



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND WORLD PEACE; FIGHT FOR JUSTICE AND FREEDOM.

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Abstract

This paper explores the contribution of Martin Luther King Jr. to world peace. The paper explores the speeches of King to illustrate his insight regarding world peace. Particularly, the paper focuses on the stance of King on the American role in Vietnam to illuminate his contribution to world peace. This paper is structured into seven sections. The first part is the introduction followed by an exploration of the concept of world peace, then a brief background of the life of King, his philosophies on non-violence, contributions to world peace, and the Vietnam war, this is followed by a critique of his contribution, a conclusion and references.

Keywords: *World, Peace, Fight, Justice and Freedom.*

Introduction

If we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective... we are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny... if we are to have peace in the world, men and nations must embrace the nonviolent affirmation that ends and means must cohere. (King, Jr. 1967).

World peace is a popular discourse among many scholars, commentators and writers, et cetera. Many scholars have contributed immensely to world peace in their actions and words, in their discoveries and teachings. Notable among these personalities are: Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and Martin Luther King Jr. among others.

The concept of peace is one among the concepts used in the social sciences that are not amenable to a universal definition. The definition of peace depends largely on who is defining it and the social construct of the definer. Peace is often wrongly conceptualized as the absence of war. Hence, war is seen as the absence of peace. However, peace does exist independent of war, argued Ibeanu (2006). Ibeanu further argued that to define peace as the absence of war and vice versa is minimalist, because it only discusses the direct, physical and open type of violence, other forms of violence, which is not open but social, includes, poverty, exclusion, intimidation, oppression of the poor by the rich, fear and other psychological pressures. This explanation is useful as it helps to shade light on the concept of peace. Rather than defining peace through the lens of war, he rendered a more straightforward definition of peace as a dynamic socio-economic process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict.

Francis (2006) on his part provided six different meaning of peace, they are; peace as the absence of war, peace as justice and development, peace as respect and tolerance between people, peace as 'Gaia' (balance in and with the ecosphere), inner peace (spiritual) and peace as wholeness and making whole.

Traditionally, peace is seen as a preserve of state actors using diplomacy and negotiation (Lilly, 2002). This state-centric notion is also supported by Alger (2014), where he asserts that the prime failure in world politics has been the tendency of states and interstates organizations to respond to crises. This notion also tends to see peace work as limited to what state actors do. This conception is highly faulty because peace is not just a state matters but involve individuals and group, in fact all sphere of human endeavour. This position is corroborated by Randle (2006), where he identified the role of non-state actors in peace even at the global stage. He cited; the Shanti Sena "Peace Army" of India during the Hindi-Muslim Riot of 1969, the Balkans Peace Team, Witness for Peace, International Solidarity Movement and the 1962 World Peace Brigade which was established in Beirut with the major aim of struggling for self-determination and social reconstruction, these unarmed non-state actors play very central role in peace process.

In more recent time, peace now encapsulate two different dimension, negative and positive peace, it includes not only stopping the violence (negative peace) but also building peaceful relations shaped by social justice (positive peace) (Galtung, 1975, cited in Alger, 2014).

Supporting Ibeanu (2006)'s position, peace is to be seen not as a static but a process involving different stages. According to the Berghorf Foundation (2012),

peace is a complex, long term and multi-layered process which requires at least three fundamental steps to attain. First, a vision of peace must be defined and at what level is the definition to be applied. For instance, the individual level differs from the international level; the conception of peace by researchers, politicians, artists differs. In essence, it is context-specific. Second, it is highly important to specify the conditions for peace in or between societies, with a view to establish these conditions. Third, a comparison of current realities with the peace vision is a precursor to finding out what is lacking in the initiatives.

World peace therefore is central to the discussion and writings of many scholars, notably, Karl Marx who believed that world peace is only possible when the working class of the world unite, rise and overthrow the oppression of the capitalist class.

Different theories have emerged to discuss world peace and the means to achieving it. The theory includes realism, idealism, and liberalism, among others. Each of this theoretical perspective has an idea of the ideal international structure that can enhance world peace. For instance, realist believe that to have world peace, states must balance their powers vis-à-vis other states within the international system, hence, states must protect their national interest by increasing their power especially militarily. The idealists on the other hand, believe that world peace is only possible through the formation of international organisations such as the United Nations, World Bank et cetera where they can share mutual interest and build on the principle of world peace.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. (JANUARY 15 1929 - APRIL 4, 1968).

Martin Luther King was born in Atlanta Georgia. He was the son of the late Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. and Alberta Williams King. Both his father and grandfather served as pastors of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, where King acted as co-pastor alongside his father in the early 1960s.

King Jr. attended Atlanta University Laboratory School and Booker T. Washington High School, where he graduated at the age of fifteen. He received a degree in sociology from More house College in 1948, and then entered Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania to pursue a degree in ministry. His seminary studies there are considered to be the turning point from a mediocre to serious student. It is known that he was greatly influenced at this point in his life by the works of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, who wrote and studied the nature of man's sinfulness, and Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent resistance. He received a bachelor degree in Divinity in 1951. That same year in the fall, King enrolled at

Boston University to pursue a doctorate degree in Theology and met his wife-to-be, Coretta Scott. King married Scott in 1953 and received his PhD in 1955. They gave birth to four children together.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was the youngest person to ever be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. He is revered around the world for his leadership in the American Civil Rights Movement. He is considered the leader of the most successful decade of this movement, from 1957 to 1968, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the massive anti-discrimination protest in Birmingham Alabama, the Selma-to Montgomery Freedom March, and his rallying call to support the sanitation workers strike, where he was assassinated in 1968. He is remembered alongside the great human rights activists of the world, including India's Mahatma Gandhi. He is most widely renowned for his famous speech, "I have a Dream," which he delivered as the keynote speaker during the March on Washington, in 1963 (Mora, 2009).

In 1959, King visited India, where it is popularly known that he became more influenced by the philosophy of Gandhian nonviolence. Upon his return from India, King moved to Atlanta Georgia, acted as co-pastor of Ebenezer Baptist church with his father Martin Luther King Sr., and became involved with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). This was a student group led by Ella Baker that carried out direct-action, nonviolent protests against segregation of public libraries, swimming pools, parks, and lunch counters (Echol, 2004) In 1960 King was arrested for his participation in one of SNCC's lunch counter sit-ins. After his arrest, King was sentenced to prison. His sentence garnered national media attention, and resulted in John F. Kennedy's intervention on behalf of King, which led to his release from prison. In 1963, King led the March on Washington where he delivered his world-renowned speech, "I Have a Dream." That same year Time magazine named King "Man of the Year." The following year, King was awarded The Nobel Peace Prize and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed (Amstrong, 2002).

KING'S PHILOSOPHY ON NON-VIOLENCE

According to King Jr. Non-violence did not mean resistance, as it was so often misrepresented in the media and even educational programs. Nonviolence " is not passive resistance to evil; it is active nonviolent resistance to evil" (Nojeim, 2013; Oates, 1982). Nonviolence is the best option to resolve social and political conflict and the way to create a just outcome. King argued further that, oppressed people could respond to their oppression in three ways; they can acquiesce in

their oppression and simply take it; they can resist their oppression using violence and can resist non-violently.

Acquiescence was unacceptable for King because it reduced the oppressed to passive co-conspirators in their own domination. Violent resistance was unacceptable because it only did it prove effective in creating long term solutions, but also fit King's moral disposition. Nonviolent resistance was "nothing less than Christianity in action.... the Christian way of life in solving problems of human relations" (Nojeim, 2013; Washington, 1986:86). Later in his career, King was as devoted to the nonviolent creed as ever when he wrote in *Where Do We Go From Here?*:

Through violence, you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish truth... Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that. The beauty of nonviolence is that, in its own way and in its own time, it seeks to break the chain reaction of evil (King, Jr. 1967).

In 1967, King calls for a "revolution in values" to fight for interconnected "triple evils" of racism, economic exploitation, and militarism, he insisted that this revolution be carried out using nonviolence (Nojeim, 2013; Garrow, 1986). King is ready to accept "whatever" assistance as long as they accepted nonviolence (Nojeim, 2013; Fairclough, 1984). King wanted a revolution in values centered on changing society from a materialistically obsessed, or "thing-oriented," society to a "person-oriented" society (King, Jr. 1967). Here King is referring to the evil associated with capitalism. According to him, the U.S. economy was too profit centered and too property centered and not person-centered enough (Nojeim, 2013; Garrow, 1986). King felt there was something terribly wrong with capitalism, as if it were the common denominator linking racism, economic exploitation and militarism. King disparaged an economic system that contributed to the creation of "islands of poverty" amid "oceans of plenty".

King became increasingly critical of the capitalist class, calling on them to give up some of their wealth, he sees majority of whites as racists and only a minority of them genuinely wanted authentic equality. King became exasperated with whites, who seemed more interested in protecting their privileged position than in helping fulfil American's dream for all citizens;

Why do white people seem to find it so difficult to understand that the Negro is sick and tired of having

reluctantly parcelled out to him those rights and privileges, which all others receive upon birth or entry in America? I never cease to wonder at the amazing presumption of much of white society, assuming that they have right to bargain with the Negro for his freedom (Nojeim, 2013; Oates, 1982).

To achieve his call for “revolution in value”, King called for a nonviolent “Poor Peoples’ Campaign”, in which whites from Appalanchia, blacks from the south and Native Americans from the west would join together in Washington, DC, and bring government operations to halt with massive marches, protests, and sit-ins (Nojeim, 2013).

King Advocated for “democratic socialism” to be instituted in the United States, as a means to eradicate all forms of poverty in the country. According to him, Peace can never exist in an atmosphere where large chunks of people are living in poverty and exploitation. King noted that the U.S already had a kind of socialism, but it is meant for the rich, in the form of corporate subsidies and tax breaks (Fairclough, 1984).

King came up with nonviolent “civil disobedience” campaign that would address the poor peoples’ frustration away from looting and burning and toward something more constructive. To do that, King said, “We’ve got to find a method that will disrupt our cities if necessary, create the crisis that will force the nation to look at the situation... and yet at the same time not destroy life or property” (Nojeim, 2013; Garrow, 1986).

The beloved community, King encourage people to commit themselves to creating a “thou-centered” society or one that values the other as much as, if not more than, the self. King’s beloved community is a “community” because the people are commonly invested with shared vows, creeds, dogmas, and beliefs. In addition, it is “beloved” because this sharing is based on genuine commitment to loving one another. For King, the beloved community could be achieved through a peaceful and harmonious integration of whites and blacks, poor and rich, Jews and gentiles and so forth. King believed that integration is creative, profound and positive because it means the open and wilful acceptance of blacks and not just the grudging acquiescence to their inclusion that desegregation implies. Segregation is evil system that is diametrically opposed to human personality because it substitutes an “I-it” relationship between people for an “I-thou” one. This reduces blacks to the condition of “things”, such as a pet, rather than raises them up to the level of human. This denies blacks more than their freedom; it

denies them their very lives (Nojeim, 2013; Herman, 1998). Only full racial integration can actually uplift all human personalities and lead to creation of the “beloved community”, the only way to uphold and nurture this human family, the only way to achieve harmonious integration of the human family is through nonviolence. The beloved community could not be obtained through using ‘violent’ means, because that will be negation of the concept. Nonviolence is at the core of King’s beloved community because they were critical elements for resolving conflicts and repairing any rupture that might tear at the fabric of society (Nojeim, 2004).

King’s desire for and vision for the beloved community was most powerfully expressed with his famous “I Have a Dream” speech during the march on Washington in August 1963. The march brought together over 250,000 people, one-third of whom were white, to the nation’s capital to peacefully march for freedom, jobs, equality and racial justice. It was the largest most peaceful integrated gathering of people in Washington, DC.

According to King, “Men often hate each other because they fear each other; they do not know each other because they cannot communicate; they cannot communicate because they are separated” this statement represents the heart of king’s integrationist philosophy (King, 1963; Cone, 1993).

The principle of Agape, King adopted the idea of ‘agape’ “a love that seeks nothing in return” (King, 1957). Agape is a realisation and recognition that all peoples’ lives are fully intertwined with one another as part of God’s way and as part of a single process binding all of humanity. For King, agape did not mean that we must like our enemies or those who oppress us. He often said it was hard to like some of the white segregationists in the South. Rather, agape was a way to forgiveness and restoration of the beloved community involving harmonious relationships with all God’s children (Nojeim, 2004; Oates, 1982). He encouraged his followers to have agape for all people, even those who beat or otherwise oppress them because he was convinced of its redemptive power to repair a broken community; Agape is an understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill toward all men. It enables us to love every man not because God loves him”. He put it well in a sermon that agape is when “you love those whose ways are distasteful to you. You love every man because God loves him” (Nojeim, 2004; Branch, 1988).

King urged his followers to “hate the sin, but love the sinner” King asked followers to remember that, even though they may not actually like their white oppressors, but they should consider them with value and must be loved. Moreover, even in victory, such as when Montgomery, Alabama, was ordered to desegregation its buses after a yearlong non-violent bus boycott and court battle, king urged

people to think of the result not as a defeat of whites or even as a “victory for 50,000 negroes in Montgomery” or 16 million negroes of America”. Rather, he said, “that victory for justice and good will” (Nojeim, 2013; The speeches of Martin Luther King, 1988).

Justice and Just Laws, King believed that justice was critical to any country’s growth and stability. Without justice, the door will always remain open for potentially violent conflicts to erupt. King argued that nonviolence thrives best in a climate of justice, but the potential for violence will grow to the extent that injustice prevails in a community. The more injustice in a community, the greater the potential for violence. “King said, “History shows they’ll be violently released”. King also warned of the increased possibility of a violent explosion if blacks, especially those residing in the inner cities, continued to live in horrendous poverty amid an incredibly affluent society: “No nation can suffer any greater tragedy than to cause millions of its citizens to feel that they have no stake in their own society” (Washington, 1986).

He argued that, “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”, implying that order and justice were two sides of the same coin. King was showing that one of the main strengths of nonviolent resistance was its ability to expose an injustice and bring it to the surface, despite efforts by those who would try to conceal the injustice. King believed that people of conscience had a duty to actively undermine unjust laws because if they did not, they were then collaborators in perpetuating the injustice (Nojeim, 2004).

King was very not in support “Black power” which was coined by black nationalists and first used in the Civil Rights Movement as a rallying cry by Black Nationalist. The black power was a militant call by black nationalists for blacks to take an aggressive, confrontational approach toward whites. Black Power was a radical rallying cry that proved divisive because it unsettled sympathetic whites who worked alongside blacks in the Civil Rights Movement. Moreover, when the cry for black power rang out, King was embarrassed because it gave the impression that he was condoning a demonstration with a slogan that contradicted his emphasis on the “beloved community and integration”. King saw black power as a pessimistic, unhelpful philosophy born of despair and thus bound to lose. He describes black power for its negative, separatist connotations, which seemed to push the goal of black domination rather than black equality. King also condemned black power as self-contradicting because, on the one hand, black power militants favoured using tactics, such as force of arms, that represented the very worst white culture had to offer. King urged that, “blacks need whites and whites need blacks” because “we are bound together in a single

garment of destiny". King suggested an alternative marching slogan such as "black consciousness" or "black equality", which still emphasized pride and love of one's race but did not suggest the intention of black domination and possible violence that phrase "black power" seemed to advocate (Nojeim, 2004; King, 1967).

SOME KEY MOTIVATIONS OF MARTIN LUTHER KINGS JNR'S ACTIVISM.

His Religious background; Martin Luther king was a Christian, his father was a minister and he became a minister as well. He studied theology and earned his doctorate at Boston University. He became a scholar of his faith after his mentors at Morehouse College, President Benjamin E. Mays and Professor George D. Kelsey, encouraged him to view religion as both "intellectually respectful and emotionally satisfying." Martin Luther King's Jnr. letter from a Birmingham prison to fellow Christian clergymen gives insight to the role his religious commitment to work of justice, his non-violent methods. To his views on human rights, he regards them as God-given and beyond the manipulation and oppression of any tyrant.

Existing racial segregation and discrimination in the United States of America; during the time of martin Luther king Jnr. black American oppression, segregation and discrimination was at its worst. The country had separate schools for blacks, blacks were not eligible to vote, separate buses for blacks and the few buses that took both whites and blacks; the blacks had to seat at the back of the bus. This dehumanizing social condition of existence stimulated him and others like him into action and propelled him into becoming a civil rights activist. The writings of Mahatma Gandhi; Martin Luther King Jnr. was greatly influenced by the teachings and writings of Mahatma Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi was an Indian nationalist who used non-violent methods to oppose British colonial rule. Although the two never met personally, king was introduced to Gandhi's teachings while at crozer theological seminary. His first application of non-violent campaign came in 1955 during the Montgomery bus boycott. Through Gandhi's activities king witnessed firsthand the power of peaceful protest. Kings conviction to pursue this course of action strengthened during his 1959 visit to India. He is quoted as saying "it was a marvellous thing to see the amazing results of a non-violent campaign. The aftermath of hatred and bitterness that usually follows a violent campaign was found nowhere in India..." and the works of Reinhold Niebuhr, who wrote and studies the nature of Man's sinfulness. While in school he also met Howard, who was a renowned civil right activist, who tremendously shape and influence his perspective about life.

The Birmingham movement in 1963; it was organized by the southern Christian leadership conference (SCLC) to bring attention to the integration efforts of Africa Americans in Birmingham led by Martin Luther king and others, the campaign of non-violent direct action culminated in widely publicized confrontations between young black students and white civic authorities, and eventually led the municipal government to change the city's discrimination laws. This movement though it was intended to be peaceful, turned violent and led to loss of lives. But the resultant effect of this movement drew the attention of the world to the plight of African Americans in the United States. The movement also motivated the call for a march on Washington as well as a catalyst to Civil Rights address and Civil Rights Act of 1969.

The August 27, 1963 march on Washington; it is difficult to not mention this march when talking about martin Luther king's activism. The march on Washington was for jobs freedom and also an anti-racial protest of the bill passed by president J.F. Kennedy, it was attended by 250,000 people, it was one of the largest demonstration ever seen in the nation's capital and one of the first to have extensive television coverage, it is particularly notable because that is where he gave the most known speech in the history of the world "I have a dream" that further geared the protest for change and peace across the world. The march also represented a coalition of several civil rights organizations, all of which generally had different approaches and agendas. This further brought the plight of African Americans in United States to the world.

His studies in Crozer theological Seminary in Chester, to pursue a degree in ministry shaped his thinking and this seminary studies are considered to be the turning point from a mediocre to serious student and he was Baptist minister and influenced by the teaching of Christ, because Christ is regarded as the prince of peace and his readings of the bible must have influenced him to shun violence as a means for fighting for social justice.

HIS MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO WORLD PEACE

As a result of his movement African-Americans were accorded mandatory equal voting right in America and the bill for this was sign by the then US president John F. Kennedy, this was a monumental achievement for the African-Americans. This paved way for a black-man of Kenyan origin in the person of Barrack Obama emerged as the president of United States of America for a period of 8 years. This has enhanced the dignity of black-man globally. This has demystified the notion and changed the perception of the white supremacist and racist in US that... Africans were not better than apex and bambos.

Martin Luther King Jr. led the bus boycott on 1 December 1955 that was sparked by Rosa Parks, the 42 year old black American woman, who refused to vacate a seat for a white Man in a bus. Because of that, she was subjected to severe torture by the American police and for that king led a protest in which African-Americans boycotted public transport throughout United States for 382 days i.e. for 382 days the African-Americans boycotted official buses throughout United State.

He helped to form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957 which was an organization that worked for civil rights.

King Jnr. led the lunch counter sit-in, where he demanded equal right and treatment of blacks in restaurants across U.S. This ended the discrimination against blacks who want to share seat with the white in restaurant. Today it is illegal in the U.S to discriminate against any one based on skin colour.

He was the leader of the entire civil rights movement in 1960s that called for working out conflicts with kindness and love as opposed to hate and violence.

His movement and agitation protected the course of peace globally and help in accelerating nationalist movement and fight for freedom and independence across the world. Many third world countries that were under the York of colonialism and white oppression took the bull by the horn as a result of his movement.

He was the leader of the entire civil rights movement in the 1960s that called for working out conflicts with kindness and love as opposed to hate and violence.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s nonviolent peaceful demonstrations proved to the world that action without violence could be effective and successful.

The standard has been set for all nations to treat everyone equally regardless of skin colour because of the work of Martin Luther King Jr. (Michelson, 2008).

He calls for “democratic socialism” to be instituted in the United States, as a means to eradicate all forms of poverty in the country and a “revolution in values” which was centred on changing society from “thing-oriented” society to “person-oriented” society.

THE VIETNAM WAR AND KING CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD PEACE

To fully appreciate Martin Luther King’s thoughts on peace, there is the need to understand his thoughts about the relationship between human beings. He saw all human beings as caught “in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.” (Nobel Media, 2014) He expands on this thought in his 1964 speech, “The American Dream”.

All I am saying is simply this, that all life is interrelated. In addition, we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny —

whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. For some strange reason I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality. ... I think this is the first challenge and it is necessary to meet it in order to move on toward the realization of the American Dream, the dream of men of all races, creeds, national backgrounds, living together as brothers (Nobel Media, 2014)

The implications of these insights on the nature of human relationships lead to his advocacy of peace in the context of the Vietnam War. In April 1967 in a speech titled "Beyond Vietnam", he outlined the reasons why he felt he had to speak out on the war in Vietnam. "Over the past two years, as I have moved to break the betrayal of my own silences and to speak from the burnings of my own heart, as I have called for radical departures from destruction of Vietnam, many persons have questioned me about the wisdom of my path." (Nobel Media, 2014)

He offered the following reasons for his opposition.

First was the adverse impact of warfare on his efforts to alleviate poverty of African Americans.

There is at the outset an obvious and almost facile connection between the war in Vietnam and the struggle I and others have been waging in America. A few years ago there was a shining moment in that struggle. It seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor, both black and white, through the poverty program. ... Then came the build-up in Vietnam, and I watched this program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything on a society gone mad on war. And I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued ... So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such (Nobel Media, 2014)

Second was the direct harm of the war on the lives of African American young men and families.

It became clear to me that the war was doing far more than devastating the hopes of the poor at home. It was sending their sons and their brothers and their husbands to fight and to die in extraordinarily high proportions ... We were taking the black young men ... and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem. So we have

been repeatedly faced with the cruel irony of watching Negro and white boys on TV screens as they kill and die together for a nation that has been unable to seat them together in the same schools (Nobel Media, 2014)

Third was the need to speak against violence as a solution to problems.

As I have walked among the desperate, rejected, and angry young men, I have told them that Molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems. ... But they asked, and rightly so, "What about Vietnam?" They asked if our own nation wasn't using massive dose of violence to solve its problems... Their questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today: my own government.

Fourth was the American Dream, that any solution must realise that dream in larger proportions.

Now it should be incandescently clear that no one who has any concern for the integrity and life of America today can ignore the present war. ... America's soul ... can never be saved so long as it destroys the hopes of men the world over. So it is that those of us who are yet determined that "America will be" are led down the path of protest and dissent, working for the health of our land.

It is in the light of this that we can see clearly Martin Luther King's contribution to world peace through his actions and words against unjust war of America in Vietnam.

CRITIQUE OF LUTHER KING'S CONTRIBUTION

By 1965, King began to face criticism for his nonviolent approaches by civil rights groups such as the SNCC, now led by Stokely Carmichael, and other vocal leaders

who challenged King's leadership with suggestions for more radical and militant approaches for the movement.

The 1965 March for Voting Rights in Selma Alabama proved to be a pinnacle event that furthered the divide between King and his nonviolent approach and African Americans who countered with the more aggressive demands of the black power movement. In Selma, King led a group of 400 marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. When the marchers were confronted by state troopers on the bridge, King led the marchers into prayer rather than confrontation (Myers, 2004).

Ironically, it is the work of the King scholars, that has illuminated details of King's life that suggest that he plagiarized, committed adultery, designed shrewd calculating methods of protest that made the protesters vulnerable to police brutality in order to attract the media to the cause, and that some of his close advisors were tied to the communist party. Scholars who discovered, analyzed, and published these findings, emphasize that these revelations are the result of a deeper examination of the complexities of the movement than the one referred to in the cultural myth (Amstrong, 2002).

The more radicalized civil right activists such as Malcolm X chided King for his passive resistance. The black nationalism of the black power movement called for a stronger approach. King began a rapid decline of influence within this part of the movement. At the same time, he began to lose favour with the national elites in Washington D.C. Moreover, he became the target of an insidious FBI surveillance project, in which King's marital infidelities, and ties to people associated with the communist Party were exploited, in an attempt to discredit King and force him to recede as the frontrunner of the movement (Myers, 2004). King's critique of capitalism did not make him out to be a Marxist, as many of his detractors, including FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, claimed. King's increasing concern for the poor and his growing hostility toward what he considered the negative hallmarks of capitalist society, such as racism, exploitation and materialism, owed more to the influences of the social gospel rather than to any Marxist interpretation to which he may have been exposed (Fairclough, 1984).

In an attempt to achieve the principle nonviolent "civil disobedience" campaign, King contradicts himself, by advocating for violence.. "We've got to find a method that will disrupt our cities if necessary, create the crisis that will force the nation to look at the situation... and yet at the same time not destroy life or property".

Some theologians like Reinhold Neibuhr, said that nonviolence too often became a way of sealing off one's moral superiority, of accepting suffering at the hands of

one's oppressors as a form of soul cleansing, while losing sight of the goal of social justice (Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2017).

Some critiques are of the opinion that, King's nonviolence is not translate to anything meaningful, because the questions and the problems remains. There is in America today a terrible divide between whites and blacks. There are two societies, unequal and mutually suspicious. Violent crime among blacks has escalated. So has unemployment. According to Ling, "Black Americans remain more likely than whites to be poor and jobless; to live in blighted neighbourhoods; to suffer debilitating disease; to leave school or become pregnant or die prematurely; to go to prison and to die violently' (Mannath, 1997).

The March on Washington in 1963, where King delivered his famous speech " I Have a Dream" was not King's brainchild, nor King's organisation, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, central to the March's organisation. Rather, Asa Philip Randolph, who king referred to as the "Dean" of Negro leaders, had the idea for such a March years before it actually occurred and Bayard Rustin was the prime organiser of the event and the "Dream" speech is rich with metaphors. For instance, King said that the authors of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S constitution had issued a "promissory note" of freedom and liberty for all Americans but when blacks had tried to cash their note, it came back marked "insufficient funds", (Nojeim, 2004).

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the powerful ability of an individual to play an important role in global peace. The role of Martin Luther King Jr in Civil Rights Movements using non-violence protest testify to the idealist notion that man is good and capable of combining with other humans to work for peace. King had contributed immensely to world peace especially his stance against American invasion of Vietnam. As a result of his movement African-Americans were accorded mandatory equal voting right in America, Martin Luther King Jr. led the bus boycott on 1 December 1955 that was sparked by Rosa Parks, the 42 year old black American woman, who refused to vacate a seat for a white Man in a bus, king led a protest in which African-Americans boycotted public transport throughout United States for 382 days i.e. for 382 days the African-Americans boycotted official buses throughout United State, he helped form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957 which was an organization that is still working for civil rights in the United States, his movement and agitation protected the course of peace globally and help in accelerating nationalist

movement and fight for freedom and independence across the world through non-violence protest. Many third world countries that were under the York of colonialism and white oppression took the bull by the horn as a result of his movement. All these without any equivocation has to do with his religious background and his studies in ministry, racial segregation and discrimination of blacks in the United States, his agitations for; revolution in values, democratic socialism, black power movement and the influence of the writings of Mahatma Gandhi on non-violence. Nevertheless, King Jnr. has been accused for plagiarism, committing adultery, designed shrewd calculating methods of protest that made the protesters vulnerable to police brutality in order to attract the media to the cause, for instance, King led a group of 400 marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. When state troopers on the bridge confronted the marchers, King led the marchers into prayer rather than confrontation. In an attempt to achieve the principle nonviolent "civil disobedience" campaign, King contradicts himself, by advocating for violence protest.

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