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# I Have A Dream, That Black Lives Matter: Martin Luther King And George Floyd

In August 1963, an African American man, who was murdered told us, "I have a dream". His ideas and speech gained an almost universal acceptance and saw laws changed in the United States of America. In August 2020, we have the continuing reaction to the murder of a Black man, creating the message that "Black lives Matter."

Both these messages are connected. Both these messages are about validating people, all people, as having the unalienable right to freedom, the right to life, the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

So, as we watch history repeat itself the obvious question emerges, why aren't we having the same outcomes and success?

The March on Washington was an economic and political protest conducted in Washington during the August of 1963. It was the combined protest of Martin Luther King's (SCLC) Freedom protest and A. Phillip Randolph's Jobs protest. The purpose of the protest was to demolish discrimination and to achieve equality, as promised in the Declaration of Independence, and The Constitution of the United States. The March on Washington occurred due to the rising violence and discrimination of the Black community. The Kennedy Administration was hesitant about the protest saying that the March was perhaps "ill-timed," as "We want success in the Congress, not just a big show at the Capitol." This was stated in concern of the reputation of the Black community, for if the protest were to end in violence the negative perceptions could undo the Civil Rights Bill making its way through Congress. That was 1963. It is history, but history goes on.

Today we are seeing the Black Lives Matter protests eventuate out of a multi-national cry for justice for George Floyd and for previous victims of police brutality. The protests started on May 26th, 2020, the day after George Floyd was murdered. By June 6th, an estimated half a million people protested in 550 places across the United States. The nation-wide protests, although aggravated by the death of George Floyd, are targeted at systemic racism (racism captured in everyday society, not just one on one interactions) and the lack of consequences for police brutality. The Black community has been negatively scrutinized over the riots and looting that occurred out of repulsion of the government and rebellion against the police, who in some cases started the violence. The Trump Administration has consistently attempted to demonize these protests.

A major difference in these two events is where the Government stands, and how it has directed the movements. The Kennedy Administration supported the Civil Right Movement, this was made extremely clear in Kennedy's Civil Rights Address. Kennedy speaks to the nation enforcing that "It ought to be possible, in short, for every American to enjoy the privileges of being American without regard to his race or his colour." He continues to point out that "nor is this a partisan issue. In a time of domestic crisis, men of good will and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or politics." Trump completely opposes this idea by stating that Radical Left political and Anarchist groups are responsible for the protest outbreaks and that the

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“Dems are controlled by the Radical Left.” Kennedy displayed concern for his nation whereas Trump only displays concern for himself by pushing the blame onto others to preserve his reputation. Kennedy was living out the call of his Inauguration Address, reminding citizens to ‘ask what you can do for your country’, challenging every American to contribute in some way to the public good.

Martin Luther King arguably paved the way for Black communities to get to where they are today. He and those who followed after him, including President Lyndon Baines Johnson, achieved countless acts that gave the Black communities a sense of equality. With what was accomplished in the 60’s, we can wonder, “What if Dr. King were still here today?”

King first brought to attention that the police in the US were no longer protecting civilians and that they were attacking them, however his message became lost or almost forgotten.

It has taken the broadcasted death of George Floyd for people other than only African Americans to remember the call to the Dream.

King was an evident supporter of non-violent action and civil disobedience to achieve his dream of equality, something we are seeing a lot of today. Martin Luther King has said that “A riot is the language of the unheard,” a quote that’s volume is still astronomical. The message that Martin Luther King was conveying in the 60s is one the Government should consider.

The compelling scene of the Black Lives Matter protests, grasping the continuous and evolving outcomes that the March on Washington started will only become less confronting, and cease to be the language of the unheard, when the United States’ Government stops opposing this movement, and ensures the necessary changes to the nation that the civil rights movement cause demanded, to fulfill the Founding Fathers’ promise to all citizens.

Only then will the United States become a nation that another President in another time of great calamity reminded all citizens is, “a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” Only then will the dream become a reality, and only then will the unalienable things that really matter exist in more than in an ideal form.