

Segregation of black people and the Civil Rights Movement in the USA

INTRODUCTION

Slavery was abolished in 1863 but it had existed for over 200 years

So segregation remained in the USA and lasted one more century

The civil rights movement born in the 50's gradually put an end to segregation.

It was a political, legal, and social struggle to gain full citizenship rights for African Americans.

But the struggle for civil right began as early as the 19th century...

I/ Segregation in the USA

A/ Jim Crow laws

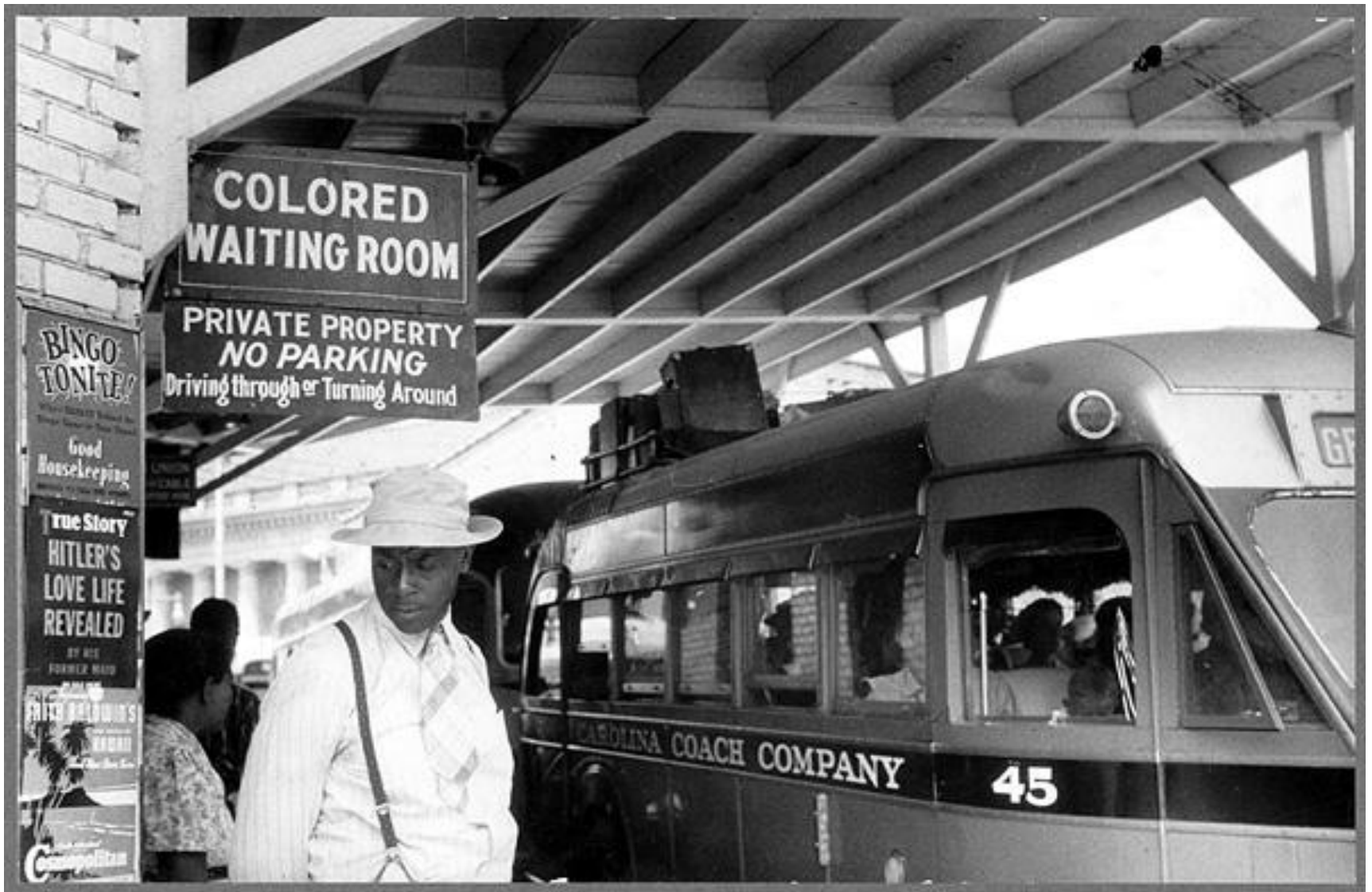
-The name « Jim Crow » comes from Jump Jim Crow : it was a song and a dance from 1828 that was done in blackface by a White actor called Thomas Dartmouth

-These laws were enforced between 1876 and 1965

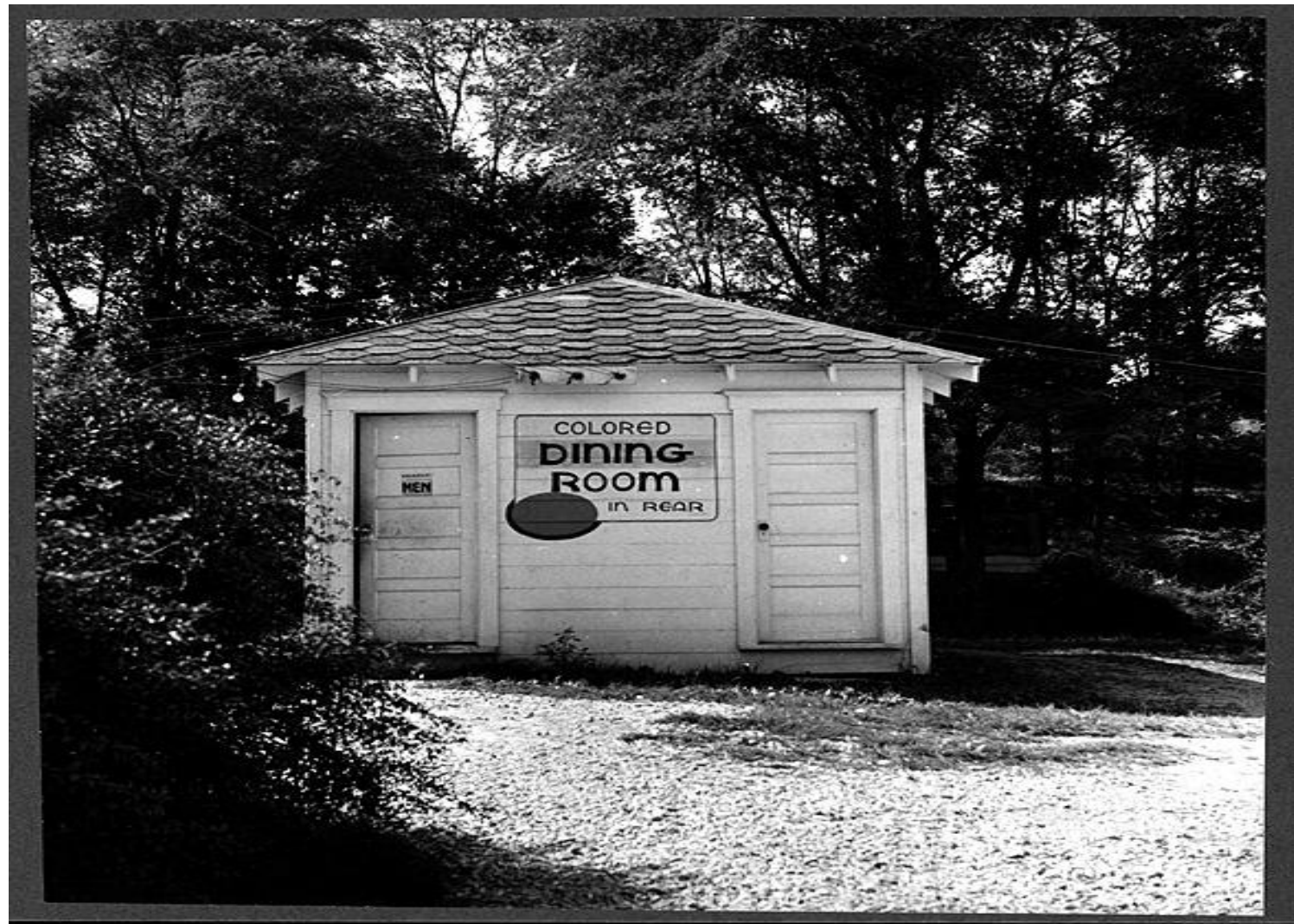
See document and write one example

1. A Black male could not offer his hand (to shake hands) with a White female because it implied being socially equal. Obviously, a Black male could not offer his hand or any other part of his body to a White woman, because he risked being accused of rape
2. Blacks and Whites were not supposed to eat together. If they did eat together, Whites were to be served first, and some sort of partition was to be placed between them
3. Under no circumstance was a Black male to offer to light the cigarette of a White female—that gesture implied intimacy
4. Blacks were not allowed to show public affection toward one another, especially kissing, because it offended Whites.
5. Blacks had to be introduced to Whites, never Whites to Blacks. For example: “Mr. Peters (the White person), this is Charlie (the Black person), that I spoke to you about”

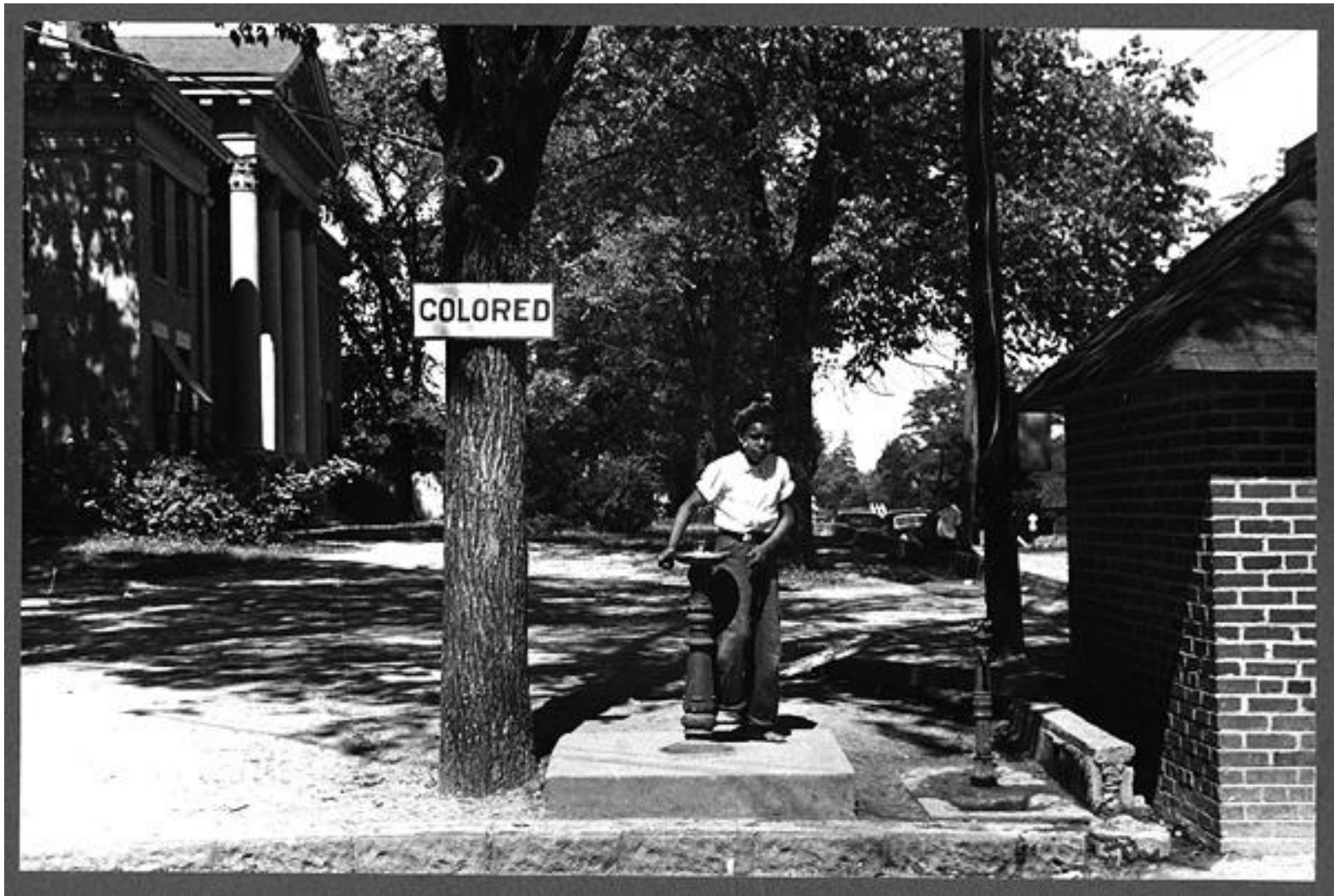
6. Whites did not use courtesy titles of respect when referring to Blacks, for example, Mr., Mrs., Miss., Sir, or Ma'am. Instead, Blacks were called by their first names. Blacks had to use courtesy titles when referring to Whites, and were not allowed to call them by their first names
7. If a Black person rode in a car driven by a White person, the Black person sat in the back seat, or the back of a truck
8. White motorists had the right-of-way at all intersections.
9. Never assert that a White person is lying
10. Never impute dishonorable intentions to a White person
11. Never suggest that a White person is from an inferior class
12. Never lay claim to, or overly demonstrate, superior knowledge or intelligence.
13. Never curse a White person.
14. Never comment upon the appearance of a White female.



At the bus station, Durham, North Carolina, 1940.



A rest stop for bus passengers on the way from Louisville, Kentucky to Nashville, Tennessee, with separate entrance for Blacks. 1943.



**Drinking fountain on the courthouse lawn, Halifax,
North Carolina. 1938.**

Strange Fruit (poem 1936)

Lewis Allan

Southern trees bear strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

Pastoral scene of the gallant south,
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,
Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh,
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh.

Here is fruit for the crows to pluck,
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop,
Here is a strange and bitter crop.

Black people were often lynched when they broke Jim Crow laws:

It's been recorded that 3,959 black men, women, and children were lynched in the Southern states between 1877 and 1950



In the North it was not so common .

B/ Early black « resistance »

There were three different ways to resist Jim Crow laws

1) Trials

In the late 1800s, African Americans went to court to stop separation

One of the cases against segregated rail travel was (Homer) Plessey V.Ferguson (1896) in Louisiana

Homer Plessey brought the case to the Supreme Court of the United States.

The court finally ruled that black people were "separate but equal"

2) Creation of associations against segregation

The most famous was the : National Association for the Advancement of Colored people (NAACP) in 1909.

It was founded by William Edward Burghardt (WEB) Du Bois (1868-1963).

It became the most influential anti-segregation association



W. E. B. Du Bois, in 1918

3) Promoting black culture: the Harlem renaissance

The Harlem Renaissance was an African American cultural movement of the 1920s and early 1930s

It then spread all around big cities throughout the USA

African American artists and writers used culture to work for the goals of civil rights and equality.

Examples:

Duke Ellington

Louis Armstrong



After WWII, The civil rights movement took off.

It was to grow bigger and bigger until Afro American were given what they had been waiting for so long...the right to vote!

II/ The civil rights movement

A/ A new background after WWII

In 1946, H. Truman appointed a committee to investigate civil rights.

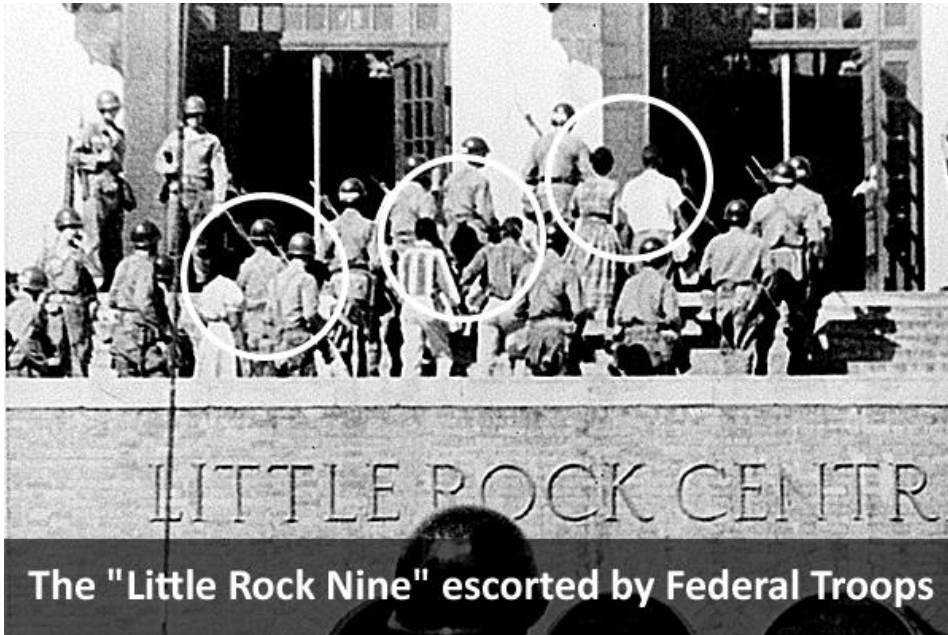
1-WHY SUCH A CHANGE?

- for some politicians it was no longer morally right
- excluding Blacks from the job market was a waste of skills
- the Blacks were becoming more outspoken especially because some went in Europe to fight the Nazis
- the USA was standing up for the respect of rights of man and equality
- decolonisation was on the brink to start and there was a risk the new states could turn to the USSR because of the unfair treatments on blacks.

2- Results

In May 1954 : the supreme Court voted racially segregated education was unconstitutional: school were desegregated.

President Dwight Eisenhower(1952-1960) sent federal troops to enforce school desegregation



B/ The Montgomery bus boycott

Let's watch this video and explain Rosa park's action

B/ The Montgomery bus boycott

-On December 1st, 1955, forty-three year old Rosa Parks (1912-2005) boarded a bus in Montgomery, Alabama after finishing work

-As all blacks were required to do, she paid her fare at the front of the bus and then re-boarded in the rear.

- The bus became crowded and Rosa was ordered by the bus driver to give up her seat to a white passenger. Rosa Parks remained in her seat and was arrested



-The black community decided to protest and organized a bus boycott. It lasted 381 days

The boycott was led by Martin Luther King



The black community got organised during the boycott:

-Car pools were put in place

-Some taxis only charged 10 cents per ride

So the Montgomery bus company almost went bankrupt

And In November 1956, a federal court ordered to desegregate Montgomery's buses and the boycott ended in victory

C/ Martin Luther King Jr (1929-April 4th 1968)

1/ Before the Montgomery Bus boycott

-Baptist minister ordained in 1948

-1953, at age 24, King became pastor of the Dexter avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery- Alabama



2/ What were his views?

We are too often loud and boisterous and spend far too much on drink. Even the poorest among us can purchase a ten-cent bar of soap; even the most uneducated among us can have high morals.

By improving our standards, we will go a long way towards breaking down the arguments of those who argue in favour of segregation.

The other part of our programme must be non-violent resistance to all forms of racial injustice, even when this means going to jail and bold actions to end the demoralisation caused by the legacy of slavery and segregation, inferior schools, slums and second-class citizenship. A new frontal assault on the poverty, disease and ignorance of a people too long ignored by America's conscience will make victory more certain.

Extracted from: Martin Luther King "Chaos or community". Penguin Press. 1967.

1/What were MLK's goals?

- better living standards for the black
- desegregation
- Same status for the black
- Full citizenship

2/What methods did he advocate?

- non violence
- passive resistance/civil disobedience
- sit-ins
- pray-ins
- Demonstrations/freedom rides

So many non-violent ways to protest against segregation



Sit-ins in a Nashville store

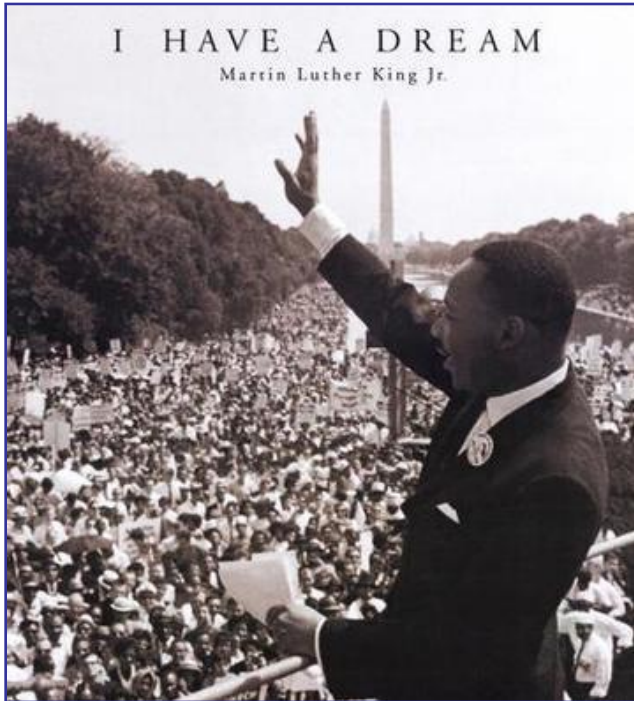


The Freedom Riders, both African American and white, traveled around the South in buses to test the effectiveness of desegregation in bus stations

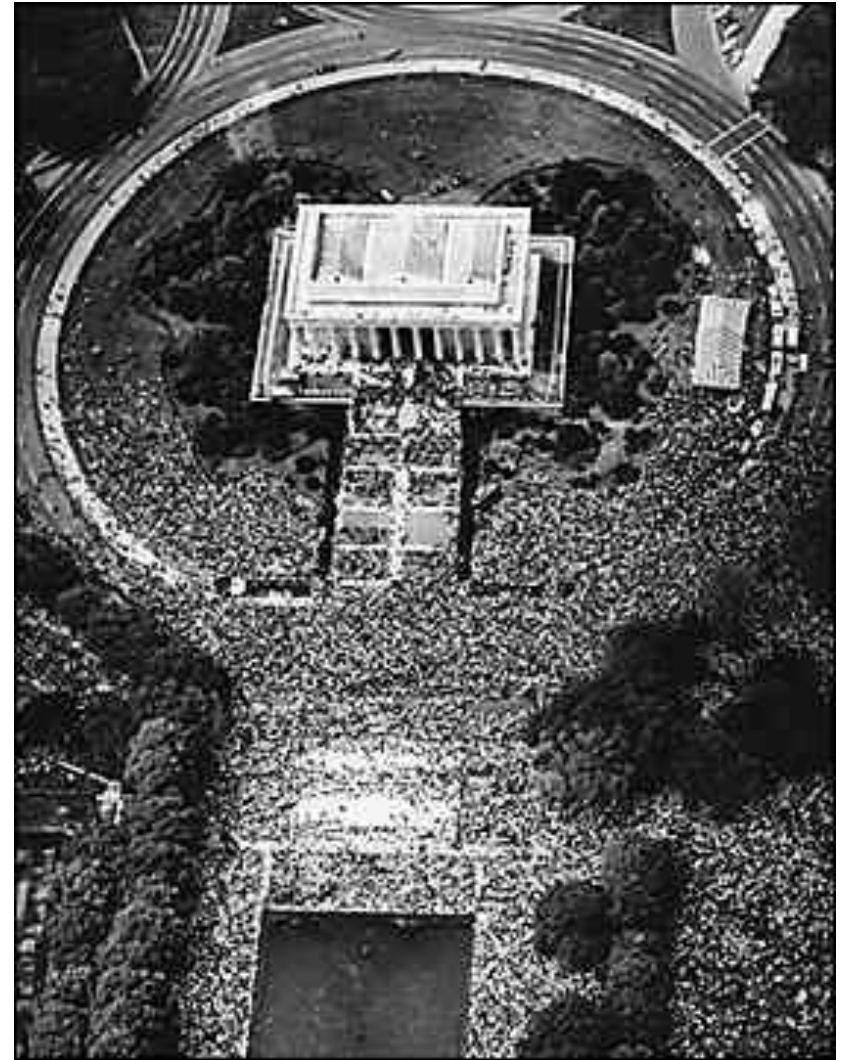
Demonstrations



3/ The Washington rally:



August 28, 1963
March on
Washington



”

“I Have a Dream

3/ The Washington rally: part 2

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal

“I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves- and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character

I have a *dream* today!

3/ The Washington rally: part 2

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of “interposition” and “nullification”—one day right there in Alabama little black boys and girls- will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers-.

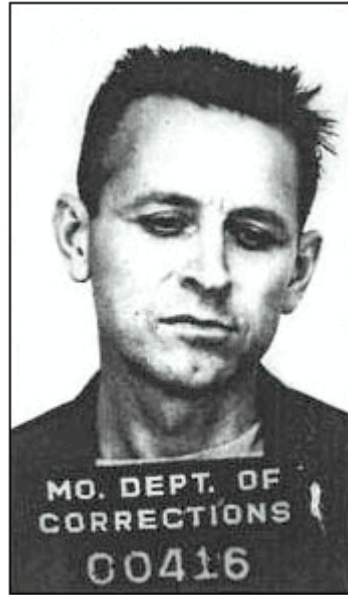
I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; “and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.”

4/ After Washington, MLK's enlarged his vision of civil rights

- 1964 King was awarded the Nobel Prize for peace
- In 1965 the Voting Right Act was passed
- 1966 he went to Chicago to fight segregation in housing
- 1967: He opposed the Vietnam war:
" I speak out against this war because I'm disappointed with America"
- 1968 "poor people's campaign"

**-APRIL 4th 1968 he was assassinated in
Memphis Tennessee (James Earl Ray ?)**



**-1983: MLK's day (Reagan) (3rd Monday of
January)**

D/ Some blacks disagreed with MLK...

MALCOLM X 1925-1965

(Malcolm Little)

1952-1964 Nation of Islam

Violent

Assassinated in 1965 by 2
Nation of Islam activists



Black panther party since 1966

Huey P. Newton

Violent and close to
marxism

10 point program

Nation of Islam activists



Black Panther's party's « Ten Point Program »

We want power to determine the destiny of our black and oppressed communities.

We want full employment for our people.

We want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our Black Community.

We want decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.

We want decent education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.

We want completely free health care for all black and oppressed people.

We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people, other people of color, all oppressed people inside the United States.

We want an immediate end to all wars of aggression.

We want freedom for all black and oppressed people now held in U. S. Federal, state, county, city and military prisons and jails. We want trials by a jury of peers for all persons charged with so-called crimes under the laws of this country.

We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace and people's community control of modern technology

POINT	Why such a claim?
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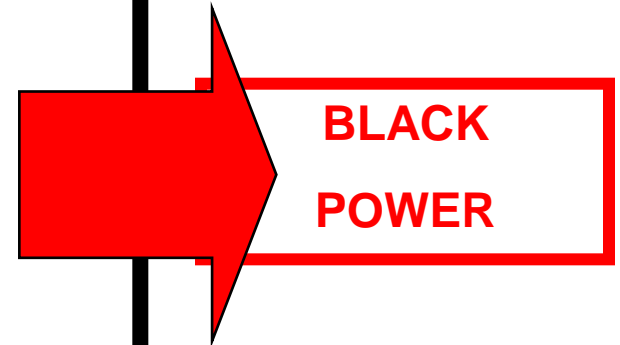
2-Black panther party since 1966

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assimilation or
integration takes
black people's
dignity and
heritage.

MEXICO 68



Black Power



Tommie Smith, a Black American, won the 200 meter race with a world record time.

The second was an Australian.

The third was also a Black American, John Carlos.

They showed a raised fist wearing a black glove to denounce racial discrimination in the USA.

It reminded of the Black Power salute.

Both were expelled from the games considering they « breached the fundamental principles of the Olympic spirit »

3-AN EXAMPLE OF ACTIVISM: ANGELA DAVIS



She was born in 1944 in the USA

She became an active member of the Black Panther Party

She was suspected to have helped three black prisoner to escape from jail and she was imprisoned for 22 months from 1970 to 1972 (see interview)

After she was released she finished her college studies and became professor of philosophy and was director of the university's Feminist Studies department in SANTA CRUZ California.

In 80 and 84 she ran for presidency in the communist party.

She is now retired but still stands up for women's rights in general including lesbians and Muslim women(veil, burqa)

4- BLACK LIVES MATTER

It was launched by Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi in July of 2013, after the death of **Trayvon Martin**.

Trayvon Martin had no criminal record when he was shot and killed by neighborhood watch member George Zimmerman on February 26, 2012, in Sanford, Florida.

ZIMMERMAN WAS ACQUITTED

It was created as an **online community** to help combat anti-Black racism.

The movement protested after George Floyd's death
On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black American man, was murdered in Minneapolis by Derek Chauvin, a 44-year-old white police officer.

Floyd had been arrested after a store clerk alleged that he made a purchase using a counterfeit \$20 bill



Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for over nine minutes while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face-down in a street

He died from asphyxiation whereas he kept saying he could not breathe

The police officer was tried for homicide

Chauvin was convicted for second degree murder and sentenced to 22.5 years of prison.

What some people think Black Lives matter means

Matter



Lives

What Black Lives Matter actually means

Matter



Lives

ELVIS PRESLEY IN THE GHETTO

As the snow flies
On a cold and gray chicago mornin'
A poor little baby child is born
In the ghetto
And his mama cries
cause if theres one thing that she dont need
Its another hungry mouth to feed
In the ghetto

People, dont you understand
The child needs a helping hand
Or hell grow to be an angry young man some day
Take a look at you and me,
Are we too blind to see,
Do we simply turn our heads
And look the other way

Well the world turns
And a hungry little boy with a runny nose
Plays in the street as the cold wind blows
In the ghetto

And his hunger burns
So he starts to roam the streets at night
And he learns how to steal
And he learns how to fight
In the ghetto

Then one night in desperation
A young man breaks away
He buys a gun, steals a car,
Tries to run, but he dont get far
And his mama cries

As a crowd gathers round an angry young man
Face down on the street with a gun in his hand
In the ghetto

As her young man dies,
On a cold and gray chicago mornin,
Another little baby child is born
In the ghetto

Nina Simone

*Of course this whole program is dedicated
to the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, you know
that.*

Once upon this planet Earth
Lived a man of humble birth
Preaching love and freedom for his fellow man
He was dreaming of the day
Peace would come to Earth to stay
And he spread his message all across the land
'Turn the other cheek' he'd plead
'Love thy neighbor' was his creed
Pain, Humiliation, Death
He did not grant
With his Bible at this side
From his foes, he did not hide
It's hard to think that this great man is dead (oh yeah)
Will the murders never cease?
Are they men or are they beasts?
What do they ever hope, ever hope to gain?
Will my country ever fall, stand or fall?
It is too late for us all?
And did Dr. Martin Luther King just die in vain?

But he'd seen the mountain top
And he knew he could not stop
Always living with the threat of death
ahead
Folks, you better stop and think
'Cause we're headed for the brink
What will happen now that he is dead?
He was for equality
For all people-you and me
Full of love and goodwill
Hate was not his way
He was not a violent man
Tell me folks if you can
Just why, why was he shot down the
other day?
People said he'd seen the mountain top
And he knew, he could not stop
Always living with the threat of death
ahead
Folks, you better stop and think and feel
again
For we're headed for the brink
What's going to happen now that the
King of Love is dead?

STRANGE FRUIT

BILLIE HOLIDAY

Southern trees bear strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

Pastoral scene of the gallant south,
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,
Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh,
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Here is fruit for the crows to pluck,
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop,
Here is a strange and bitter crop.

CONCLUSION

The civil rights movement was born after WWII and asserted with charismatic leaders as MLK and Malcolm X.

But, it's worth remembering, black Americans stood up against segregation and discrimination as early as the 19th Century.

However, today discrimination towards Afro-Americans remains, even if a black president was finally elected from 2009 to 2017.

The fact the KKK still exists, witnesses this lasting racism in the American society