

“Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such forms as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.”

—Declaration of Independence

# THE MURDER OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

## The Movement Has Collapsed

The Movement has collapsed,” said Lu Palmer, former chairman of the Chicago Black United Communities. This statement is taken from an article by Peter Applebom in the News and Observer, April 2, 1970). The article is titled, “Civil Rights groups struggle to adapt to changes.

The dinosaur became extinct because they could not adapt sufficiently to change. When anything does not serve the purpose of life, nature has its way of eradicating it. To this law nature makes no exceptions to the rule.

In order to understand the collapse we need to understand the premise and proposition of the 1960's movements. The premise was that, “obedience to God and love of all mankind is necessary in order to address constitutional violations.” And the proposition was that, “the people in enemy situations where there was a constitutional violation had to be taught nonviolence thus empowering themselves to take the necessary correct action, while withstanding the severest criticism and attacks.”

It was this premise and proposition that worked wonders in the Nashville Sit-in Movement in 1960, the Nashville Open Theater Movement in 1961, the Freedom Rides in 1961, the Mississippi Movement, C.O.F.O., the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964, the Birmingham Movement of 1963, the Selma Right To Vote Movement of 1965, the Chicago Open Housing Movement of 1966, and the massive mobilization against the war in Vietnam at the United Nations and the Pentagon in 1967.

In all of these cases the movement never attacked people but raised and addressed the violation and contradictions and called on all Americans to join the dialogue and work for just resolutions. This was dynamic, real, and beautiful – this was Americans and America at her best. Then came the abandonment of the premise and the proposition.

We will let history speak to this because probably the Look Magazine article of April 15, 1969 written by George Goodman gives the best and clearest insight into the collapse.

The movement had begun to address the dynamics of poverty. Thus the research had begun, empowering people with nonviolence and then Dr. King was killed. This was God's ultimate test for African Americans about their real desire for justice. Let history speak.

“It is now one year after the murder of Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. The poor people's campaign, whether it was a total jubilee or a qualified success, has sent the organizations standing plunging to a new all time low. The Rev. James Bevel...has announced...to defend...James Earl Ray. Rev. Ralph Abernathy (president of SCLC) gave Bevel his support and, almost immediately after, withdrew it. (Reason: the King family was appalled at the thought of defending Ray. In later years Mrs. King and her children launched a campaign for a fair trial for James Earl Ray.)

Jesse Jackson remained closed mouth... reveling for the reins of power is a notion he will not admit he ever entertains. Defensively, he brushes such queries aside – to defensive...for inside the organization, there is no man better equipped to match wits and the argument of ultra militant blacks in the cities, today's flash points of black white confrontations.

Few people understood the conflict between Bevel and Abernathy. Even fewer understood the lofty moral logic of Bevel's proposal...James Bevel won the hearts and minds of the SCLC leaders... [Bevel said] “We should not let this country give us a poor defenseless goat in sacrifice for the body of our lamb,” he said, “...a more fitting memorial to Dr. King would be to send Ralph and Mrs. King around the world asking heads of government to cut back on spending for military armaments.”

...Bevel's proposal didn't end there. He suggested enlisting white student radicals, black student organizations and anti-war groups in massive nonviolent demonstrations, with the public school system as the target. “The point would be to show how black youngsters suffer inferior education...we should demand that blacks learn their history. We should demand that all children learn nonviolence through school curriculums.

...Two SCLC attorneys argued against Bevel's proposal – not on moral grounds, but on the basis of practicality and because, as one staffer said, “There are too many Negroes in this country who want blood too.”

It was this attitude, the black lawyers and the attitudes in the black leadership that abandoned the nonviolent premise and proposition. Any American who cannot straight forwardly speak to the need of justice for any other American regardless of race, religion, gender, age, education or economic status cannot give constitutional leadership. “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Dr. M. L. King, Jr.

The nonviolent movement was addressing the constitutional violations of African Americans, but when it could not address justice for James Earl Ray, and education for African American children, and then the nonviolent movement became totally

irrelevant as a moral force for good. And it has reduced itself to privilege seeking for personalities and addresses no constitutional issues, problems or needs.

What must be done? We must go back and pick up the original premise and proposition. We must correct the errors we made and begin to address fornication and lying in the African American people that keeps us spiritually blind, disorganized and poor. We must address racism in the media, and work to create precinct councils so that people can have a context, ways and means and knowledge to participate meaningfully in the democratic process. We must work to create an educational system that educates all of our children in nonviolence, economic independence and institutional sovereignty and social responsibility. We must educate each child through school curriculum to be involved in the American constitutional and industrial revolution.

We cannot revive the movement of the sixties because like the dinosaur it did not meet nature's or God's demands and it became extinct, it has collapsed.

—James L. Bevel

President of S.E.E.D. (Students for Education and Economic Development)

## JUSTICE

### The Most Befitting Memorial For Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On January 22, 1993, on nationwide television a special documentary was aired entitled, “Who Killed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr?” This documentary was hosted by actor Larry Fishburne and featured Reverend Jesse Jackson, Dick Gregory, former Congressman Walter Fauntroy (who served as Chief of the 1976-78 House Select Committee on Assassinations) and others. The documentary presented the known facts of the case involving James Earl Ray, who has never received a fair and impartial trial by a jury of his peers as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America. Those facts presented definitely raise the question of whether Ray was involved at all.

In June, 1969, the Reverend James L. Bevel, the author, architect, chief organizer and director of the Selma 1965 Right to Vote Movement and strategist for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) from 1964 – 1969 under the leadership of Dr. King until his death, presented a detailed proposal to the SCLC leadership outlining three strategies. (For more information see Look Magazine, 6-15-69, pages 27-29)

One strategy implored SCLC to take the defense of James Earl Ray, in order to assure that justice be served. Bevel said, “We should not let this country give us a poor defenseless goat in sacrifice for the body of our lamb. I don't believe Ray was capable of killing Dr. King.” Bevel had interviewed Ray in jail and Ray informed him that he knew nothing of the murder and had just accepted a plea bargain out of fear.

Justice is the principle that Dr. King lived and died to establish for you and me here in America and the world. He said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Is it a wonder that thousands of African American males and females, many innocent fill America's jails? In that we the people have not demanded that justice be served to James Earl Ray or that Dr. King's murderers be brought to trial how can we apathetically ignore this and expect to receive justice when it is our turn before the courts? We must begin now to not only hear Martin King, but we must begin to understand what he was saying. Christians are taught in scripture that above all else we must get an understanding.

History has shown that forward motion must be preceded by a correction of past errors. In order to correct our present situation, we must understand where a violation occurred. As a result of the injustice done to James Earl Ray and the justice that was never given to Martin Luther King, Jr., a number of problems have spawned. Those problems are: 1. Opportunism for a few blacks at the expense of millions of people's rights. 2. Violence among blacks because they have not received all the facts. 3. Fear of doing right by black males for fear of being murdered. 4. The mass incarceration of black youth, many who are innocent, draining the black community of fathers/mothers, sons/daughters, husbands/wives, brothers/sisters and creating a brain drain. 5. A lack of an understanding of the cause of black crime and its relationship to an unhealed slavery programming and healing therapies to restore full manhood and womanhood capacity in all. 6. The nonviolent movement was prevented from completing the work that Dr. King was involved in. Work that was designed to create a healthy society and nation.

## Excerpts from An Anonymous Book

Reverend James L. Bevel, a member of the Southern Christian leadership Conference (King's organization) and then King's man in Philadelphia, was alone in saying he believed Ray had not fired the shot.

Whitney Young, head of one of the respectable and conservative black groups, the more establishment-oriented Urban League, confirmed my growing and by then fixed suspicion, I met him socially in New York on June 23, 1969. He was candid, quite straightforward. All black leaders had been and would remain silent because all feared Hoover's blackmail. All feared any open opposition to Hoover would result in his publicizing whatever it is he had spied out about King's personal life.

The silence of the blacks continues more than two years after the greatest American leader they have produced was murdered. Not one appears to be interested in solving the crime, helping solve it, or even seeing to it that history, especially black history, is set straight. This is difficult to comprehend for one whose people experienced Auschwitz and Buchenwald, for there are no American gas chambers. It is difficult for one who people also produced the Judenrat, those human Judas-goats of the Nazi slaughters, for this country constitutes no such environment, even if it does, in some way, resemble the days of prelude.

The awful crime of silence is not less awful when it is black silence. It may be worse.

To permit the murder of such a man to go unsolved and to be officially obfuscated; to permit prostitution of the judicial process, so symbolic of that which for centuries had victimized the blacks, without searching for the truth, without any protest, any question, to me is self-destructive.

Regardless of motive, whether it is real or fancied, it is Black Abdication.

Not one black, be he intellectual or political leader, militant or conservative, personally involved, a friend of the murdered, a disciple or a competitor-not one of the so many-made a single meaningful response of the few who responded at all.

Bowing abjectly to Hoover's blackmail-unthinkingly, cowardly or believing themselves politically mature and wise-black leaders became their own most successful enemies, indentured themselves in servitude more humiliating than their past physical slavery. They guaranteed the success of the evil purposes served by the murders of their leaders. Unwittingly, they became accomplices of the murderers. Pages 240 - 242

—Author Unknown

In February 1997, the King family began pushing for a new trial for James Earl Ray. The King family was convinced by Ray's lawyer William F. Pepper, that the assassination had been planned and executed by a government conspiracy reaching from the F.B.I. and the C.I.A. to the white house. The federal government, Mr. Pepper maintains, feared Dr. King's growing denunciations of the Vietnam War and his threats to clog Washington with massive protests by the poor.

Loyd Jowers, the owner of Jim's Grill, a restaurant in Memphis, across from the Lorraine Motel was brought to civil court in 1999 and sued for being part of a conspiracy to murder M. L. King. Jowers claimed to have received \$100,000 to arrange King's assassination. Jowers threatened to plead the Fifth Amendment if subpoenaed. His discretion was too late. In 1993 against the advice of his lawyer, Lewis Garrison, Jowers had gone public with a Prime Time Live story. He told Sam Donaldson that he had been asked to help in the murder of King and was told there would be a decoy (Ray) in the plot. He was also told that the police "would not be there that night." The jury found Jowers liable for his role, the hiring of a deceased Memphis police officer to carry out the assassination, and also found that others were involved, including government agencies. The King family was awarded \$100 in restitution to show that they were not pursuing the case for financial gain.

Mrs. Coretta Scott King said, "We're concerned about the truth, having the truth come out in a court of law so that it can be documented for all. I've always felt that somehow the truth would be known, and I hoped that I would live to see it. It is important I think for the sake of healing so many people - my family, other people, the nation."

Dexter King said, "It is so amazing for me that as soon as this issue of potential involvement of the federal government came up, all of a sudden the media just went totally negative against the family. I couldn't understand that. I kept asking my mother, "What is going on?" She reminded me. She said, 'Dexter, your dad and I have lived through this once already. You have to understand that when you take a stand against the establishment, first, you will be attacked. There is an attempt to discredit. Second, [an attempt] to try and character assassinate. And third, ultimately physical termination or assassination."

Dexter said, "The issue becomes: What do we do about this? Do we endorse a policy in this country, in this life, that says if we don't agree with someone, the only means to deal with it is through elimination and termination? I think my father taught us the opposite, that you can overcome without violence."

We're not in this to make heads roll. We're in this to use the teachings that my father taught us in terms of nonviolent reconciliation. It works. We know that it works..."

In his closing argument, William Pepper identified economic power as the root reason for King's assassination: "When Martin King opposed the war, when he rallied people to oppose the war. He was threatening the bottom lines of some of the largest defense contractors in this country. This was about money. He was threatening the weapons industry, the hardware, the armaments industries, that would all lose as a result of the end of the war."

The second aspect of his work that also dealt with money that caused a great deal of consternation in the circles of power in this land had to do with his commitment to take a massive group of people to Washington, DC. Now he began to talk about a redistribution of wealth, in the wealthiest country in the world."

Some say Ray had been used as a scapegoat. Many suspecting a conspiracy in the assassination point out the two separate ballistic tests conducted on the Remington Gamemaster rifle had neither conclusively proved Ray had been the killer nor that he had even seen the murder weapon..

James Bevel summed it up best, "There is no way a ten-cent white boy could develop a plan to kill a million-dollar black man."

## Media Blackout

After critical testimony was given in the trial's second week before an almost empty gallery, Barbara Reis, US correspondent for the Lisbon daily Publico who was there several days, turned to me, [Wendell Stacy, a Memphis TV reporter] and said, "Everything in the U.S. is the trial of the century. O. J. Simpson's trial...Clinton's trial...But this is the trial of the century, and who's here?"

*Thanks to the King Center, the full trial transcript is available online at:  
<http://www.thekingcenter.com/tkc/trial.html>*

"The jaws of power are always open to devour, and her arm is always stretched out, if possible, to destroy the freedom of thinking, speaking and writing."

—John Adams, *A Founding Father*

"When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemy to be at peace with him."

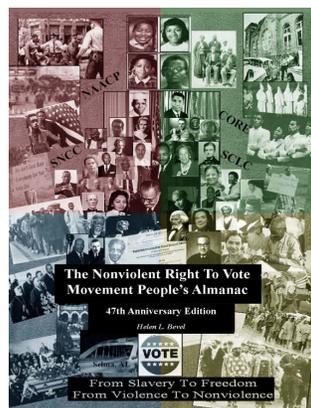
—Proverbs 16:7

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# The Nonviolent Right To Vote Movement Almanac

Compiled By: **Helen L. Bevel**

The true history of a people, creators of great civilizations that lasted for thousands of years; captured and enslaved in a foreign land; enduring the kind of treatment that left other races and nations extinct; and their rise from the ashes of annihilation to claim freedom, justice and equality and prepare to enter the Promise Land foretold by a great and courageous leader who became a sacrificial lamb that they might be free at last.



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# FREEDOM IN NONVIOLENCE

It is understandable that an oppressed people or person when newly freed by law would desire to have what the former oppressor gained as a result of their oppression. In fact the hallmark of achievement that the oppressor displays is the highest aspect of the oppressed person's reality. Not knowing freedom the oppressed person naturally volunteers himself to the oppressor by seeking to participate in the institutions built during the oppressive years.

The oppressed has a built in desire to be accepted and approved by the oppressor. This is what equality is equated as for the oppressed, which still carry the emotional scars of slavery and the mental shackles. The oppressor became a sort of godlike figure for the oppressed in that they had and have the freedom of mobility denied the oppressed and most of all the ability to interact with nature to secure their basic life needs. From the perspective of the oppressed, the oppressor has great powers of creation which have been denied them. The oppressed when no longer under the oppressor seeks to have the things that the oppressor creates from nature rather than a direct relationship with nature, especially if the formerly oppressed person was forced to interact with nature like in plantation work for the benefit of the oppressor.

The newly freed person in seeking approval and acceptance from the former oppressor and is incapable of realizing that true freedom is an inward state and seeks no approval or acceptance from any other free agent. Free agents are self-regulating, self-defined and self-accepted and engage with nature in a way that they can secure the basics of life food, clothing, shelter, transportation, communication, tools and energy from nature, needing no handouts or giveaways from the former oppressor.

When the newly freed accepts the tenets of nonviolence, he/she will realize that the institutions of the former oppressor do not serve their health, interest, rights and needs in that they were setup to initiate, develop and maintain their oppression. Thus the nonviolent student and practitioner seek to create new institutions that fulfill their needs, protect their rights, secure their interest and attain and maintain their health.

The oppressor was incapable of creating institutions that advanced freedom, justice and equality for all in that he violated the definition and purpose of man by engaging in the enslavement of another for the purpose of satiating greed. The definition and purpose of man thus violated handicapped him and left him in a state of physical animation, incapable of principled thought and just conclusions and he is thus beset with problems and his institutions are of no benefit to the newly freed person.

The newly freed must on their own initiate, develop, maintain and administrate institutions that protect and foster their definition and purpose as individuals and a collective. Whereas the oppressor only related to the newly freed as a body that they could use for labor, sex and sport, they must of necessity activate the other components of their Being in order to experience true freedom. Man (male/female) is spirit, mind, emotion and body which activates within space, energy, elements and motion. The consideration of and the act of activating the other three aspects of personhood may initially cause fear and trepidation for the newly freed in that he/she is so use to and habitually conditioned to seek direction and permission from the former oppressor, and experiences fear of repudiation and punishment for thinking a thought outside of the confines of the former oppressor.

When America disposed of British rule, it no longer sought to impose the institutions of Britain on itself. Americans had to create a government for themselves and all the other institutions needed to sustain life in a meaningful manner. They no longer sought the approval of the British and began making decisions for themselves. There were two main carry overferences that Americans took from their British inheritance and that was slavery and the English language. By not disinheritng slavery, Americans lost the ability to create a true democratic/republic. They instead created a slave state, because that is all they knew as British citizens. Today the consequences of this action is that millions of descendants of slaves and the cohabitation between the master and slaves remain in a state of mental, emotional and spiritual slavery, incapable of advancing beyond the state of being a physical body only seeking pleasure and comfort, and having no sense of responsibility for advancing the creative goodwill and thoughts of a free person. As a result a slavery recidivism has set in, whereby descendants of slaves unconsciously seek to be enslaved as in prisons and personal and social relationships.

Unlike the first Americans, the descendants of slavery never sought to establish their own institutions. Instead we sought to assimilate into what the slave masters had set-up which could only reinforce our enslavement. We made the European our role model and sought and seek to emulate him and his way of life, the very way of life that led to our enslavement in the first place. As a result the prison industrial complex is no more than a form of recycled slavery.

Slavery has crippled America. It has stunted the growth of its people for in truth no one is free until everyone is free. American's didn't care about others freedom, they just wanted to proclaim their own and trample on the freedom of others who are unable to defend themselves.

Slavery was more than an economic scheme to deprive people of free agency, and use their physical labor to amass economic advantage. Slavery was also a debauchery and denied free agents the right to live principled lives thus they became enmeshed in lying, stealing, raping, trickery, manipulation, superstition, and imitation. These states are what appear when free agents are denied their free agency by another free agent. Free agents have needs that have to be fulfilled and when these needs cannot be fulfilled in an honorable and just manner then the above mannerisms rise to the top and become the means to an end. These unprincipled ways of gaining ones needs are still operating in the majority of the descendants of enslaved people. In addition these actions are fueled by shame and anger.

The descendants of slave owners still operate from arrogance, a sense of self importance and a "know it all ism" and are themselves trapped in the physical realm, as there only reality. This has become there comfort zone. They are fueled by guilt. Both are frozen in fear and the game continues. In the meantime America decays from within, leaving her vulnerable to attack from external forces.

Why is this scenario as it is? It must be understood that mothers are the purveyors of culture or enslavement. The mother transmits to her unborn fetus her fears, her shame, her lust, her lies and her enslavement or freedom.

# Ode To Martin Luther King, Jr.

Oh, he carried the cross for me, he carried the cross for me,  
When I was just a boy playing with a toy, he was concerned about my liberty.  
When I stood telling tales, he spend many days in jail to restore to me my lost humanity.  
When I was a hate-filled man. He made me understand.  
He told me truths that set my poor heart free.  
When I could only cuss, He rode the Freedom Bus, and introduced me to responsibility.  
When I didn't have a friend, nonviolently he sat in  
and made the nation honor my dignity.  
When I didn't have a coat and my mama couldn't even vote,  
he made the Congress set my people free.  
When my sister didn't have a blouse, and my dad couldn't buy a house,  
he made open housing a reality.  
We were dying in Vietnam and he stopped Old Uncle Sam,  
and made him respect all humanity.  
When I was but a slave, he gladly went to his grave to set my mind and body free.  
He never was afraid, 'cause this is what he said:  
"No matter what my son, you must forgive,  
If you haven't found a cause to die for then you're not fit to live!"  
And this is the challenge he left you and me.  
When Martin Luther King died, I sat down and cried,  
'cause I had lost my best friend don't you see.  
He taught me to forgive, and now I'm fit to live.  
And now I too can face the tree 'cause  
He Carried the Cross for Me.

—*Reverend James L. Bevel*  
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