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Honoring Martin Luther King, Jr's Nonviolent Legacy



Martin Luther King, Jr. was born on this day in 1929. A leader of the civil rights movement, Dr. King spoke out against, "the triple evils of racism, economic exploitation, and militarism." He understood that these evils are interlinked, miring people in misery, dividing people against one another, and threatening the world with extinction [nuclear war]. He also knew that social programs suffer when our nation is obsessed with war.

In 1967, the civil-rights leader described the nightmare to come: "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

Dr. King understood that nonviolence is a practical tool and can become a way of life, applicable to all situations, including relations (and resolving conflict) with other nations. He spoke of the need for disarmament and "strengthening the United Nations and thereby disarming the whole world..."

What kind of nation and world do we want to create for our children and future generations? If the United States is to live up to its promise of democracy, isn't it time for everyone's voice to be heard? Isn't it time to commit to try to resolve differences through nonviolent means? We have seen what Dr. King called the "self-defeating path of hate [and revenge]" evidenced in our nation's continued military adventures around the globe.

As for nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear war they pose, Dr. King was clear: "We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent coannihilation..." His voice speaks to us today as clearly as it did then. We best honor Dr. King's legacy by choosing the path of nonviolence and the abolition of nuclear weapons so that future generations may live in peace.

Paid for by:
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