

T H E T I M E I S N O W :

A CONSIDERATION OF A DESEGREGATION PROGRAM FOR LOS ANGELES

a sermon delivered June 30, 1963 by

Rev. Stephen H. Fritchman

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Also included: SERMON COMMENTARY by Mr. Milton MacFarlane

The First Unitarian Church
2936 West Eighth Street
Los Angeles 5, California

THE TIME IS NOW

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Introduction

Mr. Harry Belafonte, the famed American entertainer, this week declared in Toronto, "The racial struggle has reached such intense ferocity that there is no longer any middle of the road." This is a good point at which to begin our discussion today. There has been some rather absurd talk recently about the necessity to avoid extremism of the right or left. This charge, of course, is one more convenient screen to hide irresponsibility for participation; it means nothing. One is either for integration or he is not. There is no right or left or middle. To call the President of the United States an extremist, to call the Supreme Court extremists, to call Republicans and Democrats in Congress who are supporting the civil rights program extremists is so foolish that it hardly deserves comment, were it not so frequently repeated in the newspapers and in daily conversation that "we must avoid extremism on either end of the spectrum." It must be said with child-like clarity to many people: "The Fourteenth Amendment guaranteeing equality to all persons irrespective of race is not extremism; it is the law of the land. All it needs is total implementation." Countless efforts are being made to split, to divide, to set Negro against Negro and white against Negro in a panic effort to delay the confrontation which has now begun in earnest. To be sure, there are proposals and alternate proposals, there are differences in tactics, but in any serious grappling with the issue of race in America today, one is for integration or he is against it. Mr. Belafonte is right; there is no middle road!

But, you may ask, are not Governor Barnett for the whites and Elijah Muhammad for the Negroes, "extremist" segregationists? Let me say in a word (and then hope it need not be said again for a long time) that Elijah Muhammad and the Muslim movement, like Governor Barnett and Governor Wallace, are for segregation and against integration. But there is this difference, however, that we owe an immense debt to Elijah Muhammad, as our predecessors in the Nineteenth Century did to the Marcus Garvey movement, also composed of black nationalists, for seeking to give dignity and pride to Negroes, and to educate white Americans about the iniquitous conditions of life for a dark-skinned American. And this is a very great difference indeed from the aims of the white segregationists, who hold basically to the views of those who brought the slaves to this land. I do not intend to enter into public controversy with the Muslims if it can be avoided; not because I agree with their solution, which I do not, but because I respect their efforts to spell out to all Americans the realities of the racial status quo; and I will not share in any tactics of trying to split Negro against Negro. There will be enough of this without my unwitting assistance. Says I.F. Stone in the June 24th issue of his Bi-Weekly:

"Few of us seem to understand that humiliation is what the Negro's struggle is all about. To be deprived of manhood, to be denied the right to hit back, to have no job and depend on your wife's support, to be beaten by the cops with impunity, to be drafted for some crazy white folks' crusade for freedom far away when there's a bigger one to be fought at home: how can a white man really know what it means to be inside a black skin in America?"

I do not know whether our discussant today, Mr. Milton McFarlane, will agree with me entirely or not, but I feel the multiple issues of race in America today are primarily white problems. We who are white brought the slaves to this land, we were the slavemasters. We have been the exploiters and beneficiaries of racial oppression for over three hundred years. It is white Congresses and white Supreme Courts who (along with white intellectuals in press and college and pulpit) have rationalized and defended the postponement of the promises of the early years enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. As a white American I say it is primarily our problem, not theirs to solve.

It has been in default of our action that the Negro people across the nation, including the Los Angeles Basin, have organized under their own leadership. They are weary unto death (literally) of white people assuming they had the answers, which proved to be hollow, empty answers. Democracy means that leadership comes from the people. It is fitting and proper that Negroes are today planning their own solutions to ancient evils. At last our President has spoken long overdue words, and has called Negro leaders into the White House for discussions on his program. The most important aspect of this latter action is that he is showing every Governor and Mayor, in fact every citizen of the land, that the white man no longer intends to do the solving of the problem all by himself. Leadership must now be a joint effort with full recognition of equal status for black and white leaders. This consummation has been long in coming, in Washington and Los Angeles. Three Negro members of our City Council help to spell out this truth, I trust, to those of clouded vision.

It will be a new experience for many white labor leaders, Councilmen, ministers, educators, business men and others to listen and to consider proposals from those who have been so long silent, and unlistened to when they did speak, the Negro people. Now white people must listen with some real humility and accept the agenda of change which we are discussing today.

Rev. H. H. Brookins, steering committee member of the United Civil Rights group, rightly said last week, "Los Angeles may well become the target city for total integration of Negroes across the nation." Other major figures in the defining of the targets in Los Angeles are Dr. Christopher Taylor, President of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Mr. and Mrs. Earl Walter of C.O.R.E. Rev. Mr. Brookins, Dr. Taylor and the Walters are examples of a very level-headed responsible and dedicated leadership now being discovered by citizens of Los Angeles County.

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What does a program for desegregation in the Los Angeles area mean? The following six proposals are not exhaustive. They are not the official list of any one group. They do not apply to any one city in the area. They are a summary of a number of proposals from several sources, Negro, Mexican American, Caucasian. They include ideas from Community Relations Councils, from the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League, C.O.R.E., the United Civil Rights Committee, Democratic Council groups and several others. Some proposals are more important than others. But all have sufficient merit to provide all of us with concrete, specific, urgent targets which are not to be by-passed, postponed, or dismissed as Utopian. If we wish to avoid racial strife and violence, as well as further postponement and cruel injustice, we will study these proposals, and find our own ways and means of implementing them.

Whatever else may or may not be included, a minimum program of desegregation in this area will, it seems to me, include these goals:

First, total integration is the chief goal. Tokenism, gradualism, compromises are no longer acceptable. The clock cannot be turned back. We are proposing a community in which race, creed and national origin are not considerations in any area of our society.

Second, integration in jobs, in employment, public and private, in commerce and industry, in professions and trades, is the beginning of all other desegregation. Not only does this imply an open door to the qualified person for every job, it means a realization that centuries of slavery and prejudice must be compensated for by the intensified training of Negroes and others for jobs they have every right to hold. It is not enough to say that Negroes are not qualified to be technicians, specialists, skilled workers. There must be an immediate inauguration of training programs by the unions, by the city and county, by the professions, so that in this generation Negro men and women, hitherto deprived of educational opportunities, may begin to qualify. For employers to say that they want to employ minority persons but find they do not meet necessary requirements is pious hypocrisy unless they are actively promoting such programs. A survey of industry and commerce must be started immediately, with pressure by the unions, and the city government, to prepare blueprints for new employment opportunities.

Enforcement of already passed laws against contracts with concerns that discriminate must be pressed for by our city, county and state officials. It is not enough to have rules on the books. Enforcement must have formal and informal watchdogs. All agencies of enforcement must take their duties far more seriously. The labor unions have been notoriously delinquent in practicing the integration originally proposed in the early days of the AF of L and CIO and during World War II. We are not talking about a temporary war emergency. Integration must now be thought of as a permanent and continuous part of the character of our nation.

Third: Next only to desegregation in the making of one's living is the right to live where one wishes. This means the final and absolute end of the ghetto for Negro, Jew, Mexican American or anyone else. Mr. Wendell Green of the Committee for Representative Government this week testified that "Los Angeles is more racially segregated in housing than all of the large northern cities with the exception of Chicago and Cleveland." Ninety-four percent of the Negro population is crowded in the central district of Los Angeles. When school officials tell us (as they do) that Negro demands for redistricting and providing bus transportation for Negro children from one school to another within a fifteen mile radius would add four million dollars to the school budget, the answer clearly is that such will have to be the price until we end racial segregation in housing.

This goal of integrated housing is basic to all other policies of desegregation. It calls for new thinking, new practices and, if need be, some courage by owners of property whatever their own race, creed or national origin. Liberals are not without much guilt in this matter. There is no point in seeking scapegoats and devils to blame. The guild of property owners in Los Angeles is deep and wide. The possibility of housing desegregation was advanced by the passage last week of the Rumford Act, but law is not enough. Conscience also must act. Owners of private dwellings, as well as apartments of multiple units, are involved in every part of the city. Every one of us here should voluntarily sign a statement that we will rent or sell property to anyone, without reference to race or creed. We should all be ready to support projects toward these ends, sit-ins, marches, visits to realtors, joining Human Relations Councils and other proposals which will appear. The ghetto can be ended far sooner if we voluntarily involve ourselves actively in the many undertakings which will be starting in the weeks and months before us. Elimination of the Negro ghetto can be achieved in a relatively short time if we wish to have it so. Allow me to take a moment to quote from a bulletin from the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. I wish it were not necessary, but I think it is. Mr. John Buggs, the Executive Director of the Commission, prepared this material. I ask your close attention to it, if not for your enlightenment, then for your neighbor's

"This letter is being written to provide accurate and factual information for home owners who are living in neighborhoods which are facing for the first time the impact of the tremendous social changes which are taking place not merely in our County, but throughout our nation, and the world. . . For those of us who are facing this type of change for the first time in our own community, certain questions are bound to arise, and this letter is an attempt to answer some of the more commonly encountered questions.

"'Why do they want to move into my neighborhood in the first place?' Orientals, Mexican-Americans, Negroes and other minority group families want to move into your neighborhood for exactly the same reasons you moved there. If it is a pleasant area, with good schools, shopping, transportation, churches, and well-kept homes, they want these things for themselves and their children. Many times they move into a community for the simple reason that the breadwinner of the household wants to be close to his place of work. People move into new homes for many, many reasons, and these reasons are just as valid for minority group families as they are for any others.

"'What will happen to my property values?' This depends entirely upon you and your neighbors. Almost more than any other commodity real estate values respond to the law of supply and demand. If you and your neighbors panic, or allow yourselves to be panicked by outside persons who have their own special interests, the value of your property may go down so long as there is a surplus of homes for sale in your immediate area. If you refuse to be panicked into offering your house for sale, real estate values will stay right where they are.

"The myth of the depression of real estate by the entrance of minority group persons into a community is an old one, and dies hard. Nevertheless, it is a myth - perpetuated in many cases by persons who stand to gain by the sale and resale of property in a given area. There have been many studies made as to what actually does happen to property values, and every one of them has come to the same conclusion: so long as panic selling does not take place, property values remain firm, and usually rise."

The third area of action for a program of desegregation is public and private education. I was one of a thousand marchers last Monday organized by the N.A.A.C.P., the U.C.R.C. and C.O.R.E. which walked twenty-one blocks to the Board of Education meeting to make clear that the pace has been too timid and too slow for many years. Gradualism has been the motto at the Board of Education of our city and of many private schools within it for years. Much can be done, as Dr. Brookins has well said, which the Board of Education has not even proposed or attempted. The officials say it will cost too much. No mandate from the citizens has limited the money to be spent on making our schools equal in quality on the South side and the West side, the East and the North sides of this city.

The minimum program proposed this week by the Negro leadership needs immediate implementation: (1) Geographical realignment of individual school attendance boundaries where enrollment is almost totally Negro. (2) Assignment of Negro teachers without regard to the racial composition of the schools. (3) More Negroes in the administrative and supervisory levels in the various county school systems. (4) Better compensatory education for Negro children who transferred here from different schools in Southern states. (5) Elimination of the practice in student counselling which encourages Negroes to enter lower income vocations rather than skilled trades or professions.

These are proposals which give teeth to the general talk about desegregation in education. While this program refers to lower grade schools and high schools, the same principles must be applied to junior colleges and universities, both public and private. Skin color has nothing to do with education, and most of us know it, but act otherwise.

The fourth area of programming for desegregation has to do with equality in all stores, shops, hotels, restaurants, all facilities which serve citizens. The President's proposals apply to Los Angeles. We have State laws against racial discrimination in places of public accommodation. Members of this Church have sometimes won damages in the courts when refused service in a motel or restaurant. But a Negro never knows when he is going to be humiliated publicly by a motel manager or restaurant hostess or waitress who is too bigoted to obey the law. The ancient ambiguity for the Negro must stop now. He must know that as a human being and a citizen he is entitled and able to buy merchandise or secure services anywhere at all that a white person can secure the same merchandise or services. Double talk about private property being sacred and beyond the reach of government is a shabby excuse for evasion. The law now spells out the obvious fact that the Constitution was not written to make one's property a source of inhuman treatment of fellow citizens, be it a house, a loaf of bread or the right to eat a meal in a restaurant of one's choice. It should not take a sanguinary revolution to allow a dark skinned citizen the right I have now as a white American to choose freely where I will spend my money.

The Attorney General in Washington last Wednesday, at the first hearing on the civil rights bill held by the House Judiciary Committee, made it clear that the most controversial feature of the most important federal legislation on civil rights since Reconstruction days is the ban on discrimination in privately-owned public accommodations. It is here that compromises will be sought, and here that resistance to compromise must be made by all of us. It may well be, as some Republican liberals feel, that the Fourteenth Amendment is a stronger bulwark for the new legislation than the Interstate Commerce clause of the Constitution, the use of which would lose the votes of many conservative Republicans and all Southern Democrats. Be that as it may, let it be realized by all of us that the defense of private property and other cherished notions of so called "free enterprise" will again and again in the next few years come into conflict with human rights. The Constitution and the people themselves are prior in history, and prior in value, to a particular stage of economic development. Economic institutions must serve man and not man serve economic institutions. History has been merciless in teaching this lesson to the slow of heart and mind. It will continue to be merciless. If Republicans like Rep. John V. Lindsay and those in the liberal Republican bloc with him have a clear glimpse of history, can not the rest of us share that vision with them and their Democratic allies?

The fifth step in a program of desegregation involves the privilege of receiving equality of treatment from all public officials and officers, especially the police. For over two hundred years armed officers have been the expressed agents of enforcing an inferior status upon the Negro people. The conscience of America is in swift change today on this subject. A policeman today, or a state militiaman, or a member of the federal armed forces now must be an agent for enforcing equality, not inequality. Police brutality is a fact in every city of the land in varying degrees. I am not interested in debating with Chief Parker how much of it there is, or is not, in this city today. Any at all is too much. The cliché long used that Negroes will not respond to courtesy as will white citizens is no longer to be tolerated. I favor, as does the Negro leadership of this city, a police review board which will objectively judge the charges of police misconduct that arise. It may eventually be unnecessary, but at this period of Los Angeles history, it is very necessary. I personally know of cases of police brutality against Negro friends of mine. I have read the Negro press here for years and know their stories of brutality are not inventions nor fictions. A reform in police practice will come only by pressure from white and black citizens alike. The policeman is the only white person many a Negro knows, and he has often been a very poor symbol of the white race. I am not an absolute pacifist. I believe in an intelligent, disciplined and instructed police force to control any irresponsible citizen when necessary. But the day of police violence can and must end. And I might add that there is no place in this city for dogs, fire hoses, night sticks and tear gas to stop the Negro people from insisting upon justice.

A sixth step in a program of desegregation for Los Angeles involves full voting rights for all citizens, including Negroes and other minorities, and the right which flows from it of holding office, elective and appointive, in our government at every level - city, county, state and federal. While it is not actually dangerous for a Negro to register and vote here, as it is in Birmingham or Jackson, gerrymandering has long militated against effective democracy in our city and county life. Only this year we have seen our City Council secure three long overdue Negro members. With improved educational facilities, with integrated employment in trades and professions, with up-grading for merit undertaken by all employers, public and private, the voting Negro will begin to come into his rightful position as a citizen, and not until then.

Before we leave this six point program, let me emphasize that it is not enough to say the right things about such forward, overdue steps. Many a budget will have to be repaired and improved. For example, the County Board of Supervisors this week turned down the request of the County Commission on Human Relations for a larger budget in the next year. The Commission has been operating with a budget of \$92,000. and a staff of twelve. It has asked for thirteen additional members, costing \$122,000., surely a modest request under the circumstances. Only Supervisor Ernest Debs voted for the increase. We must learn to put our tax money where our mouth is.

The enforcement of the Rumford Act by the state, the enforcement of the FEPC ruling and many other undertakings will cost money if progress is to be made. No adult citizen should think for a moment that we can even begin to get over our segregationist habits without paying for it with our purses, publicly and privately. Segregated ghettos have been money makers for owners. This must stop, even though some investors and housing organizations will cry to heaven that their economic rights are being tempered with. They must learn now that the age of racial profiteering is ending. The alternatives are too costly for us to tolerate, just as nuclear war is too costly for a twentieth century world to tolerate. We either move into an age of actual democracy for all citizens or we become a western hemisphere South Africa. There is no middle way. It is democracy or apartheid.

I know that there are many people, often persons of deep conviction and humane impulses who sincerely declares, "But you cannot legislate morality." This, alas, is also the favorite cliché of the segregationists. True, one cannot pass a law that will change a man's thinking, his fears, his hates. But society has increasingly found it necessary to legislate against murder, incest, fraud, libel, theft and other crimes, even if the hearts and minds of those captured and punished were not inwardly changed.

We are entering a period now, in this country, after centuries of injustice, after a Civil War and a tragic period of abortive Reconstruction, where we are saying that racial discrimination, also, is a crime against society. True, a law cannot change the heart of a segregationist, but it can set up controls, barriers and punishments, as in the case of murder or rape or drunken driving. People now take a second thought, even in lust, hate or anger, before performing the illegal act. Much can be done by legislation, not everything but much. Segregation has been ended in some area of American life because the federal government, or in some cases, the state or county government, has made it illegal, and cause for penalties, fines, imprisonment.

Indulgence in racial discrimination is no longer a matter of personal taste, like one's whim about baseball teams or classical music or crepes suzettes. After painful and cruel delays lasting many centuries, we are learning that discrimination is a crime, that it shortens men's lives, deprives them of health, destroys their sanity and robs them of their very humanity. Legislation can, along with education and public opinion, make it exceedingly difficult to steal another man's dignity, his chance at contributing his share to the civilized world, his chance to enjoy the good things of this wonderful earth.

To the next man who says, "You cannot legislate morality," I would suggest that you reply, "You have, for endless years legislated immorality. Laws have defended slavery, poverty and misery for millions of Negro Americans, with the full power of the state, its armies and police forces, behind the law. Now the conscience of America is shaping up. We now say we can legislate opportunity, open doors, provide equal education, equal jobs and housing, with the full power of the state behind the laws. Indeed you can legislate morality in a society where moral men make moral laws which they will enforce.

By now I hope you know your minister's conviction that the time has come to end "gradualism, tokenism and see-how-far-you-have-come-ism." Dr. Martin Luther King was so right in his magnificent discussion with David Susskind on Open End three weeks ago when he declared, "Gradualism is the application of vaseline to a cancer." And as I close this address, may I quote Dr. King in that same TV show when he declared with charming simplicity, "Some white people are thoroughly emancipated." From a leader who has seen the foolishness and impotence of so many white moderates and liberals, this was a most generous expression. Little wonder that he is the spokesman for the American Negro beyond any other figure today.

On May 19th, during the climax of the Birmingham conflict, my colleague, Rev. Edward Cahill of the Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh, ended his sermon on those crucial days with a quotation from Gandhi which shall close my sermon now: "Sometimes in the night this truth awakens me - that of all the sins the most unforgiveable is the sin of weak democracy, the sin of the cowardice of the righteous, the sin of the just man silent in the presence of injustice." May we all feel the impact of those words on our consciences this day.

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(Mr. Milton McFarlane, Chairman of Civil Rights work for the Los Angeles Chapter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship for Social Justice, then spoke as sermon discussant on the foregoing address by the minister.)

SERMON COMMENT given by MILTON McFARLANE

After listening to the discourse this morning, I must say there is a paradox of happy dissatisfaction with the task assigned me by Mr. Fritchman. He has stated the Negro's case so well that there just isn't anything significant on the subject left for me to say. Somehow I feel like a black Muslim in a white world perfectly integrated with all minorities - in short, I have no complaints whatsoever about the sermon. You can understand my predicament when you consider that I am basically a critic at heart but can find nothing in this morning's address that needs to be criticized.

My comments, therefore, may be filled with tautologies and redundancies. And I'll probably be somewhat like that old Southern Negro Baptist preacher whom Dr. David Breed mentioned in his book on homiletics. This old preacher

was asked by a city theological professor to explain the secret of his success in holding the attention of such large audiences over so many years. The preacher replied, "Well, you see, sir, it is like this, there ain't no secret, I just speaks. First I tells them what I am gonna tells them, then I tells them what I told them, and then I tells them what I been telling them".

But to be serious for just a while, let me point out that my one great criticism directed at white people in this country has been my observation that they do not listen to the Negro. White people see the Negro, they are served by the Negro, and they sometimes serve the Negro, but they seldom or never turn a listening ear to the Negro's cry about the needless pains he bears every waking moment of every day. And this is the happy contrast I feel about Mr. Fritchman's most important thesis this morning, because no white man could state the black man's case so well unless that man had been listening earnestly and for a long time to the Negro. And this is common knowledge in the Negro community, as was pointed out to me recently by a friend who showed me a copy of the Los Angeles Herald Dispatch carrying Mr. Fritchman's sermon on Birmingham.

I fully agree with the point made this morning that this present crisis is a problem belonging squarely to white Americans. Because in terms of causation, as a Negro, I could only be blamed for being here, and over that I had no control whatsoever. And being found here, I do not deny myself, nor do I exclude myself, and I do not seek to limit myself. Being so denied, so calculatedly excluded and so firmly limited in the participation in the main stream of American life, can be blamed only on deeds and activities perpetrated by most white Americans. I speak as a Unitarian, a member of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship for Social Justice. And no honest Unitarian mind will fail to agree that this national crisis is the fruition of white America's actions in the wrong direction and lack of action in the right direction. Nor can the Unitarian mind excuse itself and the North. Even here in this church, in the North and West, we share America's shame. For in housing and in jobs and wherever a decent respect for black citizens is concerned it has been forgotten that "no man is more useful than he that leadeth others by the right example."

Sometimes it takes a spectacular breaking-out to shock us into a sense of awareness; to make us pause and give true measure to our professed accomplishments in the field of human relations. Certainly, by any measure whatsoever the events of the past weeks indict this whole nation - this Western civilization - for having failed tragically to recognize that people with black skins are human beings - and this, after one hundred years of making vain boasts to all the world about our great "bastion of freedom," after one hundred years of a dangerous type of self-deception that served only to make our conscience sleep, after one hundred years of teaching history in our schools to justify and glorify deeds of hate, always passing on the blame to those who must struggle to see the light of freedom's face, after one hundred years of excuses and subterfuge and delays; after one hundred years of pointing, always with pride, to statistics of Negro progress that are in context and in reality pathetically false. And so it is, and so it ends that after one hundred years of sowing ambivalence and hypocrisy we reap our early harvest - violence, assassinations, demonstrations and deaths all over this land.

But I see this problem - this national crisis - in an even broader spectrum. America, being the epitome and grand end of white men's strivings, serves as the best indicator of their moral, social and economic health. Therefore, this present national crisis, to me, is but a symptom of a very sick, old Western civilization - like an old half-blind, punch-drunk, one-time world heavy weight champion who does not realize that his days are numbered; living desperately in defiance of change, and left only with his loud voice and a memory of past glories and with the weight of his sins on his conscience. But there will be changes, and the old must die to give way to the new, and faded flowers must make room for new and sweeter ones.

But I will not be visionary and I will not suggest that changes will come easily; because deep are the roots of Western man's fears and hate, his selfishness and his greed. I see no essential difference between the attitudes of our armed and bountiful country and those of the early Europeans - Odoacer and the Ostrogoths, Genseric and the Vandals, or Attila and the Huns. These marauding, barbaric princes who pillaged and destroyed as they swept, one after another, across

the face of Europe, unleashing their hates and fears and greed, had no time for tolerance and friendship if that did not serve their purpose to own all and conquer all. The Western world today, with the varied modern successors to their early barbarian forbears, stands ready to thrust the whole world into an abyss of destruction far greater than anything Attila himself could manage, even though "grass never grew again" on the spot over which his horses and armies marched.

I would not wish to have the Negro, in his fight for integration, become like the white American. If that should be, then it would be better if the Negro was not integrated at all. The Negro must contribute to give America some sanity, to help to mature this country that is his first love. For, if America learns to live with the Negro on a really equal basis within these national borders, then there is the great hope that America will be willing to live with all men around the globe in a never-ending peace.

I must extend to those of you that are in this audience some degree of charity, believing that you believe the principles expressed this morning in Mr. Fritchman's remarks. But your beliefs will change nothing; only your actions will. Therefore, if turn about is fair play, I propose a bargain between us. When I was a boy in the island of Jamaica, countless numbers of American missionaries, full of zeal, were always coming to the islands and going to Africa to spread the good news of "the Christ." Well, considering the state of race relations in America today and knowing full well that it is your problem, caused largely by you, why not be missionaries to your neighbors and friends and share with them today's good news? Tell them for me that it would be a sign of their own wisdom to use the full potential of the Negro's mind and strength to give this tired country a new vitality. And to those who are afraid of the "race mixture," tell them for me that all Negro men do not look like Clark Gable, nor are all Negro women as attractive as Loretta Young: and moreover their sisters and their daughters ought to know how to say "no". As good missionaries, tell them anything that will serve to make their actions more civilized. And when that is done, I promise you that the Negro, for his part, will be peaceful, cooperative and satisfied.

For how long will the Negro endure? How many more Birminghams and Little Rocks and Chicagos and Domingues Hills and Jackson, Mississippis? How many more jailings? How many more assassinations of pilgrims of right walking in freedom's name? How many more murders and deaths? How many more sins in white America's name? To the Unitarian the answer is clear. Whatever ease and comfort Americans may have had during the past one hundred years of sleep, the nation, the whole nation, North and South, must now awake and arise to face the excruciating reality that Negroes are not going to just fade away and disappear. No American is free from a share in the humiliation and degradation meted out to Negroes across this land day after day. Black Americans have been, are now, and forever will be a reflection of white America's conscience.

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"NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS, AN AMERICAN SLAVE"
by Frederick Douglass, (1860) - an excerpt:

What I have said respecting and against religion, I mean strictly to apply to the slaveholding religion of this land, and with no possible reference to Christianity proper; for, between the Christianity of this land, and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible difference - so wide, that to receive the one as good, pure and holy, is of necessity to reject the other as bad, corrupt, and wicked. To be the friend of the one, is of necessity to be the enemy of the other. I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land. Indeed, I can see no reason, but the most deceitful one, for calling the religion of this land Christianity. I look upon it as the climax of all misnomers, the boldest of all frauds, and the grossest of all libels. Never was there a clearer case of "stealing the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in." I am filled with unutterable loathing when I contemplate the religious pomp and show, together with the horrible inconsistencies, which every where surround me. We have men-stelaers for ministers, women-whippers for missionaries, and cradle-plunderers for church members. The man who wields the blood-clotted cowskin during the week fills the pulpit on Sunday, and claims to be a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus. The man who robs me of my earnings at the end of each week meets me as a class-leader on Sunday morning, to show me the way of life, and the path of salvation."

