

MODERATOR: Good afternoon, and welcome to MIT, we're going to alter our program a little bit this afternoon. And I'm going to ask Reverend Bernard Campbell to come and give us a prayer for peace in light of the current situation in the Persian Gulf. Reverend Campbell?

CAMPBELL: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming. Many here in this room are deeply troubled and anxious about the events in the Persian Gulf. Some of you have sons and daughters, husbands or wives, friends, relatives in the desert of Saudi Arabia, on ships in the Gulf or the Red Sea, or in forward surgical facilities waiting to receive the injured. Thoughtful people grieve for the loss and maiming of life, whatever the nationality, the language, the religion, or the involvement in this conflict.

Yet today, we gather here, to celebrate the dream of Martin Luther King Jr. A little over 45 years ago, the citizens of Vienna, Austria-- having suffered for over six years the cruel occupation of the German army-- agreed to promote a concert by their beloved so philharmonic orchestra. As the day of the concert approached, the Viennese began to worry.

A symphonic concert? Amidst all the cacophony of war? The concert did happen.

Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* was performed with great gusto. And as the notes faded, the whole orchestra and audience knew that this event was right. It was good for them to be there.

For men and women whose memories were ravaged by the cruelties and brutalities of war, they recovered a deeper meaning and deeper memory. That memory was of the excellence of the human spirit, still able to be motivated and inspired. All people [INAUDIBLE] are brothers and sisters of one another.

Dear friends, 45 and a bit years later, we are that orchestra and audience. And the music this day is the dream of Martin Luther King Jr, Whose notes were and are a passion for the truth of human solidarity through the struggles for justice and in the practice of non-violence. Loving God, it is good for us to be here.

The excellence of the human spirit ever present in the memory of Doctor King is a precious gift. Sustain us, we pray, in this moment that the drums of war will not deaden us. Not deaden us to the better and deeper truth of human beings.

We are sisters and brothers of one another. And in remembering the gift of belonging, we stand always before the giver, you, oh, God. Amen.

MODERATOR: It is indeed an honor for me to welcome you to this afternoon to the 17th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. On behalf of our president, Charles Vest and his wife, Mrs. Becky Vest, and the MIT Martin Luther King Committee, I hope our theme, linking the civil rights movement to MIT and Doctor King's dream-- Reality, Closing the Gap-- will give all of us hope to continue pursuing Doctor King's dream in 1991. Reverend Campbell will now give us the invocation. Oh, I'm sorry.

At this point, I would like Charles Thomas, Linda Lifsey Hughes and George Russell to join me on stage. And they will lead the audience in "Lift Every Voice and Sing." You'll find the words on the back of your program.

[MUSIC - "LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING"]

BOTH: (SINGING) Lift every voice and sing Till earth and heaven ring. Ring with the harmonies of liberty. Let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies. Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us. Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us. Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning rod. Felt in the days when hope unborn had died, yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet come to the place for which our fathers sighed? We have come, over a way that with tears has been watered.

We have come treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered. Out of the gloomy past, till now we stand at last where the white gleam of our bright star is cast. God of our weary years, God of silent tears.

Thou who hast brought us thus far on our way, thou who hast by Thy might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee, lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee-- shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand, true to our God, true to our native land. Our native land.

[APPLAUSE]

MODERATOR: In a tradition that we started as a part of our program a few years ago, we will now have the youth perspective. We have four students this afternoon to bring you that perspective. Khadija Brewington is a junior at Cambridge Rindge and Latin. [INAUDIBLE] is a junior at BC High.

[INAUDIBLE] is a senior here, at our Sloan School. And Reginald Parker is a junior at MIT in chemical engineering. And they will bring you the youth perspective.

PRESENTER: President Vest, members of the Martin Luther King committee, our special guest, Doctor Benjamin Hooks, ladies and gentlemen-- Khadija and I have selected three works of Doctor King that advance a most important theme for these times, peace on Earth. I would like to begin with two works taken from the book *The Words of Martin Luther King*. "We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today.

We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time.

Life often leaves us standing bare, naked and dejected, with a lost opportunity. The tide in the affairs of men does not remain at the flood. It ebbs.

We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage. But time is deaf to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residues of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words-- too late.

There is an invisible book of life that faithfully records our vigilance or our neglect. The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on. We still have a choice today-- nonviolent coexistence, or violent coannihilation. This may well be mankind's last chance to choose between chaos and community.

I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of thermonuclear destruction. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.

I believe that even amid today's mortar bursts and whining bullets there is still hope for a brighter tomorrow. I believe that wounded justice lying prostrate on the blood-flowing streets of our nations can be lifted from the dust of shame to reign supreme among the children of men. I still believe that one day mankind will bow before the altars of God and be crowned triumphant over war and bloodshed. And nonviolent redemptive goodwill will proclaim the rule of the land.

And the lion and the lamb shall lie down together. And every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, and none shall be afraid. I still believe that we shall overcome."

[APPLAUSE]

BREWINGTON: With all that has taken place during the past two days, it's easy to forget that the Christmas season was just a few short weeks ago. However, with the spirit of this in mind, I would like to read an excerpt taken from a sermon on peace delivered by Doctor King on Christmas Eve, 1967. I think that the thoughts and sentiments expressed in this sermon are particularly relevant at this time.

"Peace on Earth-- this Christmas season finds us a rather bewildered human race. We have neither peace within, nor peace without. Everywhere paralyzing fears harrow people by day and haunt them by night.

Our world is sick with war. Everywhere we turn, we see it's ominous possibilities. And yet my friends, the Christmas hope for peace and goodwill toward all men can no longer be dismissed as a kind of pious dream of some Utopian.

If we don't have goodwill toward men in this world we will destroy ourselves by the misuse of our own instruments and our own power. Wisdom born of experience should tell us that war is obsolete. There may have been a time when war served as a negative good by preventing the spread and growth of an evil force.

But the very destructive power of modern weapons of warfare eliminates even the possibility that war may any longer serve as a negative good. And so if we assume that life is worth living, if we assume that mankind has a right to survive, then we must find an alternative to war. And so let us this morning explore the conditions for peace.

Let us this morning think anew on the meaning of that Christmas hope, peace on Earth, goodwill toward men. And as we explore these conditions, I would like to suggest that modern man really go all out to study the meaning of nonviolence as philosophy and as strategy. We have experimented with the meaning of nonviolence in our struggle for racial justice in the United States.

But now the time has come for man to experiment with nonviolence in all areas of human conflict. And that means nonviolence on an international scale. Now, let me suggest first that if we are to have peace on Earth, our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional.

Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation. And this means we must develop a world perspective. No individual can live alone.

No nation can live alone. And as long as we try, the more we are going to have war in this world. Now, the judgment of God is upon us. And we must either learn to live together as brothers or we are all going to perish together as fools."

[APPLAUSE]

PRESENTER: Good afternoon to our guest, Doctor Benjamin Hooks, Doctor Charles Vest, our president, and to the rest of the MIT community. "August 28, 1963-- nearly 250,000 people journeyed that day to the capital. Stirring emotions came from the masses of ordinary people who stood in majestic dignity as witnesses to their single-minded determination to achieve democracy in their time.

The enormous multitude was the living, beating heart of an infinitely noble movement. It was an army without guns, but not without strength. It was an army into which no one had to be drafted.

It was white and negro, and of all ages. It had adherants of every faith, members of every class, every profession, every political party, united by a single ideal. It was a fighting army. But no one could mistake that its most powerful weapon was love."

That was a selection from *Why We Can't Wait*, written by Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963, discussing the March on Washington. Here, Doctor King speaks about a movement united by a single ideal, a single goal, peace and equality. Reflecting on the life of Doctor Martin Luther King Jr, I see a selfless men dedicated to fight for equal opportunity for all men and peace between all nations.

Through nonviolent social change, Doctor King hoped to create a reality from his dream. A dream to unite all races, and to provide equal opportunity socially, academically, politically. Doctor King, in starting this nonviolent movement for social change, realized there was something truly wrong with society.

No society can ultimately achieve greatness unless there is equal opportunity for all of its citizens. Doctor King had a vision of a world without hate, violence, and discrimination, which he hoped would stretch far into the future. Doctor King's determination to make his dream a reality has enabled me and many other people to pursue their dreams of becoming what they want to be.

In this time, where there is much gang violence, substance abuse, child abuse, high dropout rate in our schools, and now war, I believe that society has lost Doctor King's vision of peace and unity. I think that we have come a long way in realizing Doctor King's vision of unity and peace. But I also think we still have a very long way to go. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

PRESENTER: First giving honor to God, to our guest speaker, Doctor Benjamin Hooks, President Vest, MIT community, the distinguished platform guests, and to the rest of the people in the audience. Linking the Civil Rights Movement to MIT and Doctor King's dream-- Reality, Closing the Gap. When I think of civil rights, I don't think of a handout or anything like that. I think of an opportunity for an opportunity.

And Doctor King himself showed me what opportunity for opportunity was. And so when I applied to MIT, in the process, my essay was on how his life was a mentorship to me and what it meant to me. And my coming to MIT is my first opportunity for a world that I didn't know when I was growing up. And that was for the opportunity of a better tomorrow.

And then understanding that, and living the life that I'm living, I understand it more. Because the more you live and the more opportunities you see, the more opportunities you see that others can have. But the only way you can get it is by having an opportunity. So when I look at the Civil Rights Movement, I don't look at a handout. I look at opportunity for opportunity. And then when I look at MIT, I look at a lot of opportunities. But as [INAUDIBLE] said, there are still gaps. There are still things yet to come.

But yet, take what is now as for what it is and use it. Because the more you use it, the more exercise you have of it, the stronger you get. Now, when I think of Doctor Martin Luther King and his dream, I don't think of the dream as someone who's lying down, a series of thoughts, images or emotions that come to someone who's asleep.

I think of that intellectual thought that has come together, things that could, would, and should be. I think of someone who's planned a vision that is so intricate in detail that it will bring people together in unity. I don't think of a dream. Because nothing comes to a dreamer but dreams.

And even when he awakes, those are gone. I think of something more substantive. And so when I think of the reality of the dream that he was talking about in my life, in our lives, I think of unity.

Because only unity with our community can bring those dreams to a reality. That's the only thing that can bring the gap closed. That's the only thing that can link the gap.

So as we stand on the brink of war, together now in peace, you must understand that Dr. Martin Luther King's dream is embedded in love with unity for our community. And here at MIT, we must have prosperity at MIT. And we must come together to make the dream a reality and link the gap.

[APPLAUSE]

MODERATOR: Listening to the four young people that just spoke, perhaps at one of our future King celebrations, they will indeed be invited back to be an honored speaker. I neglected to mention that both Khadija and [INAUDIBLE] are members of the MIT Wellesley Upward Bound program. So while they are still in high school, they are still a very important part of the MIT community. And I'm glad they could be with us today.

I now have the pleasure of introducing to some of you and presenting to others, our new president, Dr. Vest. He's only been here a few months. And he is the 15th President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Doctor Vest, will in turn, welcome you and introduce our guest speaker for the afternoon. Doctor Vest?

[APPLAUSE]

VEST: It's a great pleasure to welcome all of you here today on behalf of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to welcome you to this assembly in honor of and in celebration of the life of Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. Our hearts are heavy today, as the momentum toward world peace and freedom that we celebrated last year has been broken. The irony of celebrating a great man of peace during a week of war escapes none of us.

Yet even the shadows of warfare must not damp out the light of our days of celebration of Doctor Martin Luther King, nor deter us from the introspection and recommitment to the creation of a truly multicultural university community. As a young man just completing my doctoral studies, I was standing one day in the Cleveland airport, on my way, literally, to my first job interview, when I sensed the rush of a group of people hurriedly rushing by me.

With that sudden electric thrill that one experiences when unexpectedly finding oneself in the presence of a great public figure, I realized that it was Doctor King, followed by his entourage. He looked serious.

Indeed, he looked stern, as he strode rapidly by me, speaking over his shoulder to his staff. He looked like a busy executive or government official hurrying off on some important mission. Indeed, he was on very serious business.

I thought about how much more important his mission was that day than mine, and what a weight he had chosen to take up. In the years since I have heard some of his close colleagues talk about his very human traits, his common humanity, if you will. Some of you here today, no doubt, had substantive interactions with Doctor King and have served his purpose far more than I.

Nonetheless, the clarity with which this simple chance encounter stands out in my memory speaks to his greatness and to the importance of the lessons he taught us all. I need not remind this audience of the stunning changes occurring in the US population. However, let me give you just one way of thinking about the numbers of African American faculty entering engineering education today, an area, obviously, of critical importance to this institution.

If African American PhDs continue to graduate at their current rate from our engineering schools, and if they should be dispersed uniformly across all engineering schools in this country, each engineering school could hire one African American professor every 19 years. What does such a stunning figure mean for MIT? MIT is a unique and extremely important center of learning.

Nonetheless, it does not exist in a vacuum. If we are to be leaders 10 years from now, as we are today, I believe that we must become more reflective of the racial, ethnic, and gender mix of our population in the United States. MIT, relative to other engineering or scientific institutions, has much to be proud of in Paul Gray's legacy of an undergraduate student population is 14% under-represented minorities and 34% women.

We should celebrate this diversity and the richness of experience that it engenders in our education and in our lives. But we must recognize that this is just one milestone on the road to being a truly multicultural community of scholars. When I look at our undergraduate students, as those numbers exhibit, I can begin to see the face of America as it will be in the 1990s and beyond.

But I do not yet see that face in our faculty or in our graduate student population. I am pleased that during the last two months two African Americans have accepted tenure track appointments at the Institute. But again, this is only a step along the way.

In the long run, one of the most effective ways that MIT can serve the nation is to increase the numbers of African American, Latino, and Native American graduate students, and women graduate students, who will then become members of the professoriate of the next generation. Our challenge, one I put before us today, is to double and redouble our efforts and creative energies to bring to MIT the diverse populations of graduate students and faculty who will enrich our own community of scholars and lead the way to the America of the future. But our discourse must not be about statistics alone.

Progress is made individual by individual. This is reflected at MIT and such programs. There's Project Interphase, Program XL, the OME BSU Tutorial Program, and peer counseling programs that are designed to enhance the readiness and success of underrepresented minorities at the Institute.

We also work hard to encourage high school and younger students-- particularly minority students-- to consider careers in scientific and technical fields. Examples of these programs include the Minority Introduction to Engineering and Science, the Minority Summer Science Research Program, the Minority Mentor Scholarship Fellowship Program, the MIT Wellesley Upward Bound Program, and the High School Outreach Program, to name but some of our activities. Some of our efforts involve joining hands with other colleges and universities.

One recent initiative, the Engineering Coalition of Schools for Excellence in Education and Leadership is a National Science Foundation funded program designed to increase the number of women and under-represented minority in engineers, and to improve the effectiveness of our undergraduate education in general. Anyone who would like more information on these programs can contact my office or the Office of Minority Education. And we would be happy to give you a summary of our educational outreach activities.

Above all, we need your interest, your support, and your participation in these efforts. Beyond good intent and good works, of course, lies the ever present challenge of financial support. To accomplish the tasks before us, universities need certain tools.

And among these is the occasional need to establish programs of financial support specifically for minority students. At MIT, our Opportunities Grant Program provides such special assistance to undergraduate students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. At the graduate level, we have a number of scholarships and fellowships specifically designed for minority scholars.

In the best of all possible worlds, perhaps, special financial aid programs for minority students might not be needed. But this is not such a world. As an engineer, when I see a problem I know that we must be pragmatic and develop mechanisms for solving it. And one practical step would be for our federal government to clearly and forthrightly reverse the recent ruling within the Department of Education that potentially blocks a wide range of financial programs for minority students.

[APPLAUSE]

Increasing the numbers of under-represented minority students and faculty on our campus and on others is not about equity and life chances alone. It is also about enriching our universities, about creating a social and intellectual fabric of bolder patterns, about celebrating both our differences and our common humanity. The road to increasing pluralism and building a multicultural community is not always easy.

Change seldom is. But it is very important that we travel down this road together. And we should do so with the same spirit of enthusiasm for exploration and involvement that we bring to our studies and research.

Just as we celebrate learning about the physical universe or the political and economic worlds or the creative arts, so we must celebrate learning about and from each other. Faculty and students are not immune to bias and prejudice. We may have strong egos or we may have troubled self images.

But we all have something to contribute. Our MIT community is formed around certain commonly-held values, values such as the importance of knowledge and learning, the commitment to academic freedom, the centrality of reasoned inquiry, the importance of science and technology to humankind, and the need to apply them in an appropriate context of social values. As we live and learn in our community during the years ahead, we must be bound together by such values.

And we must refuse to let the centrifugal forces of intolerance and injustice pull us apart. We each have an obligation to help make MIT a community that values and indeed draws sustenance from the full range of talents, cultures and perspectives that we bring here and that does so in a spirit of collegiality and mutual respect. Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

It is now my privilege and pleasure to introduce to you Doctor Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director of the world's oldest civil rights organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Doctor Hooks is an attorney, an ordained minister, and a public servant of extraordinary stature. Before assuming the leadership of the NAACP in 1977, he served for five years as the first black member of the Federal Communications Commission. Earlier in his career as a member of the Tennessee Bar Doctor Hooks was appointed as the first black judge of the Shelby County Criminal Court, making him the first black judge of a court of record in the south since the era of Reconstruction.

As an ordained minister, he is a pastor on leave from both the Middle Baptist Church in Memphis and the Greater Mount Moriah Baptist Church in Detroit. But he is a minister every time he speaks. Doctor Hooks is a Golden Heritage life member of the NAACP and a former member of the board of directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

He is Chair of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and is or has been a board member of many of the country's most influential civil rights and public service organizations. He has received more than 20 honorary degrees and was awarded the NAACP's Springarn Medal in 1986. Of course, I could go on and on. These facts that I have related to you are but brief testimony to the dedication, the power, and the eloquence of the man who honors us today by his presence at MIT, Doctor Hooks.

[APPLAUSE]

HOOKS:

Thank you very much, President Vest, for that very warm and generous introduction. And may I share how delighted I am today to be present here at this celebration. And I think we ought to give a really warm hand to these young people who so well portrayed what they were doing today. Would you give them a great big hand?

[APPLAUSE]

I see in them and hear in them not only the hope of tomorrow, but the fulfillment of the prophecy for today. Doctor King had this vision. And he talked about it so often.

I want to thank the members of the faculty and student body who have invited me to this very prestigious institution to speak on this occasion. And I want you to know how grateful I am for the opportunity. The biography or the curriculum vitae from which President Vest wrote, I forgot to add something. And I think I ought to add it now so you will have a better appreciation of your speaker.

He talked about everything else. He forgot to say-- well, he didn't forget it because I didn't write it down. I also attended Harvard. And I thought you might want to know that.

[LAUGHTER]

Since we're here in this prestigious location, I think next time you introduce me, just be sure to put that Harvard in there. Of course, the fact of the matter is, it was a bus tour. But I did attend Harvard.

I spent three hours. I have my three hours at Harvard. I've been to every building.

I've been all over the place. So I can add Harvard to my background. And when I leave here today, I can say I attended MIT.

I'll have that also added. Put it down. I won't forget it.

April 3, 1968 was a very-- from the weather viewpoint-- bad day. Rain was falling incessantly, thunder roaring ominously, fitful flashes of lightening, playing that nimble game of hide and seek across a darkened sky. And one of my best and dearest friends had died. And [INAUDIBLE] my deacon board and myself went to the memorial services. And we had planned to hear Doctor King speak that night.

It was late. It was wet. It was getting cold.

And we've said no, it's too late and we're too tired. Let's go home. Brother Turner started the car toward home.

And then almost simultaneously, we turned and said, but since Doctor King has come to be with us, it would be a tragedy if we did not attend. And so we went down to Mason Temple. A large 10,000-or-more-seat auditorium owned by the members of the Church of God in Christ, large predominantly black Pentecostal organization, huge place.

And to our utter surprise, when we arrived, Doctor Abernathy was still in the process of introducing Doctor King. And in spite of the dreadful weather, there must have been almost 2,500 people present. And there's something about that auditorium.

And I never go into it now. But I don't think about that night. I had a tin roof.

And you could hear the rain falling. The brown stained windows of the place revealed the flashes of lightning still playing across the skies. The thunder roared like a thousand hungry lions behind the mountains.

And Every Time the door opened and someone else came in, the wind was howling and shrieking. Something so ominous that my nerves were on edge, and I felt a sense of tension. I was a member of the Board of Directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

It had been my pleasure and privilege to work with Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. through much of his public life in the Civil Rights Movement. And I sat there and listened to him speak. I had heard him speak all over the nation in the great religious institutions and small chapels.

I'd heard him in board meetings, in formal and informal occasions. But as I sat there that night, I thought never had I heard him speak with such pathos, power, and passion. In fact, I had been at the March on Washington. And I thought that not even there had I seen the kind of gripping urgency.

And the thing that was rather strange was that remember, this was 1968. And we thought we had come a long way. I was sitting as a judge on the bench.

We had achieved a great deal of progress. And yet on that night, Doctor King talked about dark and difficult days ahead. And I found myself sort of wondering well, I thought the dark and difficult days were behind.

But then as he continued in that marvelous speech, talked about the conditions past, present and future, he did not leave us in despair or hopelessness. But toward the end, he raised that magnificent voice and declared that "I have seen the promised land. I may not make it there with you. But I have seen the promised land."

And then as he finished that speech with tears-- and Dr. King was a sort of a stoic. He very seldom showed a great deal of public emotion. But that night, the tears were literally running down his face and lapping of under his chin.

And as he finished that speech that night and wheeled to go to his chair, quite as-- according to the words one of his favorite hymns, "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord." And without ever finishing, he took his seat.

And we were transfixed and transfigured by the power of this marvelous man. I had no way of knowing that this would be the last speech he would deliver on this earth. And that before 24 hours had passed, he would be killed by a cowardly assassin.

But I reflected back on that night so many times. And I've listened to the lies and the innuendos and the insinuations of this man. Surely he had mortal traits.

And surely he made mistakes. But here was a man who, in my judgment, was literally caught up in the power of a living god, given to America. Not simply the black folk, but the black and white, yellow, brown, red, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, as an example of what God can do with our lives when we yield to him.

And since that day, I've thought about that speech 20-some years ago, April of 1968. And I can tell you that there have been dark days. And there are difficult days.

And I think that it enhances the feeling that I have that Doctor King was not only a preacher but he was a prophet sent from God. And that somehow he was trying to prepare those who would be left behind for the positions of leadership. And I think about all of the things that have happened that have fulfilled the fact that we would have hays.

Think about it. 22 years ago, we were on the verge of euphoria. We had seen the passion of the Voting Rights Act, the Civil Rights Act, which seeing barriers falling and signs saying, colored and white come down. And to you young people who have never known what it was the ride down the highway and to stop for gas and not be able to use the restrooms, told to go out in the trees, or to be hungry and not even at a Dairy Queen or a Burger King able to buy a hamburger except going around the back door, to see the sign that said colored only, water fountains and separate restrooms, and Jim Crow, striding across the stage supreme in his arrogance and power, you have not felt the fear of being in small southern towns. Not simply Freedom Riders, who went down for a season, but those who lived in little shacks and shanties, determined to vote, to exercise their rights as women and men in this nation.

And I thought about some of the things that we've faced since then. And these years that I've been Executive Directive of the NAACP, I have quite often gone back down to Atlanta and stood by and sort of put my hand, as it were, figuratively-- I was on the little crypt where the mortal remains of Dr. King rest and said, Doc, you didn't tell the half of it. These are some difficult days.

Think of all the things we've had to face. The re-fighting of battles. Ronald Reagan, your genial president, gift of California to the nation. You know, I used to put Ronald Reagan at the bottom of the list of presidents until I recognized that there's one thing he excelled in.

You know, any president has to have the ability to sort of deal with truth in a different way. They could not tell us, the president could not say, when we would have VE Day in Europe. And the atomic bomb was a secret.

But when it came to fabricating and not dealing with the truth, Reagan does not rank at the bottom. He's at the top.

[APPLAUSE]

If you look at him very well, he had a peculiar way of speaking. And whenever he crooked a little smile on one side of his face and did his mouth like that, there was a whopper on the way, one of the biggest you've ever heard. Some welfare queen, some strange and ingenuous stories that only he knew about, somebody bleeding and dying in a war that he never fought.

And I thought about all of the things that happened in that administration. I think today, as I look back on what King talked about, about a Jesse Helms, running a racist campaign in the state of North Carolina and resorting to the dirtiest tricks that we've known in politics to be reelected. I look at a David Duke, a psychopath, if you will, from all I've read. And yet, he received 60% of all the white votes cast in Louisiana in his race for the Senate.

I look at the college campuses where the best and brightest are now resorting to all kinds of tricks and demagoguery where crosses are being burned, and the Ku Klux Klan is being revived. And in the name of free speech, we trample upon the rights of minorities and Jewish people and those whose color of skin or religion or background is different, in the best and brightest places. And if it happens here, if it happened at these marvelous colleges and universities, where our brains are being trained for the future, what is the hope for those who live in the filth and squalor of the alleys of economic deprivation where there's too little for too many?

What is the hope of America? And I look and see all of these things happening to us. I see a Supreme Court that apparently has lost its cotton-chopping mind.

If you took the brains of the majority of the present Supreme Court and put it in the head of a bird, that bird would fly up perpetually and forever backward, backward, backward, backward, backward, backward. A court that seems to be composed of people who just landed from Mars. Listen to Sandra O'Connor, in the Richmond case versus Croson, talking about minority set asides, where they proved that black people for the last 100 years have not received 1/10 of 1% of a contract awarded by the city. And Sandra O'Connor said, you almost proved it.

You came close to showing discrimination in the past, but not quite. Go back and prove it. Do you have to be a Rhodes Scholar to understand that this nation has a history of racial and sexual discrimination that is rooted and wrong and injustice?

Does someone have to teach us all over again about 244 years of slavery without a pay day and 100 years of second-class citizenship? And that there must be remedial steps taken to remedy the mistakes of the past? And now we come with the prattling talk about a colorblind society.

How, in the name of God, can you talk about, today, a colorblind society, when for more than 350 years, we've had a society that was dominated by color. Now all of a sudden, when something is done to make it better, we want to have a colorblind society, and a new right.

And some of these so-called black intellectuals-- God rest their souls-- they may have degrees. But they're still first-class fools. And for them, the word PhD does not stand for Doctor of Philosophy, but for phenomenal dunce. And many of them who benefited from Affirmative Action program, Mr. President, are now finding means to discredited it.

How ironic as your president said, that on the 15th of January, the birth date of Dr. King, that that was the date that was picked in which war would start. And then out in Arizona, where they refuse to have a holiday. And let me say to all of you, that the holiday for Dr. King does not have to deal with his perfection.

Don't come telling me about what you heard about him. I could tell you about a Thomas Jefferson who had a concubine mistress, a slave, and had illegitimate children, and whose name is still honored, who did not free his slaves, even when he died. Don't tell me about the mistakes of people.

I can go down the line. That has nothing to do with it. Doesn't make any difference how you die.

It's how you live that counts. And if you want to go down and redress all the things, I could talk about Ben Franklin and George Washington, who never told a story, but he certainly told some lies, who never received a salary as revolutionary general, but got a million-dollar bill sent in after the war was over, who said the black folk-- when the British said to Black slaves-- if you fight for us, we'll free you. And Washington got all frightened and said, if you fight for me we'll free you.

But he didn't keep the promise. And I could go up and down the list of human frailties. But when we honor Doctor Martin Luther King, it is not simply him alone we honor.

It is the contribution to those millions of black people, who crowded from the slave ships, from the waters of the Atlantic, from the mystic deep, from those who landed here where the flora and fauna was different. And somehow, built the highways, picked the cotton, planted the tobacco, and helped build this nation, fought in every war. And yet, when it was over, were still told to sit in the back of the bus. And so when we come to the celebration of Martin Luther King, it is not only him, but a people who have been able to go through everything, who took nothing and made something. Who was it?

When you talk about contributions and all of that to America, who was it that showed people what a hog chitlin could do? You used to be able to buy them for \$0.05 a pound. Now they're delicacies when we told you what to do with them. Who was it that discovered that you could not only eat pork chops, but you could eat pork ears and hog head, and hog feet.

Who was it that took something and made nothing. It was black folks sitting back there, who cried out in the depth of their depravity, and the depth of all of degradation, that there's something in me that's greater than what you're talking about. And they're saying to young black men and women today, who find themselves too often falling down, don't be worried about your body.

Be worried about your soul. Because they understood you may own my body. But before I'd be a slave, I'd be buried in my grave and go home and be at peace with my God. Because there's something more important than the body! It is a soul and the living spirit of men and women.

We've gone through all of these terrible times. And when the state of Arizona, refused to honor the holiday, and they played a game out there, and the Fiesta Bowl decided that they would give a scholarship to black students as a certain partial grudging tribute to the fact that they were wrong, a young black bureaucrat, Michael Williams, decided to write a gratuitous letter. And if you think he composed that letter, you need another hold in your head.

He wasn't smart enough to do what was done. Somebody else was back there. He was the voice.

But he wasn't the brains. They misused him. Somebody had been brooding and planning for years that we can just get somebody here dumb enough, we'll use him to pronounce a death knell.

Now, my brothers and my sisters, let me just stop here and tell you one thing so you'll understand where I come from. I make no excuse whatsoever. I don't apologize for the fact that this nation needs Affirmative Action.

If it's spent all of these years keeping blacks and women out, it is high time that we spend some time bringing them in. And therefore, I make no excuse for Affirmative Action. I'm not afraid of it.

[APPLAUSE]

When they got somebody telling me, well, if you get a scholarship, they won't know whether you're dumb or smart. They don't know anyway whether you're dumb or smart. Amen.

Just because you're at MIT doesn't mean you're the brightest thing in the world of that you can set the world on fire. It's not being here that counts. It's getting out that counts, with grades that are worthwhile.

And I'm a veteran of World War II. And I got the GI Bill of Rights. I went to school free.

I don't know what tuition was at law school. I never saw it. Send it to Uncle Sam. He's responsible for me.

And I never have been sorry or ashamed. I have no sense of guilt or fear. Nobody can make me feel bad because I got the GI Bill of Rights.

I got \$65 every month. I kept my insurance. And I would have bought a house if I'd had the money. Now, you've got 10 million veterans who have got all those benefits.

Have you ever seen any of them saying, I'm so ashamed I got them, when all my brothers and sisters couldn't get them? It's a damnable lie to say that when this nation achieves the purpose of trying to make this world better, that somehow we've got to drop our head in shame. I think that when we look at the situation honestly, Affirmative Action was never designed to make a man who couldn't cut a tree down a brain surgeon.

But let me just say something to you. About 10 years ago, the American Medical Association did some research. And they discovered that there had been two million unnecessary cases of surgery performed.

Now, brothers and sisters, if all the black doctors in the nation had operated day and night, they couldn't have made that many mistakes. It was white doctors who were carrying people in there because of the Medicaid, Medicare, or misguided diagnosis, and were operating when it was not necessary. Those are the cases they prove.

They don't talk about how many lawyers lose cases they should win. And they're white lawyers because we only have a handful. Who is it that made machine guns that wouldn't shoot? And missiles that wouldn't go off?

And Carter looked at it and said, my God, I can't win a war with this mess. Helicopters that wouldn't fly. They wouldn't even let us in. And now MIT is graduating some black engineers. And thank God for that.

And we shall be looking for more, not less. We shall expect and demand it for all the years were closed, they now be open. Not to take unqualified people, but to give people a chance, an opportunity to demonstrate what they can do. And I think that people of color in this world, you know, when I think about it, I've been a chauvinist.

I was a male chauvinist once. But thanks to my mother and my wife, and some other good people, I've been converted. I'm not the same. but I used to be.

But when you look at it, we've never had a woman President of the United States of America. Have we Don't you think if we had really looked-- now, I don't want to be ridiculous and say, we could have found a million women-- but don't you think we could have found at least 50 or 60 who could have been as good as Ronald Reagan, if we had really, really tried hard, you know, looked and searched? Don't you think we could have found some woman?

But we've had a false philosophy. And Doctor King, on that night, as I look back, talked about the difficult days ahead, Klan, Supreme Court, a timid Congress, and George Bush-- one of the greatest disappoint was in my life. When he became president, it wasn't necessarily my choice. But the Duke-- I mean, pardon me.

I'm nonpartisan. So don't let me talk about Dukakis. But when Bush came, he was such a welcome relief from Ronald Reagan. When Carter was president I went to the White House anytime I felt like it. I even went upstairs, Mr. President, in the Presidential Quarters and had tea and crumpets. Up you know, on the second floor.

After Reagan became president, I was in and out so fast I didn't know I had been there. And Bush became president. And I was one of the first black people he met. Oh, I was thinking that we were going to go far.

Well, then came the Civil Rights Bill, the first litmus test. I had literally begged this president. And he had us a merry go round for six long months as we worked with that Civil Rights Bill.

And then when he could have signed it and gone down in history and became one of only three presidents of the United States of America who has ever vetoed a Civil Rights Bill, he joined the ignominious company of Andrew Johnson, Ronald Reagan, and now George Bush's name stands there. So I've lost hope. When you think about the war in the Persian Gulf, and whatever your feeling is about it, it is a tragedy that of the combat troops, almost 30% will be black.

Men and women who have been denied the fullness of opportunity in this country will die for it, come back in body bags. And those who live will come back to a country where the president refused to sign a simple Civil Rights Bill the correct the mistakes that had been made.

[APPLAUSE]

Dark and difficult days. And then in our own community-- and I'm talking now to my black brothers and sisters-- because there are some things that we have to do for ourselves. The late Elijah Muhammad used to say, and I believe that he was right, "Nobody can save us from us but us." Because I happen to believe-- in spite of what I've been saying-- I want you to understand that I don't believe that my destiny is in the hand of any single white man or woman in this world.

I believe that my destiny is finally in the hand of God and my own people. And so I am calling us to look at some of the things that are happening. When we look out-- and maybe Doctor King saw this-- at a situation where violence is at an all-time high, when the leading cause of death among young black men is to be killed by another young black man when society has so twisted our minds and warped our imaginations and twisted our thoughts and made us turn on each other instead of to each other, so that young men will kill you without any thought.

AIDS, sweeping our community, teenage pregnancy, babies having babies, women are grandmothers before they're hardly 30 years of age. In Baltimore, the city where I live now, in 1989, 80% of all the babies born in the black community were born to single parents. Think of the tragedy, the economic social conditions that will rob many of those young people of a chance to life.

There's so many things that we have to do. The dropout rate-- one of these young people talked about that-- in the city of New York, 70% of the Black and Hispanic young people who start their high school never finish. In an information and computer-driven age, out of the 30% who do finish almost half of them could not read their diploma if you put a pistol to their head. What a tragedy.

And these are some problems that we must work on. And Doctor King talked about the dark and difficult days. But thank God, that he did not leave us without hope. He said, "But I have seen the promised land."

And so in spite of the darkness, in spite of the difficulty, in spite of the heartaches and disappointment, there is still hope. In spite of all we've gone through, I rejoice in the fact that when I go to Los Angeles, California, to see the mayor, I walk in the office of a Black man. When I go now to New York, in spite of all the *New York Post* says, and the former mayor, Ed Koch, you would think that David Dinkins created all the problems.

On the 1st day of January a year ago, he became the mayor. In a city where the bridges were fallen in, the roads were falling out, the homeless were walking the streets, the inmates were running this asylums, Koch presided for 12 years. And now he acts like he was never there and it's all Dinkins's fault. You know, it's almost a tragedy.

I feel sorry. And as we pray, let's include Dave Dinkins in our prayers. And let's include those renegade white reporters who write those stupid stories and hope that God will shake them up and not let them sleep until they tell the truth about what the problems are in New York and what Dave Dinkins is having to do to solve them.

But the fact that in New York City we have a black mayor and that we had our Harold Washington in Chicago and a Coleman Young in Detroit, and Andrew Young and Maynard Jackson in Atlanta, down in Birmingham, a Richard Arrington, and down in New Orleans a Morial, we've come a long way. 7,000 elected black officials, a million black young people in post-secondary education. These are the bright spots, the things that make me happy.

When I look at young people like these we saw today, talking about the hopes and dreams not only of Martin Luther King, but the hopes and dreams they have for a tomorrow that is better than today, when I see you with your books rubbing against the your sides, as you rub your heads against the post of knowledge and try to make a better world, when I see these dedicated professors try and open a way for those who have not had a way opened for them, when I look out and see a people who have a \$250 billion gross national product, we have a lot of money. And we've got to teach our dollars to have some sense. And we've got to say the business, we're not going to spend money where we can not only get a goods, but jobs and respect.

We can take those dollars and make them open doors that have been closed in our face. I'm happy and proud to see a people who've done so much with so little. And somehow, when I look at what we've accomplished, and I went down a few days ago to the former capital of the Confederacy, Richmond, Virginia, saw the grandson of slaves raising his right hand, and sworn in as the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, we have a lot we can be proud of.

I'm proud of Louis Sullivan, who will be coming here to speak later on next week in this ceremony. Secretary of Health and Human Services, the largest department in the government outside of the military, and who speaks up. And they've tried to shut him up. But he speaks up anyway.

And thank God. And let's our prayers go out for Louis Sullivan so much. Now, four things and I'll be through. And the first is that in spite of whether it's dark or whether it's light, there are some things we must do. And the first thing is, my brothers and my sisters, that we try to close the gap, is that we must build coalitions.

There's no sense in people going around hating white people because they're white, or white folk hating us because we're black. It may be one or two of us. But most of us had absolutely, positively nothing to do with how we came here.

[LAUGHTER]

Amen. You didn't choose to be black or white, male or female. You didn't do anything. You were whatever you were.

You didn't have much to do with naming yourself. Didn't pick your mother. Didn't pick your father.

And I think, on balance, we ought to just accept it. If you get mad every time you look in the mirror you're not going to make much progress. I could argue with God.

But I just won't do it. I could say, God, you could've made me look a little bit more like Billy D. Williams, so that when I walked in the fluttering eyes would begin, and the hearts would begin to palpitate. Or, if you didn't want me to look like Billy D. Williams, you could have given me some of the grace and the athletic agility of Michael Jordan so I could fly through the air and get a million dollars for my endorsement.

Or if you didn't want me to have the attributes of a Michael Jordan, why didn't you let me do the moonwalk like Michael Jackson so I could back up into a fortune? But since I didn't, and I'm Ben Hooks, I will do the best I can with what I have. And that's all that is required of anybody, not to be somebody else.

But be the best of whatever you are. And I hear Martin King saying, If you can't be a mountain, be a hill. But be the best hill that ever stood.

If you can't be a mighty river, be a stream. But be the best stream that ever ran. If you can't be a mighty oak, be a little bush.

But be the best bush. Be the best of whatever you are. That's all that God requires of us.

Not everybody can be a president Charles Vest. But whatever your name is, you can be the best that there is. You can give it your best.

And when you give it your best, I'm a living witness, that somehow God can transform that. And so let us build coalition, not get mad at people, not turning on each other, but turning to people, black and white together. We have been put on this planet Earth in this nation called America, to make it what we can.

Secondly, we must get rid of envy and jealousy. No matter what happens, we can't afford to get so mad that we forget the objective for which we work. And then we've got to exhibit a sense of pride.

Somebody said, a long time ago, early bird gets the worm. I don't particularly care about getting up early. Everybody knows that.

But I get up. I've never missed a plane in my life because it left too early. You're going to lay around in bed til 12 or 1 o'clock and then by four o'clock, come in looking for a job. Nobody's going to hire you.

You're too late. Put your shoes on your feet. Don't walk on them. Walk in them.

Got a cap? Wear it like I used to wear mine. Put the bill in front so white folk will know you know where you're going. Don't turn it around backward.

[APPLAUSE]

Amen. Let everybody know that you understand where you're on the way. If you're in school, it's more than playing, fun, and fashion. It's study. It's understanding. and don't let anybody fool you and tell you that geology and physics are white folk, and you ought to be studying the pathology of the Black ghetto and Black English.

All these folk who talk about Black English want their children to speak standard English. And if you think we can't do it, turn it on again and listen to Martin Luther King, who could master the English language. Someone has said, that of all the speeches made in America, only the Gettysburg Address and King's address to that mighty crowd in Washington, you couldn't change one comma, one period, and make it any better.

If you think we can't master the English idiomatic language, listen to the majestic voice of a Langston Hughes, saying "I've known rivers. And life for me ain't been no crystal staircase." Listen to Countee Cullen and listen to Phillis Wheatley. Listen to all of these great people. Look at the life of McBay, whom you honored, the first Martin Luther King scholar. Whatever it is that has to be done, we, as black folk, have proved that we can do it. Let us not be unfaithful to the legacy of the past.

And let us be up and doing. and finally, as I close today, don't forget God. I would be untrue to the deepest tradition of my being if I did not tell you that I believe with all my heart there is a God who rules above, hand of mercy, and heart of love.

Young people, I understand that you are here in this great prestigious institution. Someone was talking about neutrons and electrons. And they had a book in one of these science courses.

And they had black and red dots. And the teacher was explaining that everything came from the black and red dots. And one of my members of the church, who is the theology student, was hearing them discount God and proving God out of existence.

And he said, I understand the black and red dots, and that everything came from them. But what I want to know is, where do the black and red dots come from? Behind that, there's something.

And in my whole life, I've seen God moving and working, and moving and working. Now, in spite of all that happened, I am confident that we shall overcome. I sat down in Brown Chapel in Selma, Alabama. Saw the troopers, tear gas, dogs, and heard people singing "We Shall Overcome."

And somehow we did. I watched them, with their masks, on edge with their tanks and all of the implements of federal and government and state authority. Saw a little ragtag band of black and white who believed in freedom.

And one day in my own life, I saw the manifestation of the glorious will of God transcending human thoughts. I was a public defender in the courts of Shelby County, Tennessee. The judge didn't even want me to practice in his courtroom. But he died. And when wherever that kind of judge goes when he dies.

And the government called me up and said, would you like to serve on the bench? I said, Mr. Governor, I resigned the Public Defender's Office because they would not make me head of the office in the courtroom. And now you talk about making me judge. Do you know what you're saying?

It was kind of early in the morning. It was a little bit too early. But I wondered if he was really at himself. In Shelby County in Memphis? In 1965?

There were never no black judges anywhere in the South, and only precious few in the North. But I said, Mr. Governor, if you appoint me, I will accept it. And on the first day of September 1965, I put on a black robe and went into the courtroom, into the same courtroom behind the same bench where their juries did not want me to practice law, and raised this right hand and swore to uphold the laws of the state of Tennessee and the United States of America.

And people were sitting there, crying. Because they never thought they'd see a black judge. And then I went out, sat down.

And the bailiff came around and said, judge, you've got to go back. There are people who want to make appeals and that type of thing. And I'm just trying to say to you, ladies and gentlemen, young men and young women, what God can do in your life.

I remember putting that robe back on. And I'd been in the Supreme Court of the United States of America, and the state appellate courts and federal district courts and every kind of court. But never, never, never ever in my life before or since, did it sound like it did that day, when I walked back into that courtroom, the bailiff made everybody stand and said, here ye.

Here ye. Here ye. This honorable criminal court of Shelby County, Tennessee is now open for business pursuant to adjournment.

All persons having business before this court, draw nigh, give attention and you shall be heard. The honorable, Ben L. Hooks presiding. And be seated please.

And I said, that's right. Sit down. Because I'm in charge. "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

[APPLAUSE]

Would you help me do like we used to do it? (SINGING) We shall overcome.

[AUDIENCE SINGING ALONG]

Join hands. (SINGING) We shall overcome. Down in Brown Chapel, we shall overcome.

Jackson, Mississippi. Atlanta, Georgia, Birmingham, Alabama, black and white, young, old, priest, rabbi, nun. (SINGING) In my heart, I do believe. We shall overcome.

(SINGING) We shall overcome some day. The Lord is on our side. (SINGING) The Lord is on our side.

The Lord is on our side. The Lord is on our side today. The Lord is on our side today.

Oh, deep in my heart-- thank you, Martin. Thank you-- I do believe. We shall overcome. We shall overcome some day.

[APPLAUSE]

MODERATOR: Doctor Reverend Hooks, I want to thank you for those inspiring remarks. And I want to say, for those of you who don't get a chance to participate or experience the Baptist experience, you can say today you've been experiencing it. And I also want to say, to Doctor Reverend Hooks, we have outdone Harvard. Because it's been more than three hours. And it was more than a bus ride.

[APPLAUSE]

At this time we're going to have some musical selections by Charles Thomas, of our Admissions Office. And he's going to be accompanied by Robin [INAUDIBLE], who's also from our Admissions Office. And he will sing "I Told Jesus." And Robin will dance. And then the gospel choir will come right after that.

[APPLAUSE]

[MUSIC - "I TOLD JESUS"]

THOMAS: (SINGING) I told Jesus, be all right. If you change my name. I told Jesus, be all right if you change my name. I told Jesus, be all right, be all right, be all right. I told Jesus, be all right if you change my name.

And he told me the world will turn away from you if I change your name. Yes, he told me the world will turn away from you if I change your name. But I told Jesus be all right, be all right, be all right. I told Jesus, be all right if you change--

And he told me, your mother won't know you, child, if I change your name. Yes, he told me your mother won't know you, child, if I change your name. But I told Jesus, be all right, be all right, be all right if my mama turns me away now.

If my papa turns me away. If my baby, baby brother turns, if my sister turns me away. If the world, if it turns me away.

If every, every body turns me away, I told Jesus be all right if you change my name. If you change my name, if you change my name. If you change my name.

[APPLAUSE, CHEERING]

[PIANO PLAYING]

PRESENTER: Good afternoon. For one thing, I'd like to thank the MIT community for inviting the MIT Gospel Choir to join in the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King. Dr. Martin Luther King was a man of peace. He was a man of love, love of all people, and love of the God that he serves.

And through this God, he received all the inspiration which allowed him to carry out his activities day to day. The song that we're about to sing, "Hallelujah, Salvation and Glory," is a prayer selection which gives us inspiration. And through this song, the faith and trust in God, hopefully we'll be able to relay this message to you. Thank you.

[MUSIC - "HALLELUJAH, SALVATION AND GLORY"]

CHOIR: (SINGING) Hallelujah, salvation and glory, honor and power unto the Lord, our God. For the Lord, our God, is mighty. The Lord, our God, is omnipotent. The Lord, our God, he is wonderful.

Hallelujah, salvation and glory, honor and power unto the Lord, our God. For the Lord, our God, is mighty. The Lord, our God, is omnipotent. The Lord, our God, he is wonderful.

For all praises be to the King of Kings. The Lord of Lords, he is wonderful. For all praises be to the King of Kings. The Lord of Lords, he is wonderful.

Hallelujah. All praises be to the King of Kings. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. The Lord of Lords, he is wonderful.

Hallelujah. All praises be to the King of Kings. The Lord or Lords, he is wonderful. Hallelujah.

All praises be to the Lord of Lords.

Salvation, and glory. The King of Kings, Honor and power, he is wonderful. Hallelujah.

All praises be, to the King of Kings. Salvation and glory. The Lord of Lords.

Honor and power, he is wonderful. Hallelujah. All praises be to the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, he is wonderful. Hallelujah.

All praises be-- hallelujah, salvation and glory-- to the King of Kings-- honor and power-- the Lord of Lords, he is wonderful.

[A CAPELLA SINGING]

All praises be-- hallelujah-- to the King of Kings-- salvation and glory-- the Lord of Lords-- honor and power-- he is wonderful. All praises be-- hallelujah-- to the King of Kings-- salvation and glory-- the Lord or Lords-- honor and power-- he is wonderful. All praises be-- hallelujah-- to the King of Kings-- salvation and glory-- the Lord of Lords-- he is wonderful. All praises be-- hallelujah-- to the King of Kings-- salvation and glory-- the Lord of Lords-- honor and power-- he is won-- he is won-- he is wonderful.

[APPLAUSE]

MODERATOR: Thank you, Charles and Robin, and the Gospel Choir and Judge on piano. Before Reverend Campbell comes and gives us the benediction, I want to thank the members of the Martin Luther King Committee for putting this program together, the participants, and especially Doctor Reverend Hooks for taking time out of his busy schedule. And certainly, all of you, for coming out and participating in the 17th Annual celebration.

I hope that you will be able to go over to the Student Center and participate in the reception. For those of you not familiar with the campus, we'll be in 20 Chimneys, which is in the mezzanine level of the Student Center as you exit Kresge, the Student Center is the first building to your left, with dual stairway going up like this. And we'll be on the mezzanine level, the third floor. Reverend Campbell?

CAMPBELL: Biblical references to God's blessing have little to do with the kind of solemn numbness that we sometimes feel or seems to be what we're about. Blessings have to do with calls-- sometimes disturbing calls-- to a living that is a blessing, a blessing in solidarity with others through struggles for justice and peace. And the words attributed to that most universal of all saints, Francis of Assisi, "May the Lord bless us.

May the Lord make us an instrument of God's peace. Where there is hatred, let us so love. Where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is doubt, faith. Despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light.

And where there is sadness, joy." May we recognize one another as blessed, and rejoice in our being together today and in the sharing of some food. Blessed are you, Lord, for this moment. Amen.