encouraged students to cultivate a “world perspective.” He implored them to consider “standing up with determination” when they encountered injustice, and “resisting it with all of one’s might.”

Many of the members of the Class of 1964 remember the speech as riveting and influential. “Anybody who was at that commencement and heard King, even if they harbored negative feelings about people of color, had to come away thinking, ‘My gosh, what a dignified, intelligent, inspirational man,’” recalled class president Kevin Gottlieb. “We didn’t know who the hell he was. He had to prove himself to all of us. And he just wiped me out. I just thought it was incredible.”

King went on to get an honorary degree at Yale the next day, then returned later in the month to Florida. On June 29, Malcolm X—recently back from his pilgrimage to Mecca—sent a Western Union telegram to King in St. Augustine that read:

We have been witnessing with great concern the vicious attacks of the white race against our poor defenseless people there in St. Augustine. If the federal government will not send troops to your aid, just say the word and we will immediately dispatch some of our brothers there to organize self defense units among our people and the Ku Klux Klan will then receive a taste of its own medicine. The day of turning the other cheek to those brute beasts is over.

It’s unknown whether Malcolm ever received a response to his telegram. What is known is this: Three days later, on July 2, 1964, Martin Luther King was back in Washington, accepting a pen from President Johnson who had just signed the Civil Rights Act into law.

-
- Martin Dobrow is an associate professor of communications at Springfield College. He is the author of a forthcoming book about the period between the March on Washington and the passage of the Civil Rights Act.
-

AUGUST 1963

Letter from Birmingham Jail

by Martin Luther King, Jr.

From the Birmingham jail, where he was imprisoned as a participant in nonviolent demonstrations against segregation, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote in longhand the letter which follows. It was his response to a public statement of concern and caution issued by eight white religious leaders of the South. Dr. King, who was born in 1929, did his undergraduate work at Morehouse College; attended the integrated Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, one of six black pupils among a hundred students, and the president of his class; and won a fellowship to Boston University for his Ph.D.

WHILE confined here in the Birmingham city jail, I came across your recent statement calling our present activities "unwise and untimely." Seldom, if ever, do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas. If I sought to answer all of the criticisms that cross my desk, my secretaries would be engaged in little else in the course of the day, and I would have no time for constructive work. But since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I would like to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I think I should give the reason for my being in Birmingham, since you have been influenced by the argument of "outsiders coming in." I have the honor of serving as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization operating in every Southern state, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. We have some eighty-five affiliate organizations all across the South, one being the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. Whenever necessary and possible, we share staff, educational and financial resources with our affiliates. Several months ago our local affiliate here in Birmingham invited us to be on call to engage in a nonviolent direct-action program if such were deemed necessary. We readily consented, and when the hour came we lived up to our promises. So I am here, along with several members of my staff, because we were invited here. I am here because I have basic organizational ties here.

Beyond this, I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the eighth-century prophets left their little villages and carried their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their hometowns; and just as the Apostle Paul left his little village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to practically every hamlet and city of the Greco-Roman world, I too am compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my particular hometown. Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the Macedonian call for aid.

Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider.

You deplore the demonstrations that are presently taking place in Birmingham. But I am sorry that your statement did not express a similar concern for the conditions that brought the demonstrations into being. I am sure that each of you would want to go beyond the superficial social analyst who looks merely at effects and does not grapple with underlying causes. I would not hesitate to say that it is unfortunate that so-called demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham at this time, but I would say in more emphatic terms that it is even more unfortunate that the white power structure of this city left the Negro community with no other alternative.

IN ANY nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive, negotiation, self-purification, and direct action. We have gone through all of these steps in Birmingham. There can be no gainsaying of the fact that racial injustice engulfs this community. Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of police brutality is known in every section of this country. Its unjust treatment of Negroes in the courts is a notorious reality. There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any other city in this nation. These are the hard, brutal, and unbelievable facts. On the basis of them, Negro leaders sought to negotiate with the city fathers. But the political leaders consistently refused to engage in good-faith negotiation.

Then came the opportunity last September to talk with some of the leaders of the economic community. In these negotiating sessions certain promises were made by the merchants, such as the promise to remove the humiliating racial signs from the stores. On the basis of these promises, Reverend Shuttlesworth and the leaders of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights agreed to call a moratorium on any type of demonstration. As the weeks and months unfolded, we realized that we were the victims of a broken promise. The signs remained. As in so many experiences of the past, we were confronted with blasted hopes, and the dark shadow of a deep disappointment settled upon us. So we had no alternative except that of preparing for direct action, whereby we would present our very bodies as a means of laying our case before the conscience of the local and national community. We were not unmindful of the difficulties involved. So we decided to go through a process of self-purification. We

started having workshops on nonviolence and repeatedly asked ourselves the questions, "Are you able to accept blows without retaliating?" and "Are you able to endure the ordeals of jail?" We decided to set our direct-action program around the Easter season, realizing that, with exception of Christmas, this was the largest shopping period of the year. Knowing that a strong economic withdrawal program would be the by-product of direct action, we felt that this was the best time to bring pressure on the merchants for the needed changes. Then it occurred to us that the March election was ahead, and so we speedily decided to postpone action until after election day. When we discovered that Mr. Conner was in the runoff, we decided again to postpone action so that the demonstration could not be used to cloud the issues. At this time we agreed to begin our nonviolent witness the day after the runoff.

This reveals that we did not move irresponsibly into direct action. We, too, wanted to see Mr. Conner defeated, so we went through postponement after postponement to aid in this community need. After this we felt that direct action could be delayed no longer.

You may well ask, "Why direct action, why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has consistently refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. I just referred to the creation of tension as a part of the work of the nonviolent resister. This may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word "tension." I have earnestly worked and preached against violent tension, but there is a type of constructive nonviolent tension that is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, we must see the need of having nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men to rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood. So, the purpose of direct action is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. We therefore concur with you in your call for negotiation. Too long has our beloved Southland been bogged down in the tragic attempt to live in monologue rather than dialogue.

One of the basic points in your statement is that our acts are untimely. Some have asked, "Why didn't you give the new administration time to act?" The only answer that I can give to this inquiry is that the new administration must be prodded about as much as the outgoing one before it acts. We will be sadly mistaken if we feel that the election of Mr. Boutwell will bring the millennium to Birmingham. While Mr. Boutwell is much more articulate and gentle than Mr. Conner, they are both segregationists, dedicated to the task of maintaining the status quo. The hope I see in Mr. Boutwell is that he will be reasonable enough to see the futility of massive resistance to desegregation. But he will not see this without pressure from the devotees of civil rights. My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. History is the long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust posture; but, as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups are more immoral than individuals.

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have never yet engaged in a direct-action movement that was "well timed" according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "wait." It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This "wait" has almost always meant "never." It has been a tranquilizing thalidomide, relieving the emotional stress for a moment, only to give birth to an ill-formed infant of frustration. We must come to see with the distinguished jurist of yesterday that "justice too long delayed is justice denied." We have waited for more than three hundred and forty years for our God-given and constitutional rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward the goal of political independence, and we still creep at horse-and-buggy pace toward the gaining of a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. I guess it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say "wait." But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick, brutalize, and even kill your black brothers and sisters with impunity; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she cannot go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her little eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see the depressing clouds of inferiority begin to form in her little mental sky, and see her begin to distort her little personality by unconsciously developing a bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son asking in agonizing pathos, "Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?"; when you take a cross-country drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading "white" and "colored"; when your first name becomes "nigger" and your middle name becomes "boy" (however old you are) and your last name becomes "John," and when your wife and mother are never given the respected title "Mrs."; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never knowing what to expect next, and plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of "nobodyness" -- then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over and men are no longer willing to be plunged into an abyss of injustice where they experience the bleakness of corroding despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.

YOU express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, it is rather strange and paradoxical to find us consciously breaking laws. One may well ask, "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are just laws, and there are unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "An unjust law is no law at all."

Now, what is the difference between the two? How does one determine when a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law, or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. To use the words of Martin Buber, the great Jewish philosopher, segregation substitutes an "I - it" relationship for the "I - thou" relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things. So segregation is not only politically, economically, and sociologically unsound, but it is morally wrong and sinful. Paul Tillich has said that sin is separation. Isn't segregation an existential expression of man's tragic separation, an expression of his awful estrangement, his terrible sinfulness? So I can urge men to obey the 1954 decision of the Supreme Court because it is morally right, and I can urge them to disobey segregation ordinances because they are morally wrong.

Let us turn to a more concrete example of just and unjust laws. An unjust law is a code that a majority inflicts on a minority that is not binding on itself. This is difference made legal. On the other hand, a just law is a code that a majority compels a minority to follow, and that it is willing to follow itself. This is sameness made legal.

Let me give another explanation. An unjust law is a code inflicted upon a minority which that minority had no part in enacting or creating because it did not have the unhampered right to vote. Who can say that the legislature of Alabama which set up the segregation laws was democratically elected? Throughout the state of Alabama all types of conniving methods are used to prevent Negroes from becoming registered voters, and there are some counties without a single Negro registered to vote, despite the fact that the Negroes constitute a majority of the population. Can any law set up in such a state be considered democratically structured?

These are just a few examples of unjust and just laws. There are some instances when a law is just on its face and unjust in its application. For instance, I was arrested Friday on a charge of parading without a permit. Now, there is nothing wrong with an ordinance which requires a permit for a parade, but when the ordinance is used to preserve segregation and to deny citizens the First Amendment privilege of peaceful assembly and peaceful protest, then it becomes unjust.

Of course, there is nothing new about this kind of civil disobedience. It was seen sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar because a higher moral law was involved. It was practiced superbly by the early Christians, who were willing to face hungry lions and the excruciating pain of chopping blocks before submitting to certain unjust laws of the Roman Empire. To a degree, academic freedom is a reality today because Socrates practiced civil disobedience.

We can never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was "legal" and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was "illegal." It was "illegal" to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. But I am sure that if I had lived in Germany during that time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers even though it was illegal. If I lived in a Communist country today where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I believe I would openly advocate disobeying these anti-religious laws.

I MUST make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the last few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in the stride toward freedom is not the White Citizens Councillor or the Ku Klux Klanner but the white moderate who is more devoted to order than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says, "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can't agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically feels that he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by the myth of time; and who constantly advises the Negro to wait until a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.

In your statement you asserted that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But can this assertion be logically made? Isn't this like condemning the robbed man because his possession of money precipitated the evil act of robbery? Isn't this like condemning Socrates because his unswerving commitment to truth and his philosophical delvings precipitated the misguided popular mind to make him drink the hemlock? Isn't this like condemning Jesus because His unique God-consciousness and never-ceasing devotion to His will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion? We must come to see, as federal courts have consistently affirmed, that it is immoral to urge an individual to withdraw his efforts to gain his basic constitutional rights because the quest precipitates violence. Society must protect the robbed and punish the robber.

I had also hoped that the white moderate would reject the myth of time. I received a letter this morning from a white brother in Texas which said, "All Christians know that the colored people will receive equal rights eventually, but is it possible that you are in too great of a religious hurry? It has taken Christianity almost 2000 years to accomplish what it has. The teachings of Christ take time to come to earth." All that is said here grows out of a tragic misconception of time. It is the strangely irrational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually, time is neutral. It can be used either destructively or constructively. I am coming to feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of men willing to be coworkers with God, and without this hard work time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation.

YOU spoke of our activity in Birmingham as extreme. At first I was rather disappointed that fellow clergymen would see my nonviolent efforts as those of an extremist. I started thinking about the fact that I stand in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One is a force of complacency made up of Negroes who, as a result of long years of oppression, have been so completely drained of self-respect and a sense of "somebodiness" that they have adjusted to segregation, and, on the other hand, of a few Negroes in the middle class who, because of a degree of academic and economic security and because at points they profit by segregation, have unconsciously become insensitive to the problems of the masses. The other force is one of bitterness and hatred and comes perilously close to advocating violence. It is expressed in the various black nationalist groups that are springing up over the nation, the largest and best known being Elijah Muhammad's Muslim movement. This movement is nourished by the contemporary frustration over the continued existence of racial discrimination. It is made up of people who have lost faith in America, who have absolutely repudiated Christianity, and who have concluded that the white man is an incurable devil. I have tried to stand between these two forces, saying that we need not follow the do-nothingism of the complacent or the hatred and despair of the black nationalist. There is a more excellent way, of love and nonviolent protest. I'm grateful to God that, through the Negro church, the dimension of nonviolence entered our struggle. If this philosophy had not emerged, I am convinced that by now many streets of the South would be flowing with floods of blood. And I am further convinced that if our white brothers dismiss as "rabble-rousers" and "outside agitators" those of us who are working through the channels of nonviolent direct action and refuse to support our nonviolent efforts, millions of Negroes, out of frustration and despair, will seek solace and security in black nationalist ideologies, a development that will lead inevitably to a frightening racial nightmare.

Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever. The urge for freedom will eventually come. This is what has happened to the American Negro. Something within has reminded him of his birthright of freedom; something without has reminded him that he can gain it. Consciously and unconsciously, he has been swept in by what the Germans call the *Zeitgeist*, and with his black brothers of Africa and his brown and yellow brothers of Asia, South America, and the Caribbean, he is moving with a sense of cosmic urgency toward the promised land of racial justice. Recognizing this vital urge that has engulfed the Negro community, one should readily understand public demonstrations. The Negro has many pent-up resentments and latent frustrations. He has to get them out. So let him march sometime; let him have his prayer pilgrimages to the city hall; understand why he must have sit-ins and freedom rides. If his repressed emotions do not come out in these nonviolent ways, they will come out in ominous expressions of violence. This is not a threat; it is a fact of history. So I have not said to my people, "Get rid of your discontent." But I have tried to say that this normal and healthy discontent can be channeled through the creative outlet of nonviolent direct action. Now this approach is being dismissed as extremist. I must admit that I was initially disappointed in being so categorized.

But as I continued to think about the matter, I gradually gained a bit of satisfaction from being considered an extremist. Was not Jesus an extremist in love? -- "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." Was not Amos an extremist for justice? -- "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." Was not Paul an extremist for the gospel of Jesus Christ? -- "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Was not Martin Luther an extremist? -- "Here I stand; I can do no other so help me God." Was not John Bunyan an extremist? -- "I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a mockery of my conscience." Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist? -- "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free." Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist? -- "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." So the question is not whether we will be extremist, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate, or will we be extremists for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice, or will we be extremists for the cause of justice?

I had hoped that the white moderate would see this. Maybe I was too optimistic. Maybe I expected too much. I guess I should have realized that few members of a race that has oppressed another race can understand or appreciate the deep groans and passionate yearnings of those that have been oppressed, and still fewer have the vision to see that injustice must be rooted out by strong, persistent, and determined action. I am thankful, however, that some of our white brothers have grasped the meaning of this social revolution and committed themselves to it. They are still all too small in quantity, but they are big in quality. Some, like Ralph McGill, Lillian Smith, Harry Golden, and James Dabbs, have written about our struggle in eloquent, prophetic, and understanding terms. Others have marched with us down nameless streets of the South. They sat in with us at lunch counters and rode in with us on the freedom rides. They have languished in filthy roach-infested jails, suffering the abuse and brutality of angry policemen who see them as "dirty nigger lovers." They, unlike many of their moderate brothers, have recognized the urgency of the moment and sensed the need for powerful "action" antidotes to combat the disease of segregation.

LET me rush on to mention my other disappointment. I have been disappointed with the white church and its leadership. Of course, there are some notable exceptions. I am not unmindful of the fact that each of you has taken some significant stands on this issue. I commend you, Reverend Stallings, for your Christian stand this past Sunday in welcoming Negroes to your Baptist Church worship service on a nonsegregated basis. I commend the Catholic leaders of this state for integrating Springhill College several years ago.

But despite these notable exceptions, I must honestly reiterate that I have been disappointed with the church. I do not say that as one of those negative critics who can always find something wrong with the church. I say it as a minister of the gospel who loves the church, who was nurtured in its bosom, who has been sustained by its Spiritual blessings, and who will remain true to it as long as the cord of life shall lengthen.

I had the strange feeling when I was suddenly catapulted into the leadership of the bus protest in Montgomery several years ago that we would have the support of the white church. I felt that the white ministers, priests, and rabbis of the South would be some of our strongest allies. Instead, some few have been outright opponents, refusing to understand the freedom movement and misrepresenting its leaders; all too many others have been more cautious than courageous and have remained silent behind the anesthetizing security of stained-glass windows.

In spite of my shattered dreams of the past, I came to Birmingham with the hope that the white religious leadership of this community would see the justice of our cause and with deep moral concern serve as the channel through which our just grievances could get to the power structure. I had hoped that each of you would understand. But again I have been disappointed.

I have heard numerous religious leaders of the South call upon their worshipers to comply with a desegregation decision because it is the law, but I have longed to hear white ministers say, follow this decree because integration is morally right and the Negro is your brother. In the midst of blatant injustices inflicted upon the Negro, I have watched white churches stand on the sidelines and merely mouth pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities. In the midst of a mighty struggle to rid our nation of racial and economic injustice, I have heard so many ministers say, "Those are social issues which the gospel has nothing to do with," and I have watched so many churches commit themselves to a completely otherworldly religion which made a strange distinction between bodies and souls, the sacred and the secular.

There was a time when the church was very powerful. It was during that period that the early Christians rejoiced when they were deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was the thermostat that transformed the mores of society. Wherever the early Christians entered a town the power structure got disturbed and immediately sought to convict them for being "disturbers of the peace" and "outside agitators." But they went on with the conviction that they were "a colony of heaven" and had to obey God rather than man. They were small in number but big in commitment. They were too God-intoxicated to be "astronomically intimidated." They brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contest.

Things are different now. The contemporary church is so often a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. It is so often the arch supporter of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's often vocal sanction of things as they are.

But the judgment of God is upon the church as never before. If the church of today does not recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authentic ring, forfeit the loyalty of millions, and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twentieth century. I meet young people every day whose disappointment with the church has risen to outright disgust.

I hope the church as a whole will meet the challenge of this decisive hour. But even if the church does not come to the aid of justice, I have no despair about the future. I have no fear about the outcome of our struggle in Birmingham, even if our motives are presently misunderstood. We will reach the goal of freedom in Birmingham and all over the nation, because the goal of America is freedom. Abused and scorned though we may be, our destiny is tied up with the destiny of America. Before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, we were here. Before the pen of Jefferson scratched across the pages of history the majestic word of the Declaration of Independence, we were here. For more than two centuries our foreparents labored here without wages; they made cotton king; and they built the homes of their masters in the midst of brutal injustice and shameful humiliation -- and yet out of a bottomless vitality our people continue to thrive and develop. If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands.

I must close now. But before closing I am impelled to mention one other point in your statement that troubled me profoundly. You warmly commended the Birmingham police force for keeping "order" and "preventing violence." I don't believe you would have so warmly commended the police force if you had seen its angry violent dogs literally biting six unarmed, nonviolent Negroes. I don't believe you would so quickly commend the policemen if you would observe their ugly and inhuman treatment of Negroes here in the city jail; if you would watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls; if you would see them slap and kick old Negro men and young boys, if you would observe them, as they did on two occasions, refusing to give us food because we wanted to sing our grace together. I'm sorry that I can't join you in your praise for the police department.

It is true that they have been rather disciplined in their public handling of the demonstrators. In this sense they have been publicly "nonviolent." But for what purpose? To preserve the evil system of segregation. Over the last few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. So I have tried to make it clear that it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends. But now I must affirm that it is just as wrong, or even more, to use moral means to preserve immoral ends.

I wish you had commended the Negro demonstrators of Birmingham for their sublime courage, their willingness to suffer, and their amazing discipline in the midst of the most inhuman provocation. One day the South will recognize its real heroes. They will be the James Merediths, courageously and with a majestic sense of purpose facing jeering and hostile mobs and the agonizing loneliness that characterizes the life of the pioneer. They will be old, oppressed, battered Negro women, symbolized in a seventy-two-year-old woman of Montgomery, Alabama, who rose up with a sense of dignity and with her people decided not to ride the segregated buses, and responded to one who inquired about her tiredness with ungrammatical profundity, "My feet is tired, but my soul is rested." They will be young high school and college students, young ministers of the gospel and a host of their elders courageously and nonviolently sitting in at lunch counters and willingly going to jail for conscience's sake. One day the South will know that when these disinherited children of God sat down at lunch counters they were in reality standing up for the best in the American dream and the most sacred values in our Judeo-Christian heritage.

Never before have I written a letter this long -- or should I say a book? I'm afraid that it is much too long to take your precious time. I can assure you that it would have been much shorter if I had been writing from a comfortable desk, but what else is there to do when you are alone for days in the dull monotony of a narrow jail cell other than write long letters, think strange thoughts, and pray long prayers?

If I have said anything in this letter that is an understatement of the truth and is indicative of an unreasonable impatience, I beg you to forgive me. If I have said anything in this letter that is an overstatement of the truth and is indicative of my having a patience that makes me patient with anything less than brotherhood, I beg God to forgive me.

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood,

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Copyright © 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. All rights reserved.

The Atlantic Monthly, August 1963; The Negro Is Your Brother; Volume 212, No. 2; pages 78 - 88.