



Malcolm X At the Audubon Ballroom

by Malcolm X

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Salaam Alaikum. I suppose I should take time to explain what I mean when I say "Salaam Alaikum." Actually, it's an expression that means "peace," and it's one that is always given to one's brother or to one's sister. It only means "peace be unto you." So, when I say "A Salaam Alaikum" or "Salaam Alaikum" and others reply, "Alaikum Salaam," why, they're just returning the peace. It means we're all at peace with one another, as brothers and sisters.

Now, brothers and sisters, first I want to thank those of you who have taken the time to come through that snow, which almost turned me back myself, and come out where we can try and put our heads together and get a better understanding of what is going on, what we've been through and what we're all concerned about. As Sister Sharon has already pointed out, and I think she did so beautifully, during recent years our people have been struggling for some kind of relief from the conditions we're confronted by.

When you go back over the period of struggle, I think it would be agreed that we've gone through different patterns of struggle, that we've struggled in different ways. Each way that we tried never produced what we were looking for. If it had been productive, we would have continued along that same way. We've tried probably more different methods than any people. But at the same time, I think we've tried more wrong methods than any other people, because most others have gotten more freedom than we have. Everywhere you look, people get their freedom faster than we do. They get more respect and recognition faster than we do. We get promises, but we never get the real thing. And primarily because we have yet to learn the proper tactic or strategy or method to bring freedom into existence.

I think that one of the things that has caused our people in this country to try so many methods is that times have changed so rapidly. What would be proper ten years ago would not have been proper seven years ago, or five years ago, or three years ago. Times change so quickly that if you and I don't keep up with the times, we'll find ourselves with an umbrella in our hand, over our head, when the sun is out. Or we'll find ourselves standing in the rain, with the umbrella inside the door. If we don't keep up with what's going on, we will not be able to display the type of intelligence that will show the world we know what time it is and that we know what is happening around us . . .

Several persons have asked me recently, since I've been back, "What is your program?" I purposely, to this day, have not in any way mentioned what our program is, because there will come a time when we will unveil it so that everybody will understand it. Policies change, and programs change, according to time. But objective never changes. You might change your method of achieving the objective, but the objective never changes. Our objective is complete freedom, complete justice, complete equality, by any means necessary. That never changes. Complete and immediate recognition and respect as human beings, that doesn't change, that's what all of us want. I don't care what you belong to' you still want that, recognition and respect as a human being. But you have changed your methods from time to time on how you go about getting it. The reason you change your method is that you have to change your method according to time and conditions that prevail. And one of the conditions that prevails on this earth right now, that we know too little about, is our relationship with the freedom struggle of people all over the world.

Here in America, we have always thought that we were struggling by ourselves, and most Afro-Americans will tell you just that—that we're a minority. By thinking we're a minority, we struggle like a minority. We struggle like we're an underdog. We struggle like all of the odds are against us. This type of struggle takes place only because we don't yet know where we fit in the scheme of things. We've been maneuvered out of a position where we could rightly know and understand where we fit into the scheme of things. It's impossible for you and me to know where we stand until we look around on this entire earth. Not just look around in Harlem or New York, or Mississippi, or America—we have got to look all around this earth. We don't know where we stand until, we know where America stands. You don't know where you stand in America until you know where America stands in the world. We don't know where you and I stand in this context, known to us as America, until we know where America stands in the world context.

When you and I are inside of America and look at America, she looks big and bad and invincible. Oh, yes, and when we approach her in that context, we approach her as beggars, with our hat in our hands. As Toms, actually, only in the twentieth-century sense, but still as Toms. While if we understand what's going on this earth and what's going on in the world today, and fit America into that context, we find out she's not so bad, after all; she's not very invincible. And when you find out she's not invincible, you don't approach her like you're dealing with someone who's invincible.

As a rule, up to now, the strategy of America has been to tuck all of our leaders up into her dress, and besiege them with money, with prestige, with praise, and make them jump, and tell them what to tell us. And they always tell us we're the underdog, and that we don't have a chance, and that we should do it nonviolently and carefully; otherwise, we'll get hurt or we'll get wasted. We don't buy that.

Number one, we want to know what are we? How did we get to be what we are? Where did we come from? How did we come from there? Who did we leave behind? Where was it that we left them behind, and what are they doing over there where we used to be? This is something that we have not been told. We have been brought over here and isolated—you know the funniest thing about that: they accuse *us* of introducing "separation" and "isolation." No one is more isolated than you and I. There's no system on earth more capable of thoroughly separating and isolating a people than this system that they call the democratic system; and you and I are the best proof of it, the best example of it. We were separated from our people, and have been isolated here for a long time.

So thoroughly has this been done to us that now we don't even know that there is somebody else that looks like we do. When we see them, we look at them like they're strangers. And when we see somebody that doesn't look anything like us, we call them our friends. That's a shame. It shows you what has been done to us. Yes, I mean our own people—we see our people come here who look exactly like we do, our twins, can't tell them apart, and we say, "Those are foreigners." Yet we're getting our heads busted trying to snuggle up to somebody who not only doesn't look like us, but doesn't even smell like us.

So you can see the importance of these meetings on Sunday nights during the past two or three weeks, and for a couple more weeks. It is not so much to spell out any program; you can't give a people a program until they realize they need one, and until they realize that all existing programs aren't programs that are going to produce productive results. So what we would like to do on Sunday nights is to go into our problem, and just analyze and analyze and analyze; and question things that you don't understand, so we can at least try and get a better picture of what faces us.

I, for one, believe that if you give people a thorough understanding of what it is that confronts them, and the basic causes that produce it, they'll create their own program; and when the people create a program, you get action. When these "leaders" create programs, you get no action. The only time you see them is when the people are exploding. Then the leaders are shot into the situation and told to control things. You can't show me a leader that has set off an explosion. No, they come and contain the explosion. They say, "Don't get rough, you know, do the smart thing." This is their role — they're there just to restrain you and me, to restrain the struggle, to keep it in a certain groove, and not let it get out of control. Whereas you and I don't want anybody to keep us from getting out of control. We want to get out of control. We want to smash anything that gets in our way that doesn't belong there.

Listen to the last part of what I said: I didn't just say we want to smash anything that gets in our way. I said we want to smash anything that gets in our way that doesn't belong there. You see, I had to give you the whole thing, because when you read it, you'll hear we're going to smash up everybody. No, I didn't say that. I said we'll smash up anything that gets in the way that doesn't belong there. I mean that. If it doesn't belong there, it's worthy to be smashed. This country practices that — power. This country smashes anything that gets in its way. It crushes anything that gets in its way. And since we're Americans, they tell us, well, we'll do it the American way. We'll smash anything that gets in our way.

This is the type of philosophy that we want to express among our people. We don't need to give them a program, not yet. First, give them something to think about. If we give them something to think about, and start them thinking in a way that they should think, they'll see through all this camouflage that's going on right now. It's just a show — the result of a script written by somebody else. The people will take that script and tear it up and write one for themselves. And you can bet that when you write the script for yourself, you're always doing something different than you'd be doing if you followed somebody else's script.

So, brothers and sisters, the thing that you and I must have an understanding of is the role that's being played in world affairs today, number one, by the continent of Africa; number two, by the people on that continent; number three, by those of us who are related to the people on that continent, but who, by some quirk in our own history, find ourselves today here in the Western hemisphere. Always bear that in mind that our being in the Western hemisphere differs from anyone else, because everyone else here came voluntarily. Everyone that you see in this part of the world got on a boat and came here voluntarily; whether they were immigrants or what have you, they came here voluntarily. So they don't have any real squawk, because they got what they were looking for. But you and I can squawk because we didn't come here voluntarily. We didn't ask to be brought here. We were brought here forcibly, against our will, and in chains. And at no time since we have been here, have they even acted like they wanted us here. At no time. At no time have they even tried to pretend that we were brought here to be citizens. Why, they don't even *pretend*. So why should we pretend?

Look at the continent of Africa today and see what position it occupies on this earth, and you realize that there's a tussle going on between East and West. It used to be between America and the West and Russia, but they're not tussling with each other any more. Kennedy made a satellite out of Russia. He put

Khrushchev in his pocket; yes, he did – lost him his job. The tussle now is between America and China. In the camp of the West, America is foremost. Most other Western nations are satellites to America. England is an American satellite. All of them are satellites, perhaps with the exception of France. France wants America to be her satellite. You never can tell what the future might bring. Better nations than this have fallen, if you read history. Most of the European Communist nations are still satelliting around Russia. But in Asia, China is the center of power.

Among Asian countries, whether they are communist, socialist – you don't find any capitalist countries over there too much nowadays. Almost every one of the countries that has gotten independence has devised some kind of socialistic system, and this is no accident. This is another reason why I say that you and I here in America – who are looking for a job, who are looking for better housing, looking for a better education – before you start trying to be incorporated, or integrated, or disintegrated, into this capitalistic system, should look over there and find out what are the people who have gotten their freedom adopting to provide themselves with better housing and better education and better food and better clothing.

None of them are adopting the capitalistic system because they realize they can't. You can't operate a capitalistic system unless you are vulturistic; you have to have someone else's blood to suck to be a capitalist. You show me a capitalist, I'll show you a bloodsucker. He cannot be anything but a bloodsucker if he's going to be a capitalist. He's got to get it from somewhere other than himself, and that's where he gets it—from somewhere or someone other than himself. So, when we look at the African continent, when we look at the trouble that's going on between East and West, we find that the nations in Africa are developing socialistic systems to solve their problems.

There's one thing that Martin Luther King mentioned at the Armory the other night, which I thought was most significant. I hope he really understood what he was saying. He mentioned that while he was in some of those Scandinavian countries he saw no poverty. There was no unemployment, no poverty. Everyone was getting education, everyone had decent housing, decent whatever – they needed to exist. But why did he mention those countries on his list as different?

This is the richest country on earth and there's poverty, there's bad housing, there's slums, there's inferior education. And this is the richest country on earth. Now, you know, if those countries that are poor can come up with a solution to their problems so that there's no unemployment, then instead of you running downtown picketing city hall, you should stop and find out what they do over there to solve their problems. This is why the man doesn't want you and me to look beyond Harlem or beyond the shores of America. As long as you don't know what's happening on the outside, you'll be all messed up dealing with this man on the inside. I mean what they use to solve the problem is not capitalism. What they are using to solve their problem in Africa and Asia is not capitalism. So what you and I should do is find out what they are using to get rid of poverty and all the other negative characteristics of a rundown society.

Africa is strategically located, geographically between East and West; it's the most valuable piece of property involved in the struggle between East and West. You can't get to the East without going past it, and can't get from the East to West without going past it. It sits right there between all of them. It sits snuggled into a nest between Asia and Europe; it can reach either one. None of the natural resources that are needed in Europe that they get from Asia can get to Europe without coming either around Africa, over Africa, or in between the Suez Canal which is sitting at the tip of Africa. She can cut off Europe's bread. She can put Europe to sleep overnight, just like that. Because she's in a position to; the African continent is in a position to do this. But they want you and me to think Africa is a jungle, of no value, of no consequence. Because they also know that if you knew how valuable it was, you'd realize why they're over there killing our people. And you'd realize that it's not for some kind of humanitarian purpose or reason.

Also, Africa as a continent is important because of its tropical climate. It's so heavily vegetated you can take any section of Africa and use modern agricultural methods and turn that section alone into the breadbasket for the world. Almost any country over there can feed the whole continent, if it only had access to people who had the technical know-how to bring into that area modern methods of agriculture. It's rich. A jungle is only a place that's heavily vegetated—the soil is so rich and the climate is so good that everything grows, and it doesn't grow in season – it grows all the time. All the time is the season. That means it can grow anything, produce anything.

Added to its richness and its strategic position geographically is the fact of the existence of the Suez Canal and the Strait of Gibraltar. Those two narrow straits can cut off from Europe anything and everything Europe needs. All of the oil that runs Europe goes through the Suez Canal, up the Mediterranean Sea to places like Greece and Italy and Southern Spain and France and along through there; or through the Strait of Gibraltar and around on into England. And they need it. They need access through the Suez. When Nasser took over the Suez, they almost died in Europe. It scared them to death—why? Because Egypt is in Africa, in fact, Egypt is in both Africa and Asia

Before the Suez Canal was built, it was all one, you couldn't really make a distinction between Africa and Asia. It was all one. When President Nasser took the Suez Canal, that meant that for the first time the Suez Canal was under the complete jurisdiction of an African nation, and it meant that other nations had to cater to this African nation if they wanted to survive, if they didn't want their oil and other sources of supply cut off. Immediately this had an effect on European attitudes and European economic measures. They began to try and devise new means, new routes, to get the things that they needed.

Another reason the continent is so important is because of its gold. It has some of the largest deposits of gold on earth, and diamonds. Not only the diamonds you put on your finger and in your ear, but industrial diamonds, diamonds that are needed to make machines – machines that can't function or can't run unless they have these diamonds. These industrial diamonds play a major role in the entire industrialization of the European nations, and without these diamonds their industry would fall.

You and I usually know of diamonds for rings – because those are the only diamonds we get close to, or the only diamonds within our line of thinking. We don't think in terms of diamonds for other uses. Or baseball diamonds – some of us only get that far.

Not only diamonds, but also cobalt. Cobalt is one of the most valuable minerals on this earth today, and I think Africa is one of the only places where it is found. They use it in cancer treatment, plus they use it in this nuclear field that you've heard so much about. Cobalt and uranium – the largest deposits are right there on the African continent. And this is what the man is after. The man is after keeping you over here worrying about a cup of coffee, while he's over

there in your motherland taking control over minerals that have so much value they make the world go around. While you and I are still walking around over here, yes, trying to drink some coffee – with a cracker.

It's one of the largest sources of iron and bauxite and lumber and even oil, and Western industry needs all of these minerals in order to survive. All of these natural minerals are needed by the Western industrialists in order for their industry to keep running at the clip that it's been used to. Can we prove it? Yes. You know that France lost her French West African possessions, Belgium lost the Congo, England lost Nigeria and Ghana and some of the other English-speaking areas; France also lost Algeria, or the Algerians took Algeria.

As soon as these European powers lost their African possessions, Belgium had an economic crisis – the same year she turned the Congo loose. She had to rearrange her entire economy and her economic methods had to be revised, because she had lost possession of the source of most of her raw materials – raw materials that she got almost free, almost with no price or output whatsoever. When she got into a position where she didn't have access to these free raw materials anymore, it affected her economy. It affected the French economy. It affected the British economy. It drove all of these European countries to the point where they had to come together and form what's known as the European Common Market. Prior to that, you wouldn't hear anything about a European Common Market.

Being the gateway to Southwest Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Basutoland, Swaziland, and South Africa, the Congo is a country on the African continent which is so strategically located geographically that if it were to fall into the hands of a real dyed-in-the-wool African nationalist, he could then make it possible for African soldiers to train in the Congo for the purpose of invading Angola. When they invade Angola, that means Angola must fall, because there are more Africans than there are Portuguese, and they just couldn't control Angola any longer. And if the Congo fell into good hands, other than Tshombe, then it would mean that Angola would fall, Southern Rhodesia would fall, Southwest Africa would fall and South Africa would fall. And that's the only way they would fall. When these countries fall, it would mean that the source of raw material, natural resources, some of the richest mineral deposits on earth, would then be taken away from the European economy. And without free access to this, the economy of Europe wouldn't be worth two cents. All of your European countries would be of no more importance than a country like Norway, which is all right for Norwegians, but has no influence beyond that. It's just another country stuck up some place in the northern part, like Sweden and some of those places. Every European country would be just as insignificant as the smallest insignificant country in Europe right now – if they lost the rest of Africa. Because the rest of Africa that's still colonized is the part of the African continent that's still backing up the European economy. And if the economy of Europe was to sink any farther, it would really wash away the American economy. American economy can never be any stronger than the European economy because both of them are one. It's one and the same economy. They are brothers.

I say this because it is necessary for you and me to understand what is at stake. You can't understand what is going on in Mississippi if you don't understand what is going on in the Congo. And you can't really be interested in what's going on in Mississippi if you're not also interested in what's going on in the Congo. They're both the same. The same interests are at stake. The same sides are drawn up, the same schemes are at work in the Congo that are at work in Mississippi. The same stake – no difference whatsoever.

Another frightening thing for this continent and the European continent is the fact that the Africans are trying to industrialize. One of the most highly industrialized African nations is Egypt. They have had a limited source of power up to now, but they are building a dam in upper Egypt, where the black Egyptians live. I was there, I took some pictures– I'm going to show you some movies, probably on the first Sunday in January, a week from next Sunday. The Aswan Dam is something that everybody should see. The Aswan is being built on the Nile in the heart of the desert, surrounded by mountains. One of the most outstanding things about this dam isn't so much its miraculous technical aspects, but the human aspects.

When you build a dam in an area where there's already vegetation, that's one thing. But this dam is being built in an area where there's no vegetation. Once this river is dammed, it will create a lake in the middle of the desert which will set up a water cycle – rain, you know, clouds, and all of that stuff – and it will turn the desert into a civilization, into a very fertile valley. In order for this artificial lake to be built in that way, from that dam, it washed away the homes of the Nubians—people who look just like you and I do, who have been living there for thousands of years. They had to replace them, they had to transplant them from where they were living for thousands of years to another area.

This in itself was an operation that would hold you spellbound if you could see all the aspects of it. It meant taking a people from one place and putting them in another place. The place where they had been was antiquated. Their methods, their customs, their homes were thousands of years old. But overnight these people, who lived that far in the past, were taken to new cities that had been built by the government. Modern cities, where they had modern schools, modern rooms in which to live, and modern hospitals. When you go into these new cities that are Nubian villages, the first thing you always see is a mosque. Their religion is Islam, they're Muslims.

The Egyptian government, the revolutionary government, differs from most revolutions in that it's one of the few revolutions that have taken place where religion has not been minimized. In most revolutions, religion is immediately de-emphasized. Eventually that revolution loses something. Always. But the thing about the Egyptian revolution was that it never de-emphasized the importance of religion. In these new cities, the first thing they build is a mosque, so people can practice their religion. Then they build schools so the people can be educated free; and then they build hospitals. They believe that the religious aspect keeps the people spiritually and morally balanced, and then everyone should have the best education and free hospitalization.

These new villages actually reflect the whole motive behind the Egyptian revolution. I found this quite interesting. I was there and could study it for two months. It's a balanced revolution. I go for revolution, but revolution should always do something for the people and it should always keep them balanced. You don't find anybody that's more revolutionary than those people over there in Egypt; they're revolutionary, they're involved in every revolution that's going on on the African continent right now.

So the Aswan Dam creates enough additional power to make it possible to step up or speed up the industrialization of that particular African nation. And as their industrialization is stepped up, it means that they can produce their own cars, their own tractors, their own tools, their own machinery, plus a lot of

other things. Not only Egypt, but Ghana too. Ghana is building a dam, they're damming the Volta River. There's the Volta High Dam, and it's being built for the purpose of increasing the power potential of Ghana, so that Ghana also can increase its industrial output.

As these African nations get in a position to increase their own power and to industrialize, what does it mean? It means that where they now are a market for American goods and America's finished products, and a market for European finished products, when they're able to finish their own products, they will be able to get their products cheaper because they're putting their own raw materials into the finished products. Now the raw materials are taken from Africa, shipped all the way to Europe, used to feed the machines of the Europeans, and make jobs for them, and then turned around and sold back to the Africans as finished products. But when the African nations become industrialized, they can take their own products and stick them in the machines and finish them into whatever they want. Then they can live cheaper. The whole system will be a system with a high standard of living but a cheaper standard of living.

This standard of living automatically will threaten the standard of living in Europe because it will cut off the European market. European factories can't produce unless they have some place to market the products. American factories can't produce unless she has some place to market her products. It is for this reason that the European nations in the past have kept the nations in Latin America and in Africa and in Asia from becoming industrial powers. They keep the machinery and the ability to produce and manufacture limited to Europe and limited to America. Then this puts America and the Europeans in a position to control the economy of all other nations and keep them living at a low standard.

These people are beginning to see that. The Africans see it, the Latin Americans see it, the Asians see it. So when you hear them talking about freedom, they're not talking about a cup of coffee with a cracker. No, they're talking about getting in a position to feed themselves and clothe themselves and make these other things that, when you have them, make life worth living. So this is the way you and I have to understand the world revolution that's taking place right now.

When you understand the motive behind the world revolution, the drive behind the African and the drive behind the Asian, then you get some of that drive yourself. You'll be driving for real. The man downtown knows the difference between when you're driving for real and when you're driving not for real. As long as you keep asking about coffee, he doesn't have to worry about you; he can send you to Brazil. So these dams being set up over there in different parts of the continent are putting African nations in a position to have more power, to become more industrial and also to be self-sustained and self-sufficient.

In line with that: In the past it was the world bank, controlled again by Europeans and from Europe, that subsidized most of the effort that was being made by African nations and Asian nations to develop underdeveloped areas. But the African nations are now getting together and forming their own bank, the African bank. The details of it aren't as much in my mind as I would like them to be, but when I was in Lagos, Nigeria, they were having a meeting there. It was among African bankers and African nations, and the Organization of African Unity, which is the best thing that has ever happened on the African continent, had taken up as part of its program the task of getting all of the African nations to pool their efforts in creating an African bank, so that there would be an internal bank in the internal African structure to which underdeveloped African nations can turn for financial assistance in projects that they're trying to undertake that would be beneficial to the whole continent

Politically, Africa as a continent, and the African people as a people, have the largest representation of any continent in the United Nations. Politically, the Africans are in a more strategic position and in a stronger position whenever a conference is taking place at the international level. Today, power is international, real power is international; today, real power is not local. The only kind of power that can help you and me is international power, not local power. Any power that's local, if it's real power, is only a reflection or a part of that international power. If you think you've got some power, and it isn't in some way tied into that international thing, brother, don't get too far out on a limb.

If your power base is only here, you can forget it. You can't build a power base here. You have to have a power base among brothers and sisters. You have to have your power base among people who have something in common with you. They have to have some kind of cultural identity, or there has to be some relationship between you and your power base. When you build a power base in this country, you're building it where you aren't in any way related to what you build it on. No, you have to have that base somewhere else. You can work here, but you'd better put your base somewhere else. Don't put it in this man's hand. Any kind of organization that is based here can't be an effective organization. Anything you've got going for you, if the base is here, is not going to be effective. Your and my base must be at home, and this is not at home.

When you see that the African nations at the international level comprise the largest representative body and the largest force of any continent, why, you and I would be out of our minds not to identify with that power bloc. We would be out of our minds, we would actually be traitors to ourselves, to be reluctant or fearful to identify with people with whom we have so much in common. If it was a people who had nothing to offer, nothing to contribute to our well-being, you might be justified, even though they looked like we do; if there was no contribution to be made, you might be justified. But when you have people who look exactly like you, and you are catching hell, to boot, and you still are reluctant or hesitant or slow to identify with them, then you need to catch hell, yes. You deserve all the hell you get.

The African representatives, coupled with the Asians and Arabs, form a bloc that's almost impossible for anybody to contend with. The African-Asian-Arab bloc was the bloc that started the real independence movement among the oppressed peoples of the world. The first coming together of that bloc was at the Bandung conference

To show you the power of that bloc and the results that they've gotten and how well the Europeans know it: On the African continent, when I was there, one thing I noticed was the twenty-four-hour-a-day effort being made in East Africa to turn the African against the Asian; and in West Africa to turn the African against the Arab; and in parts of Africa where there are no Asians or Arabs, to turn the Muslim African against the Christian African. When you go over there and study this thing, you can see that it is not something that's indigenous, it's not a divisive situation that's indigenous to the African himself. But someone realizes that the power of the oppressed black, brown, red and yellow people began at the Bandung conference, which was a coalition between the Arab and the Asian and the African, and how much pressure they've been able to put on the oppressor since then.

So, very shrewdly they have moved in. Now when you travel on the *continent*, you see the African in East Africa is being sicked on the Asian — there's a division taking place. And in West Africa he's being sicked on the Arab — there's a division taking place. And where the oppressor, this ingenious oppressor, — diabolically ingenious — where he hasn't found an Asian to sic the African on, or an Arab to sic the African on, he uses the Muslim African against the Christian African. Or the one that believes in religion against the one that doesn't believe in religion. But the main thing he's doing is causing this division, division, division to in some way keep the African, the Arab and the Asian from beating up on him.

He's doing the same thing in British Guiana. He's got the black Guianians down there fighting against the so-called Indians. He's got them fighting each other. They didn't fight each other when the British were there in full control. If you notice, as long as the place was an old-style colony, no fight. But as soon as the British are supposed to be moving away, the black one starts fighting the red one. Why? This is no accident. If they didn't fight before, they don't need to fight now. There's no reason for it. But their fighting each other keeps the man on top. The fact that he can turn one against the other keeps the man on top.

He does the same thing with you and me right here in Harlem. All day long. I turned on the radio last night. I heard them say, every hour on the hour, that James Farmer, the head of CORE, was going to Africa, Egypt and Israel. And they said the reason he was going was because he wanted to correct false statements made by black nationalist leader Malcolm X when he was over there. If I hadn't had this experience before, immediately I would have started blasting Farmer. But I called him up today. He said he didn't know what they were talking about. But why do they do it? They do it to make us fight each other. As long as we're fighting each other, we can't get at the man who should be fought against from the start. Do you understand? Once we see the strategy that they use at the international level, then we can better understand the strategy that they use at the national and at the local level.

Lastly, I would like to point out my understanding of what I think is the position taken in African policy. Their policy, in a nutshell, is positive neutrality, non-alignment. They don't line up either way. Africa is for the Africans. And the Africans are for the Africans. The policy of the independent African states, by and large, is positive neutrality, non-alignment. Egypt is a good example. They take from East and West and don't take sides with either one. Nasser took everything Russia could give him, and then put all the communists in jail. Not that I mean the communists should necessarily have been put in jail. For the communist is a man, a capitalist is a man, and a socialist is a man. Well, if all of them are men, why should they be put in jail, unless one of them is committing a crime? And if being a communist or being a capitalist or being a socialist is a crime, first you have to study which of those systems is the most criminal. And then you'll be slow to say which one should be in jail.

I cite that as an example just to show what this positive neutrality means: If you want to help us, help us; we're still not with you. If you have a contribution to make to our development, do it. But that doesn't mean we're with you or against you. We're neutral. We're for ourselves. Whatever is good for us, that's what we're interested in. That doesn't mean we're against you. But it does mean we're for ourselves.

This is what you and I need to learn. You and I need to learn how to be positively neutral. You and I need to learn how to be non-aligned. And if you and I ever study the science of non-alignment, then you'll find out that there's more power in non-alignment than there is alignment. In this country, it's impossible for you to be aligned—with either party. Either party that you align yourself with is suicide. Because both parties are criminal. Both parties are responsible for the criminal *condition* that exists. So you can't align yourself with a party.

What you can do is get registered so that you have power — political potential. When you register your political potential, that means your gun is loaded. But just because it's loaded, you don't have to shoot until you see a target that will be beneficial to you. If you want a duck, don't shoot when you see a bear; wait till you see a duck. And if you want a bear, don't shoot when you see a duck; wait till you see a bear. Wait till you see what you want — then take aim and shoot!

What they do with you and me is tell us, "Register and vote." Don't register and vote — register! That's intelligent. Don't register and vote — you can vote for a dummy, you can vote for a crook, you can vote for another who'd want to exploit you. "Register" means being in a position to take political action any time, any place and in any manner that would be beneficial to you and me; being in a position to take advantage of our position. Then we'll be in a position to be respected and recognized. But as soon as you get registered, and you want to be a Democrat or a Republican, you are aligning. And once you are aligning, you have no bargaining power — none whatsoever.

We've got a program we are going to launch, which will involve the absolute maximum registering of as many of our people as we can. But they will be registered as independents. And by being registered as independents, it means we can do whatever is necessary, wherever it's necessary, and whenever the time comes. Do you understand?

So, I say in my conclusion, we have a lady that I want to introduce you to, who I think is one of the best freedom fighters in America today. She's from Mississippi, and you've got to be a freedom fighter to even live in Mississippi. You've got to be a freedom fighter to live anywhere in this country, but especially Mississippi. This woman has been in the forefront of the struggle in Mississippi. I was on a program with her this afternoon. . . .

As I mentioned today — and you'll probably read about it tomorrow; they'll blow it up, and out of context — what we need in this country (and I believe it with all my heart, and with all my mind, and with all my soul) is the same type of Mau Mau here that they had over there in Kenya. Don't you ever be ashamed of the Mau Mau. They're not to be ashamed of. They are to be proud of. Those brothers were freedom fighters. Not only brothers, there were sisters over there. I met a lot of them. They're brave. They hug you and kiss you — glad to see you. In fact, if they were over here, they'd get this problem straightened up just like that.

I read a little story once, and Mau Mau proved it. I read a story once where someone asked some group of people how many of them wanted freedom. They all put up their hand. Think there were about 300 of them. Then the person says, "Well, how many of you are ready to kill anybody who gets in your way for freedom?" About fifty put up their hands. And he told those fifty, "You stand over here." That left 250 sitting who wanted freedom, but weren't ready to kill for it. So he told this fifty, "Now you wanted freedom and you said you'd kill anybody who'd get in your way. You see those 250? You get them first. Some of them

are your own brothers and sisters and mothers and fathers. But they're the ones who stand in the way of your freedom. They're afraid to do whatever is necessary to get it and they'll stop you from doing it. Get rid of them and freedom will come naturally."

I go for that. That's what the Mau Mau learned. The Mau Mau realized that the only thing that was standing in the way of the independence of the African in Kenya was another African. So they started getting them one by one, all those Toms. One after another, they'd find another Uncle Tom African by the roadside. Today they're free. The white man didn't even get involved—he got out of the way. That's the same thing that will happen here. We've got too many of our own people who stand in the way. They're too squeamish. They want to be looked upon as respectable Uncle Toms. They want to be looked upon by the white man as responsible. They don't want to be classified by him as extremist, or violent, or, you know, irresponsible. They want that good image. And nobody who's looking for a good image will ever be free. No, that kind of image doesn't get you free. You've got to take something in your hand and say, "Look, it's you or me." And I guarantee you he'll give you freedom then. He'll say, "This man is ready for it." I said something in your hand — I won't define what I mean by "something in your hand." I don't mean bananas.

So, we are honored to have with us tonight not only a freedom fighter, but some singers on that program today — I think they're all here; I asked them to come out tonight because they sang one song that just knocked me out. I'm not one who goes for "We Shall Overcome." I just don't believe, we're going to overcome, singing. If you're going to get yourself a .45 and start singing "We Shall Overcome," I'm with you. But I'm not for singing that doesn't at the same time tell you how to get something to use after you get through singing. I realize I'm saying some things that you think can get me in trouble, but, brothers, I was born in, trouble. I don't even care about trouble. I'm interested in one thing alone, and that's freedom—by any means necessary. So I'll bring you now the country's number one freedom-fighting woman.

(Mrs. Hamer speaks.)

Now you see why Mississippi is in trouble. And I hope that our brothers, especially our brothers here in Harlem, listened very well, very closely, to what I call one of this country's foremost freedom fighters. You don't have to be a man to fight for freedom. All you have to do is be an intelligent human being. And automatically, your intelligence makes you want freedom so badly that you'll do anything, by any means necessary, to get that freedom. And I want Mrs. Hamer to know that anything we can do to help them in Mississippi, we're at their disposal. One of the things that we will definitely provide you with, because I think it's the only real help that you can get down there: You can let those hooded people know that, from here on in, when they start taking the lives of innocent black people, we believe in tit for tat.

If I were to go home and find some blood on the leg of one of my little girls, and my wife told me that a snake bit the child, I'd go looking for the snake. And if I found the snake, I wouldn't necessarily take time to see if it had blood on its jaws. As far as I'm concerned the snake is the snake. So if snakes don't want someone hunting snakes indiscriminately, I say that snakes should get together and clean out their snakey house. If snakes don't want people running around indiscriminately chopping off the heads of snakes, my advice to snakes would be to keep their house in order. I think you well understand what I'm saying. Now those were twenty-one snakes that killed those three brothers down there. Twenty-one — those are snakes. And there is no law in any society on earth that would hold it against anyone for taking the heads of those snakes. Believe it, the whole world would honor you or honor anyone who did what the federal government refused to do.

We should let them know that we believe in giving them what they deserve. There are brothers around the country right now, a lot of them, who feel like I do, a lot of them who feel like I do. I've even met white students who feel that way. When they tell me that they're liberal, I tell them, "Great, go get me one of those snake heads." I'm sincere about this. I think that there are many whites who are sincere, especially at the student level. They just don't know how to show their sincerity. They think that they're showing sincerity by going down there and encouraging our people to be nonviolent. That's not where it's at. Since they're white, they can get closer to whiteness than we can. They can put on a sheet and walk right on into camp with the rest of them.

I'm telling you how to do it: You're a liberal; get you a sheet. And get you something up under that sheet that you know how to use, and walk right on in that camp of sheeted people with the rest of them. And show how liberal you are. I'll come back and shake your hand all day long. I'll walk you around Harlem and tell everybody what a good white person you are. Because you've proved it. But I don't accept any nonviolent liberals. This doesn't mean that you've got to be violent; but it does mean that you can't be nonviolent

(Introduces Freedom Singers.)