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Re-examining Malcolm X

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RE-EXAMINING MALCOLM X

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Communication Studies

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Daryl Farrah

August 2000

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Hanns Hohmann', written over a horizontal line.

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ABSTRACT

RE-EXAMINING MALCOLM X

by Daryl Farrah

This thesis hopes to make a contribution to the Speech Communication Field by providing a thorough analysis of a piece of African-American rhetoric, discussing its intended messages, and to paint a more highly differentiated picture of African-Americans by closely analyzing the subtlety of the rhetoric being studied.

This thesis examined a speech, delivered by Malcolm X in 1964, called the "Ballot or the Bullet." Malcolm X used both managerial and confrontational rhetoric in this text; however, Malcolm X's background, the events preceding the speech, the themes Malcolm X used and the pattern of the speech lead most people to believe the rhetoric Malcolm X produced here was confrontational. Nevertheless, this thesis argues that this speech was overall managerial and that some of the ideas expressed in this speech are being used fairly widely by people on both sides of the political spectrum today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	1
A. Description of Project	1
B. Method	6
II. Analysis of "The Ballot or the Bullet"	13
A. Background	13
B. Events Leading to "The Ballot or the Bullet"	18
C. Setting of the Speech	23
D. Confrontational and Managerial Aspects and Themes of the Speech	25
1. Ballot or Bullet	26
2. The Enemy and the Conspiracy	31
3. Human Rights	39
4. American Themes and Leaders, and the Justification of Violence	43
5. Unity	58
E. Recurrent Patterns and Structure of the Speech	66
1. Patterns of African-American Rhetoric	66
2. Overall Structure of the Speech	69
III. Conclusion	81
ENDNOTES	91
REFERENCES	92
APPENDIX	99
Malcolm X: "The Ballot or the Bullet" (1964)	100

RE-EXAMINING MALCOLM X

I. INTRODUCTION

African-American rhetoric is a defining element of the African-American community. Since that community suffered through the indignity of slavery, Jim Crow laws, anti-literacy laws, and segregation, they had to develop an effective speech behavior in the face of great difficulties and injustices. Therefore, persuasive oral communication became, for a much greater proportion of blacks than whites, the fundamental medium of public interaction (Smith, 1970a, p. 264).

As a result of slavery, anti-literacy laws, and segregation, a study of African-American rhetoric is also a study of African-American history (Smith, 1970a, p. 264). So when African-American rhetoric is studied, one will not only learn about the rhetorical strategies used by the speakers, one will also learn about the history of African-Americans and their fight for recognition. Most of the works concerning African-American rhetoric deal with the topic of human and civil rights. Since African-Americans have shared similar experiences it is quite unusual for a study to deviate from these topics or for the rhetoric produced not to discuss the experiences or the problems facing the African-American community. Examining African-American rhetoric will show important communication as well as historical strategies in the fight for human and civil rights from the works of Frederick Douglass through the works of Malcolm X and beyond.

A. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Even though African-Americans have made many rhetorical contributions, only a few of these have been thoroughly studied in the field of

Speech Communication (Rigsby, 1993, p. 191). This is quite surprising considering all of the rhetorical works that were produced during the civil rights era. In response to this observation, three key issues have been studied related to African-American rhetoric. The first is the lack of literature on this rhetoric in the Speech Communication field. The second issue relates to the interpretation of the messages that people are trying to convey through African-American rhetoric. In studying these messages there is often a lack of detailed analysis which may lead to misinterpretations. The third issue concerns the images that are constructed of African-Americans in the media due to some of these flawed analyses of African-American rhetoric.

In addressing the first issue, Enrique D. Rigsby, the author of "African American Rhetoric and the Profession," conducted an informal survey of the literature produced in the communication journals and discovered a scarcity of articles about African-American rhetoric. Yet, there has been an increasing interest in the works that were produced during the Civil Rights era, such as those of Malcolm X. For example, 1990 marked the 25th anniversary of Malcolm X's assassination, leading to the establishment of the National Malcolm X Commemoration Commission, the Spike Lee movie that depicted the life of Malcolm X, and a Sixty Minutes update of Mike Wallace's documentary, "The Hate That Hate Produced" (1959), just to name a few (Condit & Lucaites, 1993b, pp. 291-310). This thesis is intended to add to this growing trend.

The second issue is the messages which people are trying to convey through African-American rhetoric, and the analysis of such messages. According to Professor Molefi Kete Asante and Stephen Rob in their book

The Voice of Black Rhetoric, claimed there has not been, a good thorough analysis of African-American rhetoric (Smith & Robb, 1971).¹ There have only been inconclusive debates on the message content of African-American rhetoric and on what were the desired effects these rhetoricians wanted to achieve. African-American rhetoric mostly focuses on the topic of Civil Rights, who may be denying Civil Rights, and the best way to obtain Civil Rights. People on both sides of the issue have often offered conflicting interpretations of the message content of this African-American rhetoric. A good example of this is a speech given by Malcolm X, called the "Ballot or the Bullet." This was one of Malcolm X's most popular speeches. It was also one of his most militant statements, and for that reason it drew a great deal of attention from the White mass media and the White political establishment, which interpreted it as an appeal for the violent overthrow of the U.S. government (Condit & Lucaites, 1993b, p. 292).

Then Congressman Jack Miller insisted that Malcolm X made irresponsible statements designed to promote bloodshed and violence (Condit & Lucaites, 1993a, p. 199). While the U.S. News and World Report headline was "Broader Malcolm: His Theme Now Is Violence." The Chicago Defender reported: "Negroes Need Guns, Declares Malcolm X" (Cone, 1991, p. 195). However, the "Ballot or the Bullet" constitutes only a portion of one stage in the complex rhetorical development of Malcolm X's dissent from the American dream of equality, a dissent that ultimately entailed the rather peaceful goal of radically redrawing the ideological boundaries of American life to constitute a viable space for America's Black citizens (Charland, 1987, p. 141).

Others saw an evolution in Malcolm X's philosophy and interpreted the speech in a way which was contrary to its reading by mainstream America. Many who heard this address (and other speeches) formulating his ideology and the philosophy of this new movement, called it the best Malcolm X ever gave. James Cone suggests "While the 'bullet' symbolized the continuity in Malcolm X's thinking, the 'ballot' signaled an important change. It represented his movement away from the narrow 'skin-nationalism' of the Black Muslims to an affirmation of blackness which enabled him to cooperate with Martin King and others in mainstream civil rights movement" (Cone, 1991, p. 198). These two conflicting interpretations of this speech bring to the forefront the complexity of African-American rhetoric and the need to investigate and interpret thoroughly the messages being conveyed through this type of rhetoric. I will address the reasons why messages such as Malcolm X's may lead to divergent interpretations, and thereby also hope to shed some light on the study of African-American rhetoric in general.

Due to the analysis of African-American rhetoric (or lack thereof) many different images have been constructed of African-Americans in the media, and that is the third issue to be discussed in connection with African-American rhetoric. Many of these images depicted were of individuals who demanded a drastic change within American society. Some of the images were positive; nevertheless, most tended to lean heavily toward the negative side. For example, many members of American society painted a picture of Malcolm X and of the individuals who supported black nationalism or black power as violent persons ready to destroy society. Some members of Congress

described black power advocates as "hate groups" and called them a counterpart to white supremacist groups (Condit & Lucaites, 1993a, p.199).

Others accused Malcolm X of being an extremist, a demagogue who used emotionalism to obscure the issues, a hate monger who was stirring up bad blood between whites and blacks (Rummel, 1988, p. 142). Many of these assessments of the rhetoric produced and of the people behind it have been made with very little background information, very little analysis, and a lack of understanding of the material. I will try to show the way to a more careful reading of Malcolm X's speech, the "Ballot or the Bullet," a reading that will help us understand him as a representative of African-Americans aspirations.

So this study will focus on with all three of these central issues concerning African-American rhetoric. It will attempt to make a contribution on this subject to the Speech Communication field by providing a thorough analysis of a piece of African-American rhetoric and discussing its intended messages. Furthermore, this study will attempt to paint a more highly differentiated picture of African-Americans through such closer attention to the subtlety of the rhetoric being studied.

This study will examine Malcolm X's speech the "Ballot or the Bullet," given initially in Cleveland at the Cory Methodist Church on April 3, 1964, and repeated with some modifications on several later occasions. Even though Malcolm X made many contributions to the body of African-American rhetoric, his works have not yet been fully examined by the American public. Malcolm X has been heavily criticized by both white and black Civil Rights leaders for his attacks of their actions, his attacks against the

nonviolence approach, and his past association with the Nation of Islam. All of these positions were actually reaffirmed in this particular speech.

It has been called one of Malcolm X's most militant statements; nonetheless, this speech was also supposed to clarify his position on his religious beliefs, on Civil Rights, and his practical politics. In the "Ballot or the Bullet" Malcolm X introduced his philosophy of black nationalism, which states Blacks should have control over their own economic, political and social future. Most importantly, black people should take whatever steps necessary to make sure that this goal is realized. However, this speech was widely misinterpreted by the media and Americans in general.

Since Malcolm X was critical of the slow advances made in the era of Civil Rights and of the strategy used to obtain them, and since he supported other controversial methods, such as black nationalism; therefore, many labeled him as a radical. The people who rejected such a strong stance (i.e., President Johnson) and the people who tried to justify such radicalism (i.e., Paul Burgess) both agreed that this type of rhetoric was radical. However, is this impression justified?

B. METHOD

In order to determine if these interpretations are valid, this study will examine the speech, and use the Social Movement approach defined by Robert Cathcart in his essay "Movements: Confrontation As Rhetorical Form" to determine how Malcolm X's speech can be perceived as both confrontational and managerial (Cathcart, 1990). The study will define what is meant by the contrast between confrontational and managerial rhetoric, and apply this conceptual framework to the speech. This study will extend

-

this line of thought, and offer a contrasting analysis of this speech, differing from prevailing perceptions. The study will advance the argument that the rhetoric examined is not either confrontational or managerial, but a subtle combination of the two. The same speech can be perceived differently by different audiences and thus have different effects. In conclusion the study will advance the argument that though he was using deeply ambivalent rhetoric, Malcolm X was nonetheless predominantly taking a managerial stance in this speech, and also in his other speeches made after this date. Then the study will examine how some of the patterns of rhetorical strategies observed in Malcolm X's speeches can be employed in looking at later manifestations of African-American rhetoric well into our own day.

Cathcart's definition of the Social Movement approach has two elements: (1) Confrontational rhetoric: which challenges the basic values of the system, and in the end wants it abolished, and (2) Managerial rhetoric: used by individuals who do not want to abolish the system, but wish to work within it; yet these individuals are still demanding a change to the existing order. Cathcart argues that confrontational rhetoric occurs only in special and limited circumstances, such as periods of societal breakdown, or when moral underpinnings are called into question (Cathcart, 1990, p. 364). In his essay, Cathcart used confrontation to mean that form of human behavior labeled "agonistics," pertaining to ritual conflicts (p. 362). Confrontation as an agonistic ritual is not a prelude to revolution or warfare, but is a ritual enactment that dramatizes the symbolic separation of the individual from the existing order (p. 363). Cathcart also advances the idea that managerial rhetoric must be designed so as not to appear as a threat to the very existence

of the established order, because otherwise the people seeking reform might be forced out of the common value system. The reform movement uses a managerial rhetoric because to some degree it must have a *modus vivendi* with those in power if it is to continue to exist (p. 365).

Cathcart's definition differs from the position that Burgess takes in "Justifying 'Black Nationalism'" (1968) and that Malcolm X's detractors take, because Cathcart's definition doesn't force us to claim that Malcolm X's rhetoric is radical and then denounce it; nor does Cathcart's definition require us to assert that this discourse is radical and to try to justify it. Cathcart's definitions help us to demonstrate the complexity of the "Ballot or the Bullet" by allowing us to view the speech as more than just revolutionary rhetoric. These definitions along with my elaborations and modifications will illustrate how the speech is a combination of the two basic approaches, and why it can be interpreted in a variety of ways.

In order to demonstrate this point, I will apply my interpretation of Cathcart's analytical framework to all of the important themes recurring throughout the speech. On this basis it will be determined if that particular part of the speech is confrontational or managerial rhetoric by examining the statements made, the demands Malcolm X is advancing, and the actions Malcolm X is advocating. Then I will apply my own contrasting analysis to judge if the treatment of the given theme could also show aspects of the opposite approach. I will examine some of the language used and what it could possibly imply to different individuals.

This thesis will also utilize the rhetorical strategies and topics laid out by Arthur Smith (Molefi Asante) in his book, Rhetoric of Black Revolution

(1970b). Smith used works such as "The Ballot or the Bullet" to help develop and define some of the rhetorical strategies and topics used by Black revolutionaries like Malcolm X and Frederick Douglass. These rhetorical strategies will be identified in each major theme of the speech and the topics will help define some of the sections of the thesis.

Even though Cathcart does not perceive the Civil Rights struggle as a social movement, his definitions can still be utilized here. Cathcart explains that the Civil Rights movement accepted the United States system and that the rhetoric produced was only used to improve the existing system (Cathcart, 1990, p. 366). But Cathcart's framework can still be utilized in analyzing the "Ballot or the Bullet" because Malcolm X differed from the mainstream of United States Civil Rights system in that he did not accept the United States system to the extent that others did. Malcolm X rejected the white establishment, their moral codes and values, and said that he was just one victim of Americanism. Malcolm X rejected the leaders, some of the participants and objectives of the Civil Rights movement; and they in turn rejected him. At one time in his life, Malcolm X preached racial separation. He never supported integration. Malcolm X did not support integration because he felt the American system would not actually allow blacks to fully integrate. Malcolm X also believed that it denigrated the heritage of Black people, and thus their very being: to become valuable was to become a version of being White (Condit & Lucaites, 1993b, p. 301). In truth, Malcolm X supported segregation as long as it improved the lives of black people in America.

Like many others, such as Ralph R. Smith and Russell R. Windes authors of "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," (1975) I also disagree with Cathcart's view that the Civil Rights movement was not a social movement in any meaningful sense of the term. While the Civil Rights movement did not try to eliminate the entire system, it nevertheless tried to eliminate at least part of that system. The Civil Rights movement demanded a significant change in the power structure (politically, economically, and socially) in America. The people who were advocating equal rights for all Americans met with great resistance from the government and many citizens. Many Civil Rights advocates made great sacrifices in order to advance this cause. Blood was shed and lives were lost to achieve this goal. Therefore, in my opinion the Civil Rights struggle was a social movement in the fullest sense.

From a rhetorical perspective, no movement tries to eliminate the entire system. All movements, especially rhetorical movements can only work within an existing system. Even a call for radical change, for separation or attack has to be formulated in a language that can be understood by people whose perceptions and premises have been shaped in important ways by their relationships to and within existing systems of culture, history, social hierarchy, etc. Rhetoric was being used during the Civil Rights movement, so it must be assumed that both sides must have accepted some of the values of the system in the hope to persuade each other, since arguments are possible only on the basis of shared premises.

Others such as Henry H. Mitchell author of Black Preaching would argue that Cathcart's or any Euro-centric definition would not be applicable

because Black preaching by its very nature is oblivious of the rules and requirements of the majority culture, and that the very process of reducing it to writing may cause some to question the applicability of terms and forms which are not always characteristic of Black culture (Mitchell, 1970, p. 13). The reason why I nevertheless use a Euro-centric definition and apply it to the "Ballot or the Bullet" is that Malcolm X was living within the White American system which had greatly influenced his life and the formation of his communication patterns. During his life Malcolm X became an influential political figure arguing for change. Therefore, when Malcolm X gave a speech about the plight of African-Americans he was seeking an active response to the situation. Moreover, he was not only seeking a response from Black America, he was seeking a response from all of America. Beyond that, Malcolm X's speeches were not only meant for Americans to hear, but for audience in countries around the world. Malcolm X traveled abroad trying to get assistance for Black Americans in fighting the hardship they had to endure. Since Malcolm X was hoping for a response especially within the broader political arena, he necessarily had to follow some type of traditional forms of speech and persuasive appeals which transcended his immediate community, and which were strongly shaped by a dominant Euro-centric culture. So Malcolm X's speeches must also be evaluated within a Euro-centric framework to help determine how other people outside the Black community could have interpreted and be influenced by the message he was trying to send.

Nevertheless, this thesis will also pay attention to the rhetorical elements that are typically used in the African-American community. This is

important for the reasons given above. But what is more important from the standpoint of culture and politics, using a Euro-centric framework does not automatically preclude a concurrent African-American framework. Nor does using an African-American framework eliminate a simultaneous attention to a Euro-centric framework. This fusion of conflicting perspectives reflects the reality within the United States.

According to Andrew King, the author of "The Rhetorical Legacy of The Black Church" (1971) the church has had a great influence on African-American rhetoric. Even though Malcolm X was a Muslim and thought Christianity perpetuated the abuse of the Black community, he used some characteristics of African-American rhetoric that were shaped by the church. A very important reason for this is because Malcolm X wanted to relate to the audience he was addressing. The usage of some characteristics of African-American rhetoric not only allowed Malcolm X to relate to his audience, but to gain support for his particular plan of action. Some of the characteristics he utilized were style and language. Style and language encompasses the use of Black English, called response, and repetition. However, Malcolm X did not adhere to all of the rhetorical traditions of the Black Church. Most noticeably the characteristics Malcolm X did not utilize were the acceptance of the status quo and the absence of an designed and elaborate pre-planned speech structure.

Other important characteristics of African-American rhetoric are the rhetorical strategies used by Civil Rights leaders throughout American history to gain equality. These strategies are assimilation, separation, and revolution. These particular characteristics did not derive from the church

but through the continuous struggle for freedom in America. These particular rhetorical strategies will be discussed in this paper because they are also very important characteristics which contribute to the make up of African-American rhetoric. Most importantly, all three strategies were used before and during the Civil Rights movement. Malcolm X not only referred to these strategies in one way or another in his speech, he himself employed aspects of all of these strategies. Malcolm X was against total integration from the start. He rejected social and economic assimilation, but not political assimilation. All of these characteristics were chosen because they are in most rhetorical works of African-American rhetoric. Furthermore, these characteristics once were, and in some ways continue to be the most commonly used characteristics of African-American rhetoric.

II. ANALYSIS OF "THE BALLOT OR THE BULLET"

A. BACKGROUND

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska on May 19, 1925. He dropped out of school at the age of fifteen and went to prison for burglary at the age of 21. While in prison he became a member of the Nation of Islam and a follower of Elijah Muhammed, the leader of the Nation of Islam. Malcolm X devoted himself to spreading the word of Elijah Muhammed and expanding the influence of the Nation of Islam. From the start of his speaking career, Malcolm X was considered a radical. Malcolm X demonstrated such great leadership and oral skills that he quickly rose within the ranks of the Nation of Islam. Just five years after his release from prison Malcolm X became Elijah Muhammed's National Representative.

In years to come, Malcolm X's allegiance to the Nation of Islam gradually began to unravel. Malcolm X started to question the lack of involvement of the Nation of Islam in the Civil Rights movement. He did not feel the Nation of Islam was doing enough to help the black population in the United States. In addition, he was troubled by the numerous affairs that Elijah Muhammed had with his secretaries. Malcolm X was becoming disillusioned with the Nation of Islam. After his remarks about the Kennedy assassination, he was suspended from the Nation of Islam for ninety days and was never reinstated. In March of 1964, he disassociated himself from the Nation of Islam.

Malcolm X's confrontational manner made him a tremendous success as a public speaker. Audiences enjoyed his abrasive style so much that he became one of the most popular speakers on the college lecture circuit (Rummel, 1988, pp. 143-144). Michael Thelwell, a student at Howard University and a member of the Civil Rights group *Project Awareness*, invited Malcolm X and Bayard Rustin to debate their positions at the University. Thelwell believes Malcolm X was so magnetic and had such great success with the audience because "[h]e was able to be completely and totally honest unlike Rustin and other Civil Rights leaders who had an intellectual and political obligations to a set of allies or to any constituency in the liberal establishment. . . . It was a kind of self censorship. Malcolm X had no such obligation. His constituency was black people and the Nation of Islam, so he could speak the truth in terms as blunt as possible or necessary and not worry about anybody being offended, not worry about support, and this made him extraordinarily attractive to young Black people because finally here was

somebody who didn't have to kowtow to anybody" (Gallen & Skutches, 1994, p. 64).

Malcolm X gained credibility with most of his audiences because his style and language usually reflected the community in which he was speaking. Whether it be in a university or at a street corner, Malcolm X was able to relate to his audience. Malcolm's addresses to college audiences aroused indignation, hostility, enthusiasm, rage; his debates stirred controversy, and indifference fled (Gallen & Skutches, 1994, pp. 58-59). Thelwell also stated, "Whether or not Malcolm won the debate doesn't matter, the fact is that emotionally and intellectually he was in total control. It wasn't necessarily just the function of rhetoric or the elegance of poetry in the delivery, it was the message" (p. 63). Malcolm X was able to relate to a Black audience because he was saying things publicly which many people within the community said privately or only within their own group. A Harlem woman told black journalist William Worthy: "Honey child, you know those Muslims are telling the truth about the white folks. I'm not joining up, but I'm not against them either" (Cone, 1991, p. 174).

In this speech (and many others) Malcolm X's style was aggressive, full of vindictiveness, and distrust for those outside the ghettos (Rein, 1969, p. 70). Since Malcolm X was talking to a predominantly Black audience, he made sure he spoke their language. For example when Black Christians would visit his temple, Malcolm X would challenge their beliefs by "tailoring the teachings for them," and speaking in an "emotionally charged" style which Blacks called "good preaching" (Cone, 1991, p. 172). Black preaching requires the use of Black language - the rich rendition of English spoken in the Black

ghetto (Mitchell, 1970, p. 148). Malcolm X used the words "Jiving," "Honkies," and "Crackers" not only to relate to his audience but also to demean the people he felt were responsible for the oppression of the Black community. Also, in paragraph twenty six (Breitman, 1965) he used the phrase "can't see" (Can't see refers to the darkness of night in which slaves had to work) .² This is Southern black in origin, but of even more importance is the association Malcolm X establishes between himself and the "field Negro" rather than the "house Negro" (Rein, 1969, p. 73). The Black who worked in the cotton fields resented the black who was a servant or a cook and had excellent food, and hours, and therefore was "Uncle Tomming it" (p. 73). Malcolm X always compared himself to a field Negro and some Black Civil Rights leaders to a house Negro. He thus downgraded many Black leaders of the Civil Rights movement who claimed progress has been made, because he maintained that they were the only ones who had benefited from the collective efforts of the group.

Malcolm X emphasized the difference between a "house Negro" and a "field Negro" in this speech too. First he pointed out the close relationship between the Civil Rights leaders and the current administration and how both sides had claimed that progress had been made in the battle for equality (Paragraph 11). Then he proceeded to circumscribe what the current administration has done for the Black community: "All they did when they got to Washington was to give a few big Negroes big jobs. Those big Negroes didn't need big jobs, they already had jobs. That's camouflage, that's trickery, that's treachery, window-dressing" (Paragraph 13). With this statement,

Malcolm X attempted to make himself one with the Black community, while marking Civil Rights leaders as an enemy of the community.

Even though Malcolm X was a public figure in the battle for Civil Rights, he identified himself as one of the disenfranchised in paragraph 24 when he stated, "It'll be liberty, or it will be death. The only difference about this kind of death--it'll be reciprocal. You know what is meant by reciprocal? That's one of Brother Lomax's words, I stole it from him. I don't usually deal with those big words because I don't usually deal with big people. I deal with small people. I find you can get a whole lot of small people and whip hell out of a whole lot of big people. They haven't got anything to lose, and they've got everything to gain. And they'll let you know in a minute: 'It takes two to tango; when I go, you go.'" Malcolm X was disenfranchised because he faced the same abuse from the government as did the rest of the Black community. More importantly, he was a prominent leader within the Black community who did not work with or was accepted by the White establishment or by some leaders of the Black community. Even though it was quite clear that Malcolm X had the knowledge and the vocabulary to deal with the current establishment, he chose to do so on his terms. He felt his terms strongly reflected and were in tune with the best interest of the Black community. As a result, Malcolm X's position could never be compromised unlike that of many other Civil Rights leaders.

This speech was just part of a series of events that helped Malcolm X regain credibility with the Black community; this was necessary because his membership within the Nation of Islam had alienated him not only from White America, but also from most Blacks, who were fighting for integration

and equality. After Malcolm X terminated his relationship with the Nation of Islam, the rhetoric he produced, as exemplified in this speech, was more inclusive of all of Black America. Nevertheless, many individuals in the United States could not separate Malcolm X and the rhetoric that he had so strongly supported in the past from the rhetoric he was producing in 1964.

B. EVENTS LEADING TO THE "BALLOT OR THE BULLET"

The struggle for Civil Rights has been an on-going battle for Blacks in America reaching its height in the 1960s. Between autumn of 1961 and the spring of 1963, 20,000 men, women and children had been arrested (Marable, 1984, p. 76). In 1963 alone another 15,000 were imprisoned; 1000 desegregation protests occurred across the region, and in more than 100 cities (p. 76). The strategies used by mainstream Black America to obtain equality has always been non-violent. Some of the strategies used were sit-ins, marches, and boycotts. The person who was known as the leader of the Civil Rights movement and one of the strongest supporters of the non-violent strategy was Martin Luther King Jr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s methods and goals always received negative criticism from the likes of Malcolm X.

There were three events that greatly affected the Civil Rights movement and greatly affected Malcolm X's role in the movement. These events were the Birmingham demonstrations, the March on Washington, and the Kennedy assassination. They not only had great effect on this country in general but were also some of the particular reasons that lead to the "Ballot or the Bullet". These events also highlight the differences in Malcolm X's and Martin Luther King's philosophy to obtain equality in America.

Martin Luther King's and Malcolm X's differences in philosophy were clearly evident at one of the most confrontational meetings between peaceful Civil Rights protesters and government officials in Birmingham, Alabama. For decades, Birmingham had represented the citadel of White supremacy (Marable, 1984, p. 76). The Alabama metropolis was indeed the most segregated of all the large cities in the United States; its schools, theaters, restaurants, drinking fountains, and other facilities were totally segregated (Muse, 1968, p. 5). It was a hot bed of explosive intolerance: in six years it had seen 50 Ku-Klux-Klan-style cross burnings and 18 anti-Black bombings, for which no one had been punished (p. 5). Alabama's fiery Governor George Wallace also defied a federal court order and stood at the front door of the University of Alabama to prevent two Black students from registering (p. 6).

During the months of April and May, Civil Rights advocates led a series of massive demonstrations to protest the segregation of the Black community. Blacks poured into the Birmingham streets and were violently suppressed by police (Muse, 1968, p. 5, 6). Many were injured; over 3,000 were arrested (p. 6). President Kennedy sent troops to Birmingham to help prevent the violence from escalating. With Birmingham as a symbol, but acutely conscious of discrimination suffered in every American community, a quarter of a million Negroes took to the streets in demonstrations in forty cities (p. 6). As a response to these massive demonstrations, President Kennedy proposed Civil Rights legislation that a few months earlier would have been impossible (Muse, 1968, p. 6).

On the day every television network carried scenes of Birmingham police dogs attacking Black children, Malcolm X gave an interview (Lomax,

1963, p. 74). Asked what he thought of the events at Birmingham, Malcolm said: "Martin Luther King is a chump not a champ. Any man who puts his women and children on the front lines is a chump, not a champ" (p. 74). This statement and his non-participation in the demonstrations obviously alienated Malcolm X from the Civil Rights movement and angered mainstream Black America who supported Martin Luther King.

Malcolm X also had some harsh words for President Kennedy: "President Kennedy did not send troops to Alabama when dogs were biting Black babies," he told a New York Times reporter. "He waited three weeks until the situation exploded. He then sent troops after Negroes had demonstrated their ability to defend themselves" (Cone, 1991, p. 113). Furthermore, "in his talk with Alabama editors," Malcolm continued, "Kennedy did not urge that Negroes be treated right because it is the right thing to do. Instead, he said that if the Negroes aren't well treated the Muslims would become a threat. He urged a change not because it is right but because the world is watching this country. Kennedy is wrong because his motivation is wrong" (Cone, 1991, p. 113). But by most others, the Birmingham demonstrations were viewed as a success because the world was able to see for themselves the way Blacks were treated in America. Moreover, Kennedy promised to help pass significant Civil Rights legislation; therefore, negative criticism directed towards this event was not well received by any of the participants who sacrificed themselves for the cause.

The events at Birmingham lead to another great demonstration, the March on Washington. This was an organized effort to take the problems of the Black community directly to the nation's capital. However, the SCLC, the

Urban League and the NAACP explained that the demonstration should be planned without any arrests, and in complete co-operation with the federal authorities (Marable, 1984, p. 81). The Kennedy administration supported the March and the event was used to help promote his Civil Rights bill that was before Congress (p. 81). Malcolm X also supported Civil Rights legislation even though he was highly critical of the March. Martin Luther King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech and called the March the greatest demonstration of freedom in American history (p. 82). There were at least 170,000 Blacks and 30,000 Whites that marched that day (Muse, 1968, p. 1). According to Benjamin Muse, "The March on Washington was to millions a revelation. Many white Americans, sitting before television sets, saw Negroes walking with dignity and heard the words of polished Negro spokesmen for the first time. The March presented an illuminating cross-section of the Negro minority and a dramatis personae of the great movement agitating it." (p. 9).

But when so called radicals such as Malcolm X examined the March, they could find nothing positive that came from it. While Civil Rights leaders were basking in the successful display of black and white unity, Malcolm called the march a "Chump's March" and a "Farce on Washington" (Cone, 1991, p. 113). According to Malcolm X, "The march was subsidized by white liberals and stage-managed by President Kennedy. The President and the Administration in Washington should get an Academy Award for directing the best show of the century" (Cone, 1991, p. 113). On October 19 1963, Malcolm X told an Amsterdam News reporter, "The Negroes spent a lot of money, had a good time, and enjoyed a real circus or carnival type

atmosphere. Now that the show is over the black masses are still without land, without jobs, and without homes. . . . Their Christian churches are still being bombed, their innocent little girls murdered. So what did the March on Washington accomplish? Nothing." (NYAN, 1963, p.7).

Another event that had a an effect on the Civil Rights movement was the assassination of President Kennedy on November, 22 1963. On December 1, 1963 Malcolm X was asked what he thought of the Kennedy Assassination at a Black Muslim rally in New York. After the address, Malcolm X made his now-famous characterization of the Kennedy assassination as an instance of the "chickens coming home to roost (Cone, 1991, p. 184)." Malcolm X was referring to the climate of hate that existed in America, however the media did not see it the same way. The New York Times read: "Malcolm X Scores U.S. and Kennedy: Likens Slaying to 'Chickens Coming Home To Roost.'" Not only did this statement further alienate Malcolm X from the mainstream of the Civil Rights movement, it also gave Elijah Muhammed justification to suspend his most popular and most influential spokesperson from the Nation of Islam for ninety days (Cone, 1991, p. 185).

Malcolm X lost much of the credibility he worked so hard to achieve with non-Muslims with the statements he made about these particular events. His statements about the Birmingham demonstrations made every Black person who witnessed those events feel like a moral idiot, spiritually illiterate and intellectually stupid (Lomax, 1963, p. 74). According to Louis Lomax, "Martin Luther King -- and we know his strengths and as well as his weaknesses--triggered Birmingham. This nation's Negroes were with him. If he was a 'chump' so were we all" (Lomax, 1963, p. 74). It took months of hard

work for Malcolm X to regain the ground he lost among non-Muslim Negroes with the statement he made about Martin Luther King. Furthermore, Malcolm X's criticism of the Kennedy administration offended many Black Civil Rights leaders because they saw the current administration as allies of the Black community. Any criticism of the Kennedy administration (and its involvement with the Civil Rights movement) was seen as an attack, and as damaging to the advancement of Civil Rights. As a member of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X could not support these events or the people who organized them, because their efforts were planned steps towards integration. Since Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam did not participate in any Civil Rights events, (at this time) in which many people sacrificed their lives for the cause of their community, they both appeared to be unsympathetic or unwilling to help the Black community to improve their condition in America which the Nation of Islam had preached criticized so vehemently in its preaching.

C. SETTING OF THE SPEECH

Events such as the Birmingham demonstrations, the March on Washington, and the Kennedy assassination greatly influenced Malcolm X's philosophy and were also among some of the reasons why he gave the speech "The Ballot or the Bullet." On that night of April 3, 1964 Malcolm X and Louis Lomax shared the platform at the meeting sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) on "The Negro Revolt-What Comes Next?" Malcolm X's answer had the directness his audience expected: "The Ballot or the Bullet." According to an article printed in the *Militant* on April 13, 1964, an audience of 2,000 which included many Whites heard the two speakers share

their ideas about the plight of Black America. The article also stated that the discussion was a symposium, not a debate, and the speeches tended to complement each other rather than pose sharp or irreconcilable differences. The first speaker was Louis Lomax, whose talk was in line with CORE doctrine and was well received by the audience (Breitman, 1972, p. 23). Malcolm X's talk got even more applause, although it differed in fundamental respects from anything ever said at a CORE meeting (p. 23). Core was actually a pioneer in non-violence resistance techniques which included sit-ins (Muse, 1968, p. 22). One of the goals of CORE was integration for the Black community. If this is compared to Malcolm X's speech it is evident that the people associated with Core did not have exactly the same goals as Malcolm X. This speech is in fact considered one of Malcolm X's more militant statements and is characterized as a sharp rebuke to the goals of the CORE organization; however, if we look at the speech more closely, we will discover that there are elements in it that coincide with the beliefs of CORE and other relatively moderate organizations.

This thesis will identify the major themes of the speech, which are: The enemy and the conspiracy, Human rights, American themes leaders and violence, and the concept of unity. These themes are central to Malcolm X's speech because they help him to highlight the problems Black Americans were facing, the causes of these problems, the actions that were necessary to solve their problems, and justifications for any and all actions that could be taken by any member of the Black community to move toward solving these problems.

D. CONFRONTATIONAL AND MANAGERIAL ASPECTS AND THEMES OF THE SPEECH

At first glance, the themes in this speech may appear confrontational; however, a closer examination shows that these themes have elements of both confrontational and managerial rhetoric. All of the themes support and justify violence in one way or another, at least as an ultimate recourse; nevertheless, in each theme Malcolm X also supported the use of the system first (a managerial approach) to help gain Civil Rights for the Black community. The endorsement of violence may appear confrontational, but from another point of view, one that is not unquestioningly committed to "non-violence," the system may in fact require the use of violence in order to achieve justice. Thinking of violence as a strategy necessitated and rewarded by the system would have made Malcolm X's approach appear managerial. In this way, Malcolm X's major themes can also be interpreted and categorized as managerial rhetoric.

Thus, while the rhetoric produced by Malcolm X may be interpreted as confrontational, a closer investigation allows us to interpret the rhetoric also from the opposite view point. Now that we have looked at the background, let us turn to the speech itself. The main focus will be on the managerial and confrontational aspects of the speech within the major themes. There will be a general analysis of the major themes which permeate the entire speech, and I will identify additional major themes which are emphasized in different parts of the speech. In my analysis, I will also discuss the rhetorical strategy used by Malcolm X within the framework for Black revolutionary rhetoric developed by Arthur L. Smith in his book Rhetoric of Black

Revolution. Hopefully this will lead to a more complex and illuminating interpretation of his speech

1. BALLOT OR BULLET

The Ballot or the Bullet was widely perceived as a confrontational statement which stirred up many strong feelings in mainstream America. What contributed to this effect in no small measure was the way Malcolm X used historical figures, current events, and certain aspects of American history to bolster many of his ideas. The title of Malcolm X's speech alluded to a speech that President Abraham Lincoln made on May 19, 1865, and in which he stated that the ballot is stronger than the bullet (Paragraph 36). For Abraham Lincoln the bullet was not an option. But Malcolm X took Lincoln's statement and made it a radical one. Malcolm X thought the bullet was a legitimate and a necessary option for Black America. In fact, Malcolm X said to everyone, "It's got to be the ballot or the bullet. If you're afraid to use an expression like that, you should get on out of the country, you should get back in the cotton patch, you should get back in the alley" (Paragraph 13). The words that Malcolm X used such as "we're going to be forced either to use the ballot or the bullet," and "1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed," suggest that there might be some very violent confrontations ahead within the country (Paragraphs 5, 9, 13). The threat of violence made Malcolm X and his speech confrontational.

However, in his first inaugural address, Abraham Lincoln stated, "If by the mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority of any clearly written constitutional right, it might, in any moral point of view justify revolution" (Fehrenbacher, 1989, p. 219). In this statement, Lincoln

was merely echoing the Declaration of Independence. Even though Lincoln rather would have used the ballot, he nevertheless supported, in accord with American revolutionary history, the use of violence if any group of people's constitutional rights were being denied to them. Lincoln supported violence as long as it was justified by prior oppression.

From this larger historical perspective, Malcolm X's speech, like Lincoln's, justifies any violent action taken to ensure that each individual would not be denied god given rights. Still, when Malcolm X referred to the phrase "The Ballot or the Bullet," he was primarily advocating a peaceful method to achieve his objectives just like many Americans had done in the past. Yet, at the same time he also made it clear that if people can not achieve their goals in a peaceful manner, then violent actions must be taken, just as Americans had also done in the course of creating this country (Paragraphs 5, 13, 24, 38, 39, 40).

In 1964 the government at every level was depriving the members of the Black community of their rights; therefore, Malcolm X argued that 1964 would be an explosive year, not due to any of his actions or to the actions of the Black community, but because of the government's actions and all the broken promises made by politicians that used the Black community to get into office. Even from Lincoln's perspective on revolution, violence would have been justified because broken promises in effect denied minorities the use of constitutional rights to equality in the political process and beyond. As Malcolm X said in the speech, "the politicians are coming into the black community and making promises which they do not intend to keep. As they

nourish these dissatisfactions, it can only lead to one thing an explosion" (Paragraph 5).

Malcolm X took a managerial stance by encouraging Black people to use the system to make a change peacefully; however, if promises were made and not kept, he *predicted* that 1964 would be an explosive year. 1964 was an election year and the current administration relied heavily on the Black community's vote as they did in 1960. Nevertheless, significant Civil Rights legislation had not been passed. Malcolm X reminded the Black community of all the promises that were made and broken by the Democratic party and the necessary action that should be taken if such a betrayal continued.

Malcolm X slowly built his argument when he said "If we don't do something soon, I think you'll have to agree that we're going to be forced either to use the ballot or the bullet. It's one or the other in 1964. It isn't that time is running out--time has run out! 1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed. Why? It's also a political year. It's the year when all of the white politicians will be back in the so-called Negro community jiving you and me for some votes. The year when all of the white political crooks will be right back in your and my community with their false promises, building up our hopes for a let down" (Paragraph 5).

These statements suggest that if some drastic and significant changes are not made in the 1964 political arena there may be violence of scope that has never been seen before in America. Thus Malcolm X asserted that "the type of black man on the scene today. . . . just doesn't intend to turn the other cheek any longer, the false promises of the politicians, which result in rising expectations, will lead to an explosion." In his view, that explosion would be

justified because the "22 million black people are the victims of Democracy." (Paragraphs 5, 9, 13). Malcolm X constantly emphasized a need for immediate action either through the political system or through violent means. Malcolm argued that President Johnson should take a stronger stance for Civil Rights and should support some of the needs of the Black community as a way of avoiding violence. Emphasizing the need for immediate action demonstrated how serious the problems were and how the friction between the two sides and the frustration of the Black community might lead to violence, which *neither* side wanted.

One could of course argue that the constant threat of violence throughout Malcolm X's speech was a political ploy to possibly speed up the process to pass Civil Rights legislation. From such a perspective, the bullet would not have been an actual option for Malcolm X. It was not realistic to assume that every Black person in America was going to revolt. Most Black Americans were working within the system to help bring about change in American society. People who participated in the Civil Rights movement practiced the non-violence approach. Even though Black people were subjected to violence, they rarely acted out in the same manner against the government. More importantly, it was not realistic to expect that Black people could have succeeded in using violence to achieve their goals. Most likely, Black people would have suffered ultimate defeat if they had collectively acted out in any violent manner, given their numbers and lack of weapons.

Malcolm X repeatedly argued that the White community was willing to cooperate with the Black community *only* when violence was a serious

possibility. Only when the White community was threatened in some way, were significant changes made. This could account for the "violent" rhetoric he and many African-Americans have produced throughout the years. One of the typical rhetorical strategies of African-American activists which Malcolm X used was that of invoking "revolution." Some people believed that Black people could neither be assimilated into a basically racist society, nor could they obtain their fully deserved freedom, humanity, and a good life by withdrawing into all-black communities (Golden, 1971, p. 44). According to this view Black people had seen this nation become wealthy due to their labor and concluded that if they could not achieve their goal by complete separation or assimilation, then a new society must be formed (p. 44). This rhetoric of revolution argues that only by removing power from those who have created the racist society, and giving it to those who can use it properly can Black people ever reach their goals (p. 44).

The message for Black people is that the use of violence, either as civil disobedience or in the form of other coercive methods, is legitimate and necessary (Golden, 1971, p. 45). The message to White people is that it is their choice whether the revolution will be violent or not (p. 45). The threat of violence would more likely influence the White community to stop discriminating against the Black community, so that changes could be made without the use of violence (p. 45).

But Black people were becoming more and more disenchanted with the apparent ineffectiveness of the non-violence approach. In this light, Malcolm X may have been using people's dissatisfactions with the approach to help break up the logjam in Congress in order to pass significant Civil

Rights legislation. Even though Black people as a group would not have won in a violent confrontation, the possibility of violence embarrassed the United States internationally, and caused major problems within certain parts of the country, especially the South. With the threat of violence, Malcolm X rhetorically set out to force the hand of the current administration. The reason why there was a legitimate threat of violence even if the ballot was used was because the elected officials were not keeping any of their promises made to the Black community.

2. THE ENEMY AND THE CONSPIRACY

The broken promises, the contradictory actions taken by some members of government, the flat out refusal for American society to recognize the rights of Black people, and America's history led many members of the Black community to think that there was a concentrated effort by members of the government to continue to deny the Black community their rights. As a result many members of the Black community, including Malcolm X, believed there was a governmental (and societal) conspiracy to continue the exploitation of Black people in America. He pointed to the people who he thought were involved in the conspiracy, the manner in which the conspiracy was being conducted, and the person who was ultimately responsible for the exploitation of the Black community.

Malcolm X talked about many of the hypocritical actions taken and the policies implemented by the United States government that denied justice and equality to Blacks. Many Black revolutionists claim that the United States constitution was not intended to include Black people (Smith, 1970b, p. 52). Many Black revolutionists argue that racism is America's basic hypocrisy,

because it contradicts all of the myths handed down from the founding fathers (p. 53). The United States promotes itself as the safe haven for democracy, yet it does not include all of its citizens in the process. As Malcolm X stated in his speech, "If you and I were Americans, there'd be no problem. Those Honkies that just got off the boat, they're already Americans; Polacks are already Americans; the Italian refugees are already Americans. Everything that came out of Europe, every blue-eyed thing, is already an American. And as long as you and I have been over here, we aren't Americans yet. . . . Being born here in America doesn't make you an American. Why, if birth made you American, you wouldn't need any legislation, you wouldn't need any amendments to the Constitution, you wouldn't be face with civil right filibustering in Washington, D.C., right now. They don't have to pass civil rights legislation to make a Polack an American" (Paragraph 8).

Malcolm X identified the problem and the cause of the problem. It was important for him to identify a common enemy that all of Black America could easily unite against. Black people have come to distrust the people who pervade their economic and political life. Using this distrust of White America, African-American rhetoricians such as Malcolm X have shown White America to be the source of their problems (Smith, 1970b, p. 50, 52).

Malcolm X identified the enemy as White America. He took an overtly confrontational stance when he blamed the United States government, the Democratic party leadership, the White race and more specifically Lyndon B. Johnson for the perpetuating the exploitation, degradation, and oppression of the Black community. He thus attacked the

power structure of the government and advocated removing some political officials from office. He argued that the party that Black people voted for to protect their interest was inherently working against them. Arthur Smith (1970b) calls this particular strategy of revolutionary rhetoric "objectification." Objectification is the use of language to direct the grievances of a particular group toward another collective body such as a nation, political party, or race (p. 29). This strategy is used to show that a certain group is responsible for the injustices that another group has to suffer. By targeting the United States government, its representatives, and the White race, Malcolm X demonstrates that the problems that Black people are facing are not going to be solved easily and may not be solved peacefully.

Detailing his indictment of "White America," he first blamed the Democratic party for not passing any kind of significant Civil Rights legislation to help ensure that Blacks would receive equal rights. He believed that significant Civil Rights legislation could have been passed already, because the Democrats basically controlled the government. Malcolm X told the audience that the House of Representatives had 257 Democrats to only 177 Republicans. Democrats almost controlled two thirds of the House. In the Senate there were 67 Democrats to only 33 Republicans (Paragraph 12). Malcolm X claimed that the Northern Democrats blamed the Southern Democrats (Dixiecrats) for not passing significant legislation because the Dixiecrats would help filibuster any kind of Civil Rights legislation. He even identified Democratic Senator Richard Brevard Russell of Georgia as heading the Civil Rights filibuster.

With this indictment of the part of "White America" that is presumed to be most friendly to Black aspirations, Malcolm X introduced the idea of a conspiracy against the Black race. He carefully plotted out the actions of the Democratic party and demonstrated that the government had always been joined in a concentrated effort to deny Black people their constitutional rights. By showing why he is justified in having no faith in the government, the black revolutionist is capable of contending that the government is engaged in a conspiracy. Many African-American rhetoricians have used this theme to show the contradictory nature of the actions of their government: White politicians are playing a game to suppress Blacks by saying one thing and doing another (Smith, 1970b, p. 58).

In 1964, there were more than enough examples to show that the United States had two different policies for Whites and Blacks. In claiming there was a conspiracy against Black people, some felt violence might be needed to counteract these schemes.

Malcolm X argued that the Democratic party was knowingly and willingly preventing any kind of Civil Rights legislation from being passed, but he also presented a plan to end this stalemate by means of the political process. While the Northern Democrats promised to pass significant legislation for equal rights, the Dixiecrats were filibustering to prevent this legislation from being brought to the floor (Paragraph 12). The reason why this was allowed to go on was based on the power structure of the government. Malcolm X argued that this structure allowed the Dixiecrats to control the government and the reason why they had that power to obstruct justice was that they came from states where voting rights legislation had

been violated. In order to develop this solution he presents a more detailed analysis of the problem: "The Dixiecrats in Washington D.C. control key committees within the government and the reason why they control these key committees is because they have seniority. The reason why they have seniority is because they come from states where Blacks can not vote," he declared. The conclusion, stark in 1964, is in accord more with our own contemporary understanding of Constitutional law: "This is not even a government that's based on democracy. It is not a government that is made up of representatives of the people. Half of the people in the South can't even vote. . . . Half of the senators and congressmen who occupy these key positions in Washington D.C., are there illegally, are there unconstitutionally" (Paragraph 15).

Malcolm X attacked the heart of the Democratic party when he advocated removing anybody who was in office that came from states where voting rights had been violated. But note, he was advocating the use of the system to take action against the individuals who were in office though they were not elected by the people as a whole: "These Senators and Congressmen actually violate the constitutional amendments that guarantee the people of that particular state or county the right to vote. The constitution itself has within it the machinery to expel any representative from a state where the voting rights of the people are violated. . . . In fact, when you expel them, you don't need new legislation, because they will be replaced by black representatives from counties and districts where the Black man is in the majority, not in the minority" (Paragraph 17). But, according to Malcolm X, if this had happened the key Dixiecrats would have lost their seats and the

Democratic party would have lost power. The conclusion is that, had they lost power, the Black community interest would have been better served, and Civil Rights legislation would not have been needed. So it was in the best interest of the Democratic party to keep the Dixiecrats in power in order to maintain the ascendancy of their party at the expense of Black people (Paragraph 17).

This is not to say that the Democrats would have necessarily lost seats to the Republican party, although that was a possibility borne out by subsequent events. But, the Democrats most certainly would have lost seniority, and without seniority, they would have lost control over key committees within the government. In turn, their power and influence would have drastically decreased.

Malcolm X went even further and indicted the government hierarchy, the current administration under President Lyndon B. Johnson. Malcolm X referred to President Johnson as a "Southern Cracker" and a "Tricky Blue Eyed Liberal." He believed that Johnson could not be trusted (Paragraphs 11, 32). He attacked Johnson for not denouncing the Dixiecrats and for not putting in more effort to pass any type of Civil Rights legislation. He made Lyndon B. Johnson the head villain against Black people.

This rhetorical strategy of revolutionary rhetoric is called "vilification," which is the use of language to degrade an opponents' person, actions, or ideas (Smith, 1970b, p. 26). In using this strategy, the rhetorician wants the audience to disapprove of the representative for the opposition. This is done by exposing corruption, inefficiencies, lies and injustice (p. 27). One way in which Malcolm X exposed the duplicity of the administration was by pointing

out that Johnson worked closely with Senator Richard Russell, the Democrat leading the filibuster against Civil Rights legislation (Paragraph 12). Malcolm X claimed that Johnson would be responsible if violence were to erupt in the United States (Paragraph 11, 12): "If he's (Lyndon B. Johnson) for civil rights, let him go in there right now and declare himself. Let him go in there and denounce the Southern branch of his party. Let him go in there right now and take a moral stand--right now, not later. . . .If he waits too long he will be responsible for letting a condition develop in this country which will create a climate that will bring seeds up out of the ground with vegetation on the end of them looking like something these people never dreamt of" (Paragraph 59; see also paragraphs 11, 12).

Even though some observers argued that Malcolm X was attacking the government inappropriately, from Malcolm X's perspective, he was attacking the institutions that could and should, but did not stop the exploitation and degradation of the Black community. The person that is ultimately responsible was the President of the United States. The President sets the political and social agenda of the country. Malcolm X felt the President was not doing enough to help pass Civil Rights legislation; this showed that President was not completely committed to ending the exploitation of the Black community politically, economically, and socially. Thus Malcolm X began to question the sincerity of President Johnson and the Democratic party and the strategy they used in order to obtain the Black community's votes (Paragraph 19).

The Civil Rights movement was making little progress at the time of the speech, with no clear end in sight for the struggle. Civil Rights legislation

was still being used as a political issue by the politicians to obtain the Black vote while at the same time blocking any kind of meaningful legislation that would have helped that community to secure its rights. As Malcolm X said, "Everyone who's filibustering is a Senator--that's the government. Everyone who's finagling in Washington, D.C., is the government. You don't have anybody putting blocks in your path but people who are a part of the government. The same government that you go abroad to fight for and die for is the government that is in a conspiracy to deprive you of your voting rights, deprive you of your economic opportunities, deprive you of decent housing, deprive you of decent education. You don't need to go to the employer alone, it is the government itself, the government of America. . . . " Malcolm called it a "government conspiracy," a "hypocrisy in disguise" and said that "democracy and the government has failed the Black man" (Paragraph 21). The leader of any organization is ultimately responsible for the actions taken by any of its members. Therefore, the Democratic party, President Lyndon B. Johnson, and the United States government must take blame for the continuance of the exploitation and degradation of Black people in America.

Even though these passages may be characterized as confrontational, they can also be viewed as expressing a managerial stance, since Malcolm X was here suggesting a peaceful way to help pass significant Civil Rights legislation. In fact, he claimed that if the existing political system had just followed its own already existing rules, such legislation would not even have been needed. According to Malcolm X, such a compliance would have put more Black people in office. He challenged the system which gives politicians

their power; he wanted to take this illegitimate power away legally and ethically. In his mind, this could have sent many more Black representatives to Washington, D.C. If this had happened the Black communities' concerns would have been recognized and their interest would have been better served.

Malcolm X knew that the Dixiecrats (or anyone else) would not be expelled from politics for the violation of voters' rights, but he wanted Blacks to be prepared to take the very serious actions that might be necessary if their needs and demands were not being addressed and met by their elected officials. The first serious action would have been to hold their elected official accountable to represent the Black community as promised. If the elected officials did not represent the Black community to their fullest, the Black community would have to elect a new person into office. If the new elected officials conducted themselves in the same manner as the previous official and there still was a perceived effort by the government and members of society to deny the Black community their Civil Rights, violent means would become necessary to achieve equal rights. If these actions were not to be taken, then the government would continue to exploit and degrade the Black community.

3. HUMAN RIGHTS

It was quite clear to Malcolm X that the Black community had taken every legal step within the United States in order to achieve Civil Rights, but their biggest obstacle was the institution that was supposed to be helping them, the United States government. He felt that the political system within the United States inherently worked against the Black community. He

therefore sought a new political arena where Black people could succeed. This political arena was the United Nations. He felt that in order to achieve Civil Rights the Black community (apart from the use of violence) needed some outside help to make the United States live up to their own constitution and to recognize the rights which the world community recognized. Malcolm X proposed that the people of color around the world join with the Black people in America in seeking human rights. Confronted with the combined efforts from all the people of color in the world, the United States would have to concede their demands.

Due to the lack of sufficient progress in the advancement of Civil Rights and the conspiracy he saw against such progress in the United States, Malcolm X wanted to offer a new way to frame and further the fight for Civil Rights. He sought to expand the struggle for Civil Rights in to a struggle for Human Rights (Paragraphs 22, 31, 32, 33). He argued that Human Rights are recognized by every nation in the world and that the United States should be held accountable in the United Nations for violating the rights of Blacks in America. Accordingly, advocated redefining the Civil Rights struggle as a Human Rights struggle because Civil Rights was merely a domestic issue which fell within the jurisdiction of the United States. So when Blacks took their grievance to the government, they were taking their problems to the exact same system which was causing and perpetuating these problems and thus could not realistically expect redress: "When you expand the Civil Rights struggle to the level of Human rights, you can then take the case of the Black man in this country before the nations in the UN.³ You can take it before the General Assembly. You can take Uncle Sam before a world court. But the

only level you can do it is on the level of Human rights. Civil Rights keeps you under his restrictions, under his jurisdiction. . . . human rights are something you were born with. . . . Human rights are the rights that are recognized by all nations of this earth (Paragraph 33). When you take your case to Washington, D.C., you're taking it to the criminal who's responsible; it's like running from the wolf to the fox. They're in cahoots together" (Paragraph 35).

This part of the speech can be considered confrontational because the expansion of the Civil Rights issue to a Human Rights concern could have been seen to invite outside intervention from the United Nations in an issue that the United States considered purely domestic. This kind of outside intervention could be seen as a violation of sovereignty and possibly leading to a possibility of violence as it has in many other countries. If there had been wide spread discussion of outside intervention it would have embarrassed the United States, the so called "leader of the free world," in the United Nations, a institution in whose establishment the United States was centrally involved. The United States had taken such a strong moral stance against Human rights violations in other countries around the world that Malcolm X's effort would have deeply humiliated the United States by putting them on the same level as those countries they had indicted in the past, especially the USSR (as it then was), with which they were engaged in a "Cold War."

Raising such a prospect was certainly a confrontational strategy yet, this step was also managerial in a number of ways. Malcolm X was advocating using the system, which the United States played a major role in establishing. In fact, the United Nations had faced this issue before. Almost

twenty years earlier, on October 23, 1947 the NAACP submitted a petition of grievances to the United Nations calling attention to the long history of cultural deprivation suffered by Blacks in America (Berman, 1970, p. 65). However the United Nations refused to investigate.

Still, the United States government was quite embarrassed by the adverse publicity it received from the NAACP petition and Attorney General Tom Clark remarked that he was "humiliated" that a group of Americans could not find equitable treatment at home (Berman, 1970, p. 66). Even though the involvement of the United Nations might cause great difficulty and embarrassment for the United States, Malcolm X here advocated a *peaceful* method to help bring about a solution. Military action would and could not have been used by the United Nations because the United States was critically involved in its formation and it did not have a standing armed force under its own control. Most importantly, what Malcolm X was advocating was an action that has been taken before by an organization (NAACP) that always worked well within the laws of the United States.

Malcolm X saw such an expansion of the Civil Rights issue into on of Human Rights as an utmost necessity for the Black community. Early in his speech, Malcolm X demonstrated to the Black community that they already had a significant amount of power within the United States. The Black community had the decisive bloc of votes that determined which party had control in Congress and helped put the Johnson administration in the White House (Paragraphs 9, 10). It was important to show Black America that even though the Black community had suffered at the hands of the United States government, together the Black community can have a considerable amount

of power in the United States. Even though the Black community was a minority in the United States, world wide the people of color were the majority and it was important to put the United States before a world stage where the people of color could exert their influence and overcome the injustices committed by the White world. Forging new alliances, the Black community would have been able to take their plight to the world community and have the United States judged in that forum. Malcolm X believed that the Black community could win in the halls of the United Nations, because African-Americans would have the people of color throughout the world supporting their cause. People of color in the 1950s and 1960s were winning battles and wars against traditional White powers, such as France and the United States. Korea, French Vietnam, and Cuba were recent vivid examples of people of color winning battles against supposedly more powerful White Nations. Linking people of color into a world wide coalition would greatly increase their chances of success.

4. AMERICAN THEMES AND LEADERS, AND THE JUSTIFICATION OF VIOLENCE

Along with his indictment of the denial of Human Rights the denial of freedom Malcolm X presents the notion of justified violence. He often, argued vehemently for "revolution," and as he repeatedly pointed out, revolutions, including the heralded American Revolution, are never "non-violent" (Condit & Lucaites, 1993b, p. 302). We have already seen how he made this point by relating his speech to the rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln. By using this and other themes from American history Malcolm employs part of the strategy of "mythication." One aspect of mythication is the use of

language suggesting the sanction of supra-rational forces; the agitator often attempts to use religious symbolism in an effort to demonstrate the righteousness of his cause (Smith, 1970b, p. 34).

The second aspect of "mythication" is the use of history itself as an instrument of persuasion (Smith, 1970b, p. 36). The black rhetor wants to demonstrate that his agitation is sanctioned by history, because great agitators of the past have sought to establish justice, create equality, and build dignity (p. 36). Briefly, Malcolm X refers to Human Rights as God Given Rights in an attempt to make a clear distinction between Civil Rights and Human Rights (Paragraph 33). Civil Rights are man made and is determined by each individual country. However, each individual is born with Human Rights and therefore, it supersedes Civil Rights. Malcolm X did not invoke any kind of religious language in his speech and thus did not rely on the first aspect of "mythication." However, he does use historical symbolism to support his beliefs. Malcolm X demonstrated how the Black community's actions were not only supported by world history, but more specifically by United States history, and he alluded to many specific examples in order to emphasize his points. For instance, throughout the speech, Malcolm X frequently stated the phrase "liberty or death" which originated from John Patrick Henry and his call to arms against Britain in 1775. In order to constitute themselves as a new and independent nation, Anglo-American colonists had to construct a set of shared commitments (Condit & Lucaites, 1993a, p. 40). The values they adopted in this process were revolutionary in two senses: they justified revolutionary violence, and they consisted of distinctively new ways of speaking about political community (p. 40). Malcolm X was doing the exact

same thing in his speech. Malcolm X was producing a rhetoric that justified violence and at the same time aimed at changing the political community by including Black people.

In many ways, Malcolm X was comparing the plight of Black people in America in the 1960s to that of the colonists during the American Revolution. Malcolm X was almost making the same statements to Black people in the 1960s that John Patrick Henry made in his speech to the Virginia Convention of delegates to the Continental Congress on March 23, 1775.

Malcolm X felt that every nation, race, or religion had a right to defend themselves if they were subjugated to unjustified violence and if the government sworn protect them is not doing so, then violence becomes justified for self-defense. On May 21, 1964 on his arrival to New York after his visit in Africa and the Middle East, Malcolm X was asked about his support for the Black community to use violence (Rummel, 1988, p. 18). Malcolm X answered by pointing out what he believed were contradictions in the way the press - mainly the white press - writes about the issue of self-defense in the case of racial attacks (p. 18). It is considered normal for whites to buy guns for their self-defense in the case of racial attacks. It is considered normal for whites to buy guns for their self-defense, he says, but when blacks take up arms to protect themselves against lynch mobs, it is viewed as a potentially dangerous situation (p. 18). Malcolm X stated, "I'm for justice. When the law fails to protect Negroes from whites' attacks, then those Negroes should use arms, if necessary, to defend themselves" (p. 18).

The Black community was being provoked and had not yet acted out in a violent manner; however, according to Malcolm X an explosion was about to erupt because of the lack of governmental protection that was being provided to the Black community. The Black community was justified when they tried to exercise their rights. Since the law supported their actions anyone who tried to deny the Black community their rights were the criminals. Malcolm X said, "Whenever you are going after something that is yours, you are within your legal rights to lay claim to it. And anyone who puts forth any effort to deprive you of that which is yours, is breaking the law, is a criminal. Whenever you demonstrate against segregation. . . . the law is on your side, and anyone who stands in the way is not the law any longer. They are breaking the law, they are not representatives of the law. Any time you demonstrate against segregation and a man has the audacity to put a police dog on you, kill that dog, kill him" (Paragraphs 28, 29). "The force who opposes you in your desire to carry out the law are the police and they provoke the violence of resistance. If people do not want to see this kind of action taken, it is up to the government and its citizens to prevent it by reigning in the police" (Paragraph 29).

Later in the speech, Malcolm X commented about the ownership of rifles and shotguns and said, "The only thing that I've ever said is that in areas where the government has proven itself either unwilling or unable to defend the lives and the property of Negroes, it's time for Negroes to defend themselves. . . . If the white man doesn't want the black man buying rifles and shotguns, then let the government do its job. That's All" (Paragraph 55). It is clear Malcolm X did not advocate violence for the sake of violence;

nevertheless, violence may be necessary for Black people to defend themselves. White people's refusal to acknowledge the right of blacks to defend themselves against persons who violated their humanity was perhaps the main reason that Malcolm X could never accept Martin Luther King Jr.'s idea of non-violence and its capacity to prick the moral conscience of whites (Cone, 1994, p. 173).

Just like numerous members of the Virginia Convention of delegates many Black and White leaders in the 1960s believed that Black people could and would achieve civil rights in a peaceful manner. However, Malcolm X talked about the history of violent actions against blacks and around the world that the United States government supported, as John Patrick Henry did in 1775 about the transgressions of the British government. Malcolm X reminded the people about some of the violent acts the United States had been involved in around the world like the Korean War, and the war with Japan (Paragraphs 38-40). In paragraphs twenty eight and twenty nine, Malcolm X pointed to the common horrid experience that most Black people had with the police when they try to exercise their god given rights. In paragraph five through twenty eight, Malcolm X very carefully described how Black people took all of the necessary means to achieve civil rights by using the political system and how the needs of Black people were still being ignored by the government. As John Patrick Henry said to the Virginia Convention of Delegates, Malcolm X said to Black people: the government is giving us no choice. If the government is not going to recognize our civil rights in the upcoming 1964 presidential election, then we must make them recognize our rights with the bullet.

In his speech Henry had argued "that this Colony be immediately put into a posture of defense" and a committee draft a plan "for embodying, arming, and disciplining such a Number of Men as may be sufficient for that purpose." "A well-regulated Militia composed of Gentlemen and Yeomen is the natural Strength and only Security of a free Government" (Mayer, 1991, p. 243).⁴ Even though there were still those individuals who claimed the conflict between Great Britain and the Colonies could be resolved without violence, but he was not going to take that course. During his speech, Henry claimed it was only natural for people to shut their eyes to the painful truth, but he wasn't going to. Henry argued that Great Britain should be judged by its past actions (Mayer, 1991, p. 244).

As Malcolm X did later, John Patrick Henry very carefully reviewed the dispute between the two sides, and pointed out some of the violent actions that Great Britain had committed against the Colonies and claimed there was no longer any room for hope; the colonies no longer had a choice (Mayer, 1991, pp. 244-245). At the end of the speech Henry cried out "Give me Liberty or Give me Death." With the statement of "liberty or death," Henry was making the statement that he was willing to sacrifice himself for this cause and he was urging others to join him in that attitude.

Just like John Patrick Henry, Malcolm X emphasize that he would rather die to achieve civil rights than be a second class citizen. Nonetheless, people can interpret this part of the speech as confrontational because Malcolm X is advocating violence to bring a change within the American society. By invoking the phrase liberty or death, Malcolm X is suggesting that people may have to die in order for Blacks to obtain their Human rights.

However, John Patrick Henry can be considered even more radical and confrontational than Malcolm X. For John Patrick Henry, negotiations were not an option for the colonist when he gave his speech. The only option for John Patrick Henry was that of war. Unlike John Patrick Henry, Malcolm X still wanted to achieve his goals in a peaceful, managerial manner, even though violence was still an option. Nevertheless, Malcolm X demonstrated how far he was willing to go help achieve human rights for Black America, when he invoked the term "Liberty or Death" during his speech.

Along with the theme of revolution, Malcolm X introduced another confrontational theme in his speech. This theme sounded in the phrase "I am not an American. " Frederick Douglass made a similar statement in his Fifth of July speech, given that day in 1852. Frederick Douglass was invited by the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society to give an oration in Corinthian Hall on the Fourth of July. Douglass agreed to give a speech, but insisted that it must be delivered the day after America's Independence Day (McFeely, 1995, p. 172). Statements like this will offend most White Americans and some African-Americans. A lot of people believe if you live in any country a certain amount of respect should be shown to that government and its citizens. Malcolm X was a citizen of the United States and according to many should have given the country the full respect that many people believe it deserves.

But, Black people have faced discrimination in the United States which was supported by the government. Therefore, Black people can not have the same respect, love and admiration for the United States of America, if they are being denied their god given and constitutional rights which the

government supported. Douglass did state in his speech that if only the constitution were interpreted as it ought to be it would be a glorious document of liberty (McFeely, 1995, p. 173).

Frederick Douglass, like Malcolm X, was also viewed as an extremist because he was an abolitionist, a person calling for an end to slavery. In fact he was a radical among abolitionists because he thought more could have been done to free the slaves. Malcolm X refers to him early in his speech when he states, "No, I'm not an American, I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or flag-saluter, or a flag waver no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare" (Paragraph 9).

In his speech, Douglass had said "This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony. Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak today" (McFeely, 1995, p. 172)? Later in the speech Douglass said, "I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July! Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future. Standing with God and the

crushed and bleeding slave on this occasion, I will, in the name of humanity which is outraged, in the name of liberty which is fettered, in the name of the constitution and the Bible, which are disregarded and trampled upon dare to call in question and to denounce, with all the emphasis I can command, everything that serves to perpetuate slavery-the great sin and shame of America!" (Blassingame, 1979, p. 367). Malcolm X and Frederick Douglass made the same argument, which is that Black people unreservedly can not call themselves citizens of the United States if they are not allowed to participate in society on equal terms with everyone else. Both men attacked the United States government as a hypocritical enterprise that does not live up to its values.

As shocking as these statements are, this part of the speech can also be interpreted as being managerial. There is a slim chance by showing all of the harms that the United States government has committed against its citizens and presenting a well thought out and logical response to why the government is wrong for doing so, just maybe the citizens of the country may be forced to rethink their position and change their views. When these statements are examined both of these men were stating plain and simple facts; that they were not fully considered citizens of the United States.⁵ Frederick Douglass was once a slave and was fighting for freedom. The United States considered Black people more as property than as human beings. Malcolm X was fighting for Civil Rights which were being denied by the government. Malcolm X never would had to fight for these rights if he had been fully considered a citizen.

Support for these arguments can be traced to the Declaration of Independence which was written by Thomas Jefferson and others. Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, and many other individuals who have fought for freedom and equal rights refer to this document to demonstrate the hypocrisy of the actions taken by the United States government. The Declaration of Independence was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion (Mayer, 1994, p. 25). Thomas Jefferson and the founding fathers of this country wanted to establish a new government based on the authority of the people (p. 40).

The founding fathers believed that a social contract was made between the government and its citizens, and if the government doesn't live up to its part of the bargain then the people have a right to abandon the broken contract. Malcolm X is only advocating using the same methods and principles which the United States government was founded and still should support. Malcolm X implied throughout his speech that the history of slavery, and many of the atrocities that Blacks have suffered through and continue to endure, gave them the right to abandon the contract. These are the reasons why Malcolm X is trying to transform American society and its values system by bringing the operative values of society into line of its professed values. John Locke, whose ideas helped construct some of the values the United States was founded on claimed that some basic natural rights and duties are to respect life, liberty, and property (Medina, 1990, p. 30). According to Locke, a legitimate government is any government that respects natural rights (p. 38). If this is the case, then there is a general obligation to

obey such a government as long as we openly or tacitly consent to it, provided it does not violate natural rights (p. 38). Given this premise, Blacks did not have to obey the government because the government violated their natural rights. For Locke, ultimate sovereignty resides with the people (popular sovereignty) since, even though civil society was created by a contract, no such contract exists between the people and their government (p. 41). According to Locke, the relationship between the people and their government is fiduciary rather than contractual (p. 41). Therefore, whenever the government betrays their trust, the people have a natural right to change it (Locke, 1980, pp. 77-78). It follows, therefore, that the idea of government by consent involves the natural right to revolution (Medina, 1990, p. 41). Once the government violates the contract, then the citizens have the right to use violence in order to change the government or establish a new government. The United States government has historically betrayed the trust of the Black Community, and as a result it could be argued the Black community had the natural right.

Locke's theory on the "State of War" can also be interpreted to justify any violent actions that Malcolm X argued that Black America has the right to use. Malcolm X believed the American government declared war on Blacks in America; therefore Blacks were justified in using violence or destroying the current system that oppressed them. In fact Locke states, "The state of war is a state of enmity and destruction. . . . it being reasonable and just I should have a right to destroy that which threatens me with destruction; for, by the fundamental law of nature, man being to be preserved as much as possible when all cannot be preserved, the safety of the innocent is to be preferred; and

one may destroy a man who makes war upon him, or has discovered an enmity to his being, for the same reason that he may kill a wolf or a lion, because such men are not under the ties of the common law of reason, have no other rule but that of force and violence, and so may be treated as beasts of prey, those dangerous and noxious creatures that will be sure to destroy him whenever he falls into their power" (Locke, 1952, p. 11). Locke believed that in a "State of War" there is a declared design of force, upon the person of another, where there is no common superior on earth to appeal to for relief, is the state of war; and it is the want of such an appeal that gives a man the right of war even against an aggressor, though he be in society and a fellow subject. Locke claimed that he has a right to kill a thief during the progress of a robbery because the aggressor allows no time to appeal to their common judge, nor the decision of the law, for remedy in a case where the mischief may be irreparable (p. 13). Therefore if someone uses force on another person, then they are in a state of war even if there is a higher authority (p. 13). Malcolm X claims the thief is the United States government who is the higher authority where all citizens can take their complaints to. However, the government along with many of its citizens were willingly committing crimes against the Black community. Therefore, according to Locke, Blacks have the right to destroy whatever and whoever that was trying to destroy them until the aggressors is willing to make peace and repair their wrongs (p. 13). As many Americans believe today, Locke felt the purpose of government is to preserve the property (rights and liberty) of all human beings (p. 71). As of 1964 the government has failed to do so. The government was putting the Black community under their control which put the two sides in a state of

war. According to Locke, if another human being puts someone under their control it would have to be done by force and against the rights of freedom (p. 12). The government was not protecting the property of every human being, consequently, Malcolm X felt the Black community had justification for violence and this was clearly evident and based on some of the theories in which this country was founded on.

Locke's theory about a political society leads to the Declaration of Independence and the formation of this country. The Declaration of Independence states "That all men are created equal. . . . with certain unalienable rights. . . . that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it. . . . prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security." Malcolm X clearly demonstrated that the United States government has not lived up to their part of the contract, so just like the colonies abandoned their contract with the British crown, the Black community had the right to do the same according to Malcolm X.

Malcolm X referred to American history and used common phrases made by very respected historical figures to support the ideas he was advancing and the necessary steps (which included violence) that it may take for Blacks to achieve human rights. Malcolm X refers to Abraham Lincoln,

Frederick Douglass, John Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson, whose ideas were once considered controversial, but became accepted as being moral and correct over time. All of these men were considered radical by many and produced a rhetoric which was ambivalent, which allows for a double interpretation. When the speech is examined closely, Malcolm X consistently repeats these individuals' ideas throughout the text.

Placing himself in proximity to well respected historical figures such as these individuals to support his ideas, Malcolm X attempted to build credibility with his audience, particularly by using the same logic that many White Americans have used in the past to justify their violent actions. Yet, by referring to these famous individuals and their ideas, he possibly may anger mainstream America because they see Malcolm X as an extremist whose ideas are rejected by both Black and White Americans, while Lincoln's, Douglass', John Patrick Henry's, and Thomas Jefferson's ideas and actions are now perceived as noble, just, and an improvement of the American system.

Malcolm X used familiar American phrases to support his arguments, but he also denounced American history and so at the same time his invocation of the past could be perceived as an attack on some very notable leaders. For example, when Malcolm X refers to the "American Dream" as the "American Nightmare" this could have been interpreted as an attack on certain Civil Rights leaders, especially Martin Luther King Jr. and the United States as a whole. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington in 1963. Twenty thousand people gathered in Washington, D.C., to sing hymns and march in support of racial understanding and greater civil rights legislation, and Malcolm X watched the

understanding and greater civil rights legislation, and Malcolm X watched the demonstration from the sidelines and called the march a wasted effort (Rummel, 1988, p. 148). Malcolm X told reporters: "I don't believe we're going to overcome by singing. If you're going to get yourself a .45 and start singing We Shall Overcome, I'm with you" (p. 148). In this speech, Martin Luther King claimed that White and Black people can work and live together in harmony. The March on Washington was supposed to be a great success in the battle for Civil Rights. The rhetorical strategy that Martin Luther King Jr. used and which Malcolm X opposed, was of calling for "assimilation." This strategy emerged from an assumption that the differences between the White and Black community are not inherent and thus inevitable, and the way out of the current predicament were the seeking of freedom, humanity, and the good life through assimilation into the United States society (Golden, 1971, p. 43). Some of the sub-strategies utilized included the invocation of the brotherhood of man within the Christian church; of equality of citizens of the United States as proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution; and of equality to be affirmed through productive citizenship (p. 43). Desegregation and integration are part of this strategy, however it does not necessarily rely upon a literal interpretation of the metaphor of America's melting pot (p. 43). This particular strategy has been the most commonly used and most widely supported throughout American history. Nevertheless, Malcolm X continued to argue that it had never worked and a that new strategy was needed.

He maintained that there had not been any progress in the Civil Rights movement, or any change in the lifestyle of the Black community after the

observed that White People and Black people have two different histories in America. White people came to this country seeking political and religious independence. White people left an oppressive government to enter into a government of freedom; a place which has been called the land of opportunity. By contrast, Black people were physically forced to leave a place of freedom to be transported to a place of oppression. The "American Dream" is that every person can achieve a certain amount of success, express his or her political and religious belief in America, no matter what his or her race, religion, or gender. In claiming to see the "American Nightmare" Malcolm X may have been referring to the two races' very different past in this country. He was also saying that Blacks were never given the same opportunities as Whites. In fact, Whites were given many of these opportunities at the expense of Blacks. Black people have been victimized in this country more so than members of any other race; therefore, Malcolm X envisioned a nightmare. This statement offended many individuals but at the same time Malcolm X effectively used American ideals to support his claims that Blacks should be treated equally.

5. UNITY

In order for the Black community to achieve their goal of equality through the political process or through violence a united front would have been needed. The Black community was facing political and economic discrimination and was at times subjugated to unnecessary violent attacks which were all condoned by the government. If the leaders of the Civil Rights movement would not allow people who differed from the mainstream philosophy to participate in the movement, or give any credence

mainstream philosophy to participate in the movement, or give any credence to their ideas, the movement could not be a success according to Malcolm X. Malcolm X felt that all parts of the Black community needed to be joined in order to succeed in America and to make the government more responsive to the needs and the plight of the Black community.

Malcolm X emphasized the need for Black unity through out the speech. Malcolm X believed that unity was a necessity for the Black community to overcome White discrimination. Malcolm X felt the only way the Black race was going to achieve equal status with Whites was for the Black community to be completely unified. For many Black revolutionaries, it was clear that to avoid oppression the Black masses must get themselves together so that they can speak with one voice (Smith, 1970b, p. 59). Malcolm X also used a strategy called "legitimation", which is the revolutionist's way of explaining and justifying the activist's involvement within a movement. If violence breaks out in the course of advancing the movement, the activist will explain that these actions would never have occurred if the opposition had listened (p. 41). In this speech Malcolm X justified any action taken by Black people because they were only asking for what was rightfully theirs and these actions needed to be taken if Blacks were going to be on equal footing with Whites in American society.

Malcolm X mentioned some of the experiences the members of the Black community shared no matter where they were from. For example, he states "I'm not here to argue or discuss anything that we differ about, because it's time for us to submerge our differences and realize that it is best for us to first see that we have the same problem, a common problem—a problem that

will make you catch hell whether you're a Baptist, or a Methodist, or a Muslim, or a nationalist. Whether you're educated or illiterate, whether you live on the boulevard or in the alley, you're going to catch hell just like I am. We're all in the same boat and we all are going to catch the same hell from the same man" (Paragraph 3).

Malcolm X made it clear to the audience that the United States of American was built on the backs of Black people. In fact, if it had not been for the hard work which the Black community was forced to contribute to this country, the United States would not be what it is today. Therefore, a collective effort was going to be needed for the Black community to receive at least some of the rewards they justly deserved. So, Malcolm X also pointedly talked about the contributions that Black people had made to this country, and thereby claimed that Blacks were justified for seeking equal rights, because Blacks were just trying obtain what was rightfully theirs. Malcolm X stated, "Well, we're justified in seeking civil rights, if it means equality of opportunity, because all we're doing there is trying to collect for our investment. Our mothers and fathers invested sweat and blood. Three hundred and ten years we worked in this country without a dime in return. . . . Your mother and father, who didn't work an eight-hour shift, but worked from 'can't see' in the morning until 'can't see' at night, and worked for nothing, making the white man rich, making Uncle Sam rich. . . . This is our investment. this is our contribution--our blood. We have made a greater sacrifice than anybody who's standing up in America today. We have made a greater contribution and have collected less" (Paragraphs 26, 27).

Malcolm X was more than ready to collect on his investment. However, in order for the Black community to collect on their investment the community needed a way to obtain power whether it be politically, economically, or socially. Malcolm X believed that the Black community needed to be unified in all phases in the efforts they under took to gain equality. According to Malcolm X, the way Blacks were going to collect on their investment was through Black Nationalism (Paragraphs 42-45). He explained the political philosophy of Black Nationalism means, "that the black man should control the politics and the politicians in his own community. The black man in the black community has to be re-educated into the science of politics so he will know what politics is supposed to bring him in return" (Paragraph 42). He elaborated further "The economic philosophy of Black Nationalism means that Blacks should control the economy of our community. The philosophy of Black Nationalism involves a re-education program in the black community in regards to economics" (Paragraph 43). "The social philosophy of Black Nationalism only means that Blacks have to get together and remove the evils, the vices, alcoholism, drug addiction, and other evils that are destroying the moral fiber of our community" (Paragraph 45).

Malcolm X felt Black Nationalism would make the Black community re-evaluate itself. Black Nationalism was supposed to create a special bond among Blacks so they could solve the problems which they were faced with (Paragraph 46). According to Malcolm X, the gospel of Black Nationalism could have been preached in any organization. The political philosophy of Black Nationalism was not supposed to threaten the existing of any

organizations but to create unity among them that could help Blacks gain power within American society.

Malcolm X saw equality as based on power (Condit & Lucaites, 1993a, p. 193). In his autobiography, Malcolm X said, "The black man never can become independent and recognized as a human being who is truly equal with other human beings until he has what they have, and until he is doing for himself what others are doing for themselves" (Malcolm X & Haley, 1964, p. 275). Some Black revolutionist believed as long as White people had economic, political, and military power exclusively, it would be impossible to consider the Blacks as truly equal; at most, they could be the recipients of benevolent paternalism (Smith, 1970b, p. 49).

Malcolm X thought the way to avoid being recipients of such benevolent paternalism was through Black Nationalism. The philosophy of Black Nationalism therefore emphasized the acquisition of power for the Black community. Although the use of the power theme in speeches and essays suggests an inward turn (people focusing on their own potentials and abilities), the concept is militant to the extent that the acquisition of power always presupposes the relinquishing of power by another (Smith, 1970b, p. 49). If this philosophy had been carried out, the Black community would have been somewhat independent of the White community. This would had been a drastic change in American society and probably would had been considered a threatening change to White America.

The promotion of Black Nationalism can be classified under the rhetorical strategy of "separation." This strategy is based on the assumption that the prejudice directed towards the Black community is derived from

insurmountable color differences and that therefore, it is futile to engage in rhetoric aimed at convincing the White community of the inherent equality of the races (Golden, 1971, p. 43). The message directed to the Black community is that White and Black cannot live together, and that living with non-whites would be more desirable than an integrated society (pp. 43-44). The kind of separation advocated varies depending on the messenger. Black Nationalism can be promoted by asking for legislative efforts such as those aimed at the passage of bills calling for urban self determination, or the by creation of all-black political-economic units out of former ghettos such as Harlem, Watts or South Chicago (p. 44).

Yet, this part of the speech can also be considered managerial because Malcolm X was encouraging Black people to use the system to acquire economic, political, and social power. Some of Malcolm X's ideas are similar with those of Booker T. Washington, who in many people's view produced a rather conciliatory rhetoric. Washington believed that Black Americans should work toward equal status in American society by gaining economic power through vocational training and diligent vocational pursuits and by working within the system rather than challenging or attempting to change that system (Harris & Kennicott, 1971, p. 48). However, if Black people were to acquire power and gain truly equal status with that of Whites, this would eventually change the system within the United States very significantly. In an article called "The Negro and the Signs of Civilization" printed in the Tuskegee Student, November 9, 1901, Booker T. Washington said "There are certain visible signs of civilization and strength which the world demands that each individual or race exhibit before it is taken seriously into

consideration in the affairs of the world. Unless these visible evidences of ability and strength are forthcoming, mere abstract talking and mere claiming of 'rights' amount to little" (Wintz, 1996, p. 41). Later Booker T. Washington goes on to say that "the possession of property is an evidence of self sacrifice, thrift, character, and purpose and anyone who owns property has a deep interest in the nation's politics. These are the signs of highest civilization. The Negro must possess these or be debarred" (Wintz, 1996 p. 42). According to Booker T. Washington it is up to the White race to help the Black race to obtain these qualities or the nation will never succeed (pp. 42, 43).

Like Booker T. Washington, Malcolm X believed that the Black community must possess some of these qualities; if not, they will never achieve a status equal to that of Whites. With the achievement of monetary gains, the Black community would increase its political power and most likely become more knowledgeable about politics in general. Malcolm X was also asking Black people to rely on their own abilities because the United States was not going to answer for the injustices which they had committed against Blacks (even though the White community owed the Black community enormous amount of financial relieve). Therefore, the responsibility was on Black people to achieve equality without government help.

Black Nationalism was in essence just racial self determination. Black Nationalism was a restructuring of power. It would have given the Black community more power over their politics and politicians, their economy, and their social situation (Paragraphs 41-45). When Jesse Jackson formed the Rainbow Coalition he adopted Malcolm X's notion of equality as "reciprocity"

(Jackson, 1987, p. 111, 277). The goals of Black Nationalism are closely related to the goals of the Rainbow Coalition. However, the Rainbow Coalition included members of all races. The Rainbow Coalition is a political movement of all the people who have worked to help build this country, but find its imperfections still in place (Daniels, 1988, p. 30). It is a movement of people who have come together to help America become what must become, a new nation to shape a new world (p. 30). The goal of Jackson's organization was to bring together all the disparate groups in America into one brightly colored coalition. Even though Malcolm X supported the idea of a separate nation for Blacks he was not advocating it in this speech. But this was not primarily a separatist movement, his philosophy was an empowering movement. Black Nationalism presupposed the continued existence of the larger, alien society against which the black community would have to determine itself (Wolfenstein, 1994, p. 303).

Malcolm X strongly believed that Black Nationalism would help revitalize the Black community and also help overcome some of the historical injustices the community had to face. Jack E. White wrote an article about President Clinton's apology concerning slavery and said, "Without some form of reparations, apologizing for a historical wrong is an empty gesture. For one thing, both the slaves and the slave owners are long since dead, and you can't repent for the sins of others. And even if you could, our legal system recognizes that repentance without compensation serves only to make the apologizer feel good while doing nothing for the victim" (White, 1997, p. 35). White argues that the United States should pay some form of reparations and said, "Use the money to uplift those who have been most

hurt by not only by the legacy of slavery but by existing discrimination and poverty: the urban and rural black poor. Put the money into a fund-call it the New Freedmen's Bureau-to finance the construction of schools, housing, transportation grids, factories in the most depressed areas where descendants of slaves are a majority. Use it to help finance new black-owned companies, to put poor black kids through college and endow cash-poor historically black universities, to run drug-treatment and job-training centers" (p. 35).

E. PATTERNS AND STRUCTURE OF THE SPEECH

So far, I looked at the themes of the speech, now I am going to examine the African-American church's rhetorical legacy, the pattern of speech, and the overall structure which is usually associated with African-American rhetoric. Then it will be determined how Malcolm X used some aspects of African-American rhetoric as well as aspects of traditional European rhetoric to bolster his arguments. Malcolm X used a problem, cause, solution structure which reflects typical managerial approach in political rhetoric when addressing issues. However, within this structure Malcolm X used a confrontational strategy of repeating phrases, such as the "The Ballot or the Bullet" which highlighted the potential for violence. I will show that not only in determining the content, but in also in designing the structure of the speech Malcolm X combined managerial and confrontational elements which helped strengthen many of his points.

1. PATTERNS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN RHETORIC

Many of the ideas which Malcolm X presented in the "Ballot or the Bullet" as ways of promoting unity among African-Americans, such as his elaboration of Black Nationalism, have been meant to help empower the

many people within the Black community the church has been a source of unity, strength and played a critical role and provided its most notable leader, Martin Luther King, in the Civil Rights movement. However, on the other hand many people saw the church as an obstacle to true unity and genuine empowerment for the Black community.

Andrew A. King, author of "The Rhetorical Legacy of the Black Church," claims the historic orientation of the Black church has been one of passivity and acceptance of the status quo. The pressures on the church have been such that it could only satisfy the desires of its constituency for assimilation in an other worldly or mystical context (King, 1971, p. 181). It was expected to endorse earthly dependency and weakness, and provide a safe outlet for aggressive feelings in emotionalism (p. 181). The minister, rather than making a positive affirmation of the spiritual values of his constituency, has been the unwitting messenger of white expectations. . . . whites have seen to it that the values of fatalism and accommodation were actively propagandized (p. 181). Black intellectuals had been highly critical of the church for just that reason (p. 180).

Even Booker T. Washington, denounced "ignorant, immoral preachers" and he declared that the turning aside of Black youth from the ministry into other pursuits was a sign of racial progress (King, 1971, p. 181). Right from the beginning of his speaking career to the very end, Malcolm X deviated from traditional Black preaching by encouraging the Black community to take either political action or violent action against oppression. Malcolm X has always argued that Islam was a Black person's religion and that Christianity has not done one thing to help the conditions of Black

America. Black Nationalism urged the Black community to take a more active role in their political, economic, and social future. The theme of the speech, "The Ballot or the Bullet" demanded that the Black community be more aggressive and if necessary violent in order to gain equal status to that of the White community.

Malcolm X's call for unity would have justified the expansion of the Civil Rights issue into a Human Rights issue and could have involved more so called "radicals" such as himself. However, Malcolm X never saw himself as a radical because he was fighting for the rights of Black America, for rights which the White community already had. When Malcolm X referred to any violent situations that he endorsed, he made sure it would be in response to any injustices, political or violent that the Black community faced. This was not only a repeated theme, but a repeated phrase, "The Ballot or the Bullet" demanded some kind of response. Malcolm X always repeated this theme not only to emphasize his points, but to demonstrate to the world that Black America would be willing to die for their rights. Even though his speech had a theme of violence he always made sure it was justified. This was a recurring pattern in the speech.

Malcolm X developed aspects within this speech which follow the traditional characteristic of African-American rhetoric. However, a characteristic which Malcolm X did not duplicate is the approach to speech structure prevalent in African-American rhetoric. A study conducted by Lyndrey A. Niles, concluded that it was not possible to arrive at a set pattern of organization in traditional Black preaching (Niles, 1984, p. 47). He did, however, find that Black preaching seems to require the speaker to touch the

deep emotions of the audience very early in his sermon (p. 47). In contrast to this highly flexible approach to structure, Malcolm X did use a traditional set of designed organizational patterns for his speech. Since Malcolm X was trying to persuade the Black audience to take a supposedly more confrontational role in the Civil Rights movement by encouraging them to take part in Black Nationalism, he needed a general pattern that would indicate the need for a clear course of action and justify it. Malcolm X's speeches were also meant for a larger diverse audience, therefore it also became necessary for him to develop a general pattern for his formal public utterances that would be recognizable and fulfill structural expectations of that larger audience. This pattern is made evident by the continuous use of the phrase "The Ballot or the Bullet" and by the presentation of clearly marked sequence of problem, cause, and solution.

2. OVERALL STRUCTURE OF SPEECH

In this section I will discuss the overall structure of the speech. The basic structure of the speech is marked by the sequential presentation of problem, cause, and solution, which is highly a managerial approach. However, I will point out in order to counteract the basic managerial implementation of problem, cause, solution, Malcolm X strategically reiterated the phrase the "Ballot or the Bullet" to introduce elements of confrontation. Thus, he repeatedly discusses points that can lead to managerial solutions; Nevertheless, he still keeps confrontational elements in view as a viable option.

a. FROM PROBLEM TO SOLUTION

Early in the speech, Malcolm X undertook a general discussion of the problems African-Americans were facing (Paragraph 5). The first issue Malcolm X addressed was how African-Americans had been shut out of and oppressed by the American political process. Malcolm X claimed that African-Americans had been denied their Constitutional rights that the United States guarantees all of its citizens (Paragraph 8). More specifically in paragraph 21, Malcolm X not only identified the problems of the African-American community but also identified the source: the United States government. Malcolm X stated, "The same government that you go abroad to fight for and die for is the government that is in a conspiracy to deprive you of your economic opportunities, deprive you of decent housing, deprive you of decent education. You don't need to go to the employer alone, it is the government itself, the government of America, that is responsible for the oppression and exploitation and degradation of black people in this country" (Paragraph 21).

According to Malcolm X, the reason African-Americans were denied their Constitutional rights, was because the government and more specifically the Democratic party were not only unresponsive to the needs of the African-American community, but mandated the racist policies practiced by American society (Paragraphs 11-15). Malcolm X first identified the Johnson administration as one of the causes of the problems that faced the African-American community. Malcolm X argued that even though the Black community helped put the current administration into office, the administration ignored the problems of the Black community (Paragraph 11).

Exacerbating the problem was that Black leaders were claiming progress had been made. Malcolm X made the argument that even though Johnson came from a southern state, it was a state where Blacks had been lynched. Malcolm X stated, "Texas is a lynch state. It is in the same breath as Mississippi, no different: only they lynch you in Texas with a Texas accent and lynch you in Mississippi with a Mississippi accent. And these Negro leaders have the audacity to go and have some coffee in the White House with a Texan, a Southern cracker--that's all he is--and then come out and tell you and me that he's going to be better for us because, since he's from the South, he knows how to deal with the Southerners" (Paragraph 11).

Malcolm X then identified the Democratic party as another cause of the problems that the Black community faced. Malcolm X demonstrated how the Democratic party controlled both houses of government and how the party did not even consider passing Civil Rights legislation (Paragraph 12). Malcolm X also blamed the Democrats for claiming to be the party that would represent the Black community's interest while all along they had no intention of doing so (Paragraphs 12-13). Malcolm X also attacked the Democratic party for not denouncing the Southern branch of the party that helped prevent Civil Rights legislation from being brought to the floor. Since Malcolm X identified the problems that the Black community faced and the causes of these problems, He now needed to propose some possible solutions to them. These solutions were both managerial and confrontational.

Malcolm X's proposed methods to help solve the problems were combined with reminders of the possibility of a violent confrontation. First, Malcolm X indicated general solutions to the problems being faced by the

Black community. He introduced the idea of broadening the interpretation of Civil Rights, which could have given the Black community more support (Paragraph 22). Then he introduced the philosophy of Black Nationalism which would allow more people like himself to participate fully in the struggle for Civil Rights (Paragraph 22).

But, Malcolm X quickly became confrontational when he pointed to the high probability of a violent conflict within America. Malcolm X reminded the people that the possibility of violence was very much alive because of the new militancy of the Black youth. Malcolm X stated, "And now you're facing a situation where the young Negro's coming up. They don't want to hear that 'turn-the-other-cheek' stuff, no. . . . There's new thinking coming in. There's new strategy coming in" (Paragraph 24).

After this reminder of the potential of confrontation, Malcolm X again offered a managerial solution by stating one of the ways in which he thought the Civil Rights movement should have been redefined. Malcolm X viewed the movement as the quest for equality of opportunity and emphasized that Blacks were justified in this endeavor. Malcolm X just wanted the Black community to have the same opportunities that were being offered to the White community. Malcolm X stated, "Well we're justified in seeking civil rights, if it means equality of opportunity, because all we're doing there is trying to collect on our investment" (Paragraph 25).

Nevertheless, Malcolm X offered a confrontation solution in this context too, when he said the Black community should do whatever was necessary to fight segregation to obtain equality of opportunity (Paragraphs 28-30). Malcolm X made the point that African-Americans were being denied

"equality of opportunity" due to segregation. He said that even though segregation had been outlawed, the United States government continued to support the practice of segregation. Malcolm X stated, "Whenever you are going after something that is yours, you are within your legal rights to lay claim to it. And anyone who puts forth any effort to deprive you of that which is yours, is breaking the law, is a criminal" (Paragraph 28).

Malcolm X argued that the United States government was responsible for denying the Black community "equality of opportunity" and the Black community had every right to fight back. Malcolm X claimed, " Whenever you demonstrate against segregation. . . the law is on your side, and anyone who stands in the way is not the law any longer. They are breaking the law, they are not representatives of the law" (Paragraph 29). Malcolm X made it clear in such a situation confrontation can go quite far, "Any time you know you're within the law, within your legal rights, within your moral rights, in accord with justice, then die for what you believe in. But don't do alone. Let your dying be reciprocal. This is what is meant by equality" (Paragraph 30).

Next, Malcolm X offered another managerial solution by broadening the interpretation of the Civil Rights struggle into a Human Rights struggle. Malcolm X argued, that making the Civil Rights issue a Human Rights issue would give the Black community new allies all over the world (Paragraph 31). Also, it would allow the Black community to bring the United States before the United Nations to be judged before the world court (Paragraph 33). This effort would embarrass the United States, but would still represent a managerial solution.

However, Malcolm X then presented another confrontational solution by again suggesting the possibility of violence within the United States. Malcolm X raised the specter of guerrilla warfare within the United States because it was prevailing all over the world. Malcolm X said this kind of war was not suited for the White nations of the world, which gave the people of color a decisive advantage. Malcolm X stated, "And the white man can't win another war fighting on the ground. Those days are over. The black man knows it, and the yellow man knows it. So they engage him in guerrilla warfare. That is not his style" (Paragraph 38). Malcolm X later stated, "Just as guerrilla warfare is prevailing in Asia and in parts of Africa and in parts of Latin America, you've got to be mighty naive, or you've got to play the black man cheap, if you don't think he's going to wake up and find that it's got to be the ballot or the bullet" (Paragraph 40). Malcolm X again implied that the Black community could have very well used violence as a possible solution. However, Malcolm X then again offered another managerial solution to help bring about a peaceful resolution.

Malcolm X justified his political involvement in the Muslim Mosque to which he belonged and elaborated on the philosophy of Black Nationalism (Paragraph 41). This was the final interpretation he wanted to add to the Civil Rights struggle. Malcolm X detailed the political, economic and social philosophy of Black Nationalism (Paragraphs 42, 43, 45). Black Nationalism meant that the Black community should control their political, economic and social future just as White America does. Malcolm X then explained what the people need to do who are associated with Black Nationalism. First, Malcolm X claimed that Black Nationalist needs to organize just as Billy

Graham has done (Paragraphs 47, 48). Malcolm X then claimed that Black Nationalists needed to control their own schools. If not, then the kids will leave schools with crippled minds (Paragraph 52). Finally, Malcolm X suggested that the Black community needed to defend itself against any unnecessary violence that was committed against it. It was within its legal rights to act forcefully if the government refuse to do its job of protecting the community (Paragraph 55).

The last solution Malcolm X proposed was also confrontational unless the problem could be settled peacefully by President Johnson. Malcolm X strongly suggested that the next March on Washington would not be a peaceful demonstration. Malcolm X implied that lives would be lost the next time the Black community marched on Washington. This can only be prevented by the government if it did what was legally and morally right. Malcolm X stated, "And this time, they're not going like they went last year. They're not going singing We Shall Overcome. They're not going with white friends. They're not going with placards already painted for them. They're not going with round-trip tickets. They're going with one-way tickets" (Paragraph 58). "And if they don't want that non-violent army going down there, tell them to bring the filibuster to a halt" (Paragraph 59).

The overall structure of the speech is problem, cause, and solution. Nevertheless, within that structure, there are alternating elements of the managerial and confrontational approach. This is done to shock the audience and to also remind them that if a peaceful solution could not be found, violence would have to be used. Malcolm X uses the key phrase of this speech the "Ballot or the Bullet" to highlight the potential for conflict. He

does this not only in the predominantly confrontational sections of his address, but even within sections that most of us would call managerial.

**b. 'THE BALLOT OR THE BULLET' AND THE THREAT OF
CONFRONTATION**

The theme as pointed out above dominates the introduction of the speech and is followed by "what ever means necessary." The use of repetition of this key phrase added strongly to the confrontational tone to the speech not only in confrontational sections but even when it was used in passages that were overall managerial. Malcolm X answered the question, "The Negro Revolt, and Where Do We Go From Here?," with the "Ballot or the Bullet" (Paragraph 1). Malcolm X reintroduced the "Ballot or the Bullet" in paragraph 5 when describing the problems faced by the Black community. Malcolm X began the paragraph by stating, "If we don't do something real soon, I think you'll have to agree that we're going to be forced either to use the ballot or the bullet. It's one or the other in 1964" (Paragraph 5).

Also, the theme plays a central role when Malcolm X described what and who caused the problems being faced by the Black community. Malcolm X then reintroduced the theme when he described what he called the government conspiracy to deny the Black community their rights. Malcolm X used the phrase in a way to let the government know that the conspiracy had been revealed and if it continued, violence would erupt. Malcolm X stated, "So it's time in 1964 to wake up. And when you see them coming up with that kind of conspiracy, let them know your eyes are open. And let them know you got something else that's wide open too. It's got to be the ballot or the bullet. The ballot or the bullet" (Paragraph 13).

As Malcolm X moves forward, the phrase marks the first solution of the speech which is very confrontational. The first solution describes the new militancy of the Black youth at that time (Paragraph 24). In the solution offered in this section of the speech, the phrase occurs in the place in which I already identified and also recurs at the end of the section when Malcolm X discusses another confrontational situation: guerrilla warfare. Malcolm X states, "Just as guerrilla warfare is prevailing in Asia and in parts of Africa and in parts of Latin America, you've got to be mighty naive, or you've got to play the black man cheap, if you don't think he's going to wake up and find that it's got to be the ballot or the bullet" (Paragraph 40).

The next confrontational setting in which Malcolm X uses the phrase is when he claimed that there is a need for the Black community to arm itself. The reason for this is that the government has not done anything to help protect the Black community; therefore, it is incumbent on them to take the necessary action to defend themselves (Paragraphs 55-57). Malcolm X ended this section with, "No, if you never see me another time in your life, if I die in the morning, I'll die saying one thing: the ballot or the bullet, the ballot or the bullet."

Malcolm X also concludes the speech with the phrase the "Ballot or the Bullet" after he has again denounced President Johnson for not taking a firm moral stand against racism and claims the President will be responsible for any violence that may occur. Malcolm X states, "If he waits too long, brothers and sisters, he will be responsible for letting a condition develop in this country which will create a climate that will bring seeds up out of the ground

with vegetation on the end of them looking like something these people never dreamt of. In 1964, it's the ballot or the bullet" (Paragraph 59).

By repeating the "Ballot or the Bullet" in these situations Malcolm X made it clear that the bullet was a legitimate option. Malcolm X used the phrase to show his disgust with how the American political system was practiced and the possibility of violence if the political system continued to oppress the Black community. The use of the phrase was necessary in order to show how far the Black community was willing to go in the struggle for Civil Rights.

In other parts of the speech, Malcolm X substituted words or other phrases to help stress the likelihood of violence. When Malcolm X talked about the need to fight segregation he repeated the phrase "kill that dog." This was in response to the Black community demonstrating against segregation and the police would violently attack the demonstrators (Paragraphs 28-30). Malcolm X said, "Any time you demonstrate against segregation and a man has the audacity to put a police dog on you, kill that dog, kill him, I'm telling you, kill that dog. I say it, if they put me in jail tomorrow, kill--that--dog" (Paragraph 29). Malcolm X not only emphasized the need for violence, he also justified it by equating the violent police officers to that of an animal. Also, by killing that animal they would be killing something that was less than human.

In this section, Malcolm X also used the phrase "Let your dying be reciprocal" and "What is good for the goose is good for the gander." Malcolm X pointed out that if someone is going to attack another person who is attempting to exercise Civil Rights, then that person must respond in the

same manner. If not, people will continue to oppress others. In this context Malcolm X used, "Any time you know you're within the law, within your legal rights, within your moral rights, in accord with justice, then die for what you believe in. But don't die alone. Let your dying be reciprocal. This is what is meant by equality. What is good for the goose is good for the gander" (Paragraph 30). Malcolm X substituted different phrases for the "Ballot or the Bullet" but each phrase implied the possibility of violence in order to obtain equality.

The phrase the "Ballot or the Bullet" not only appears in confrontational sections, it also appears in managerial sections. Malcolm X does this to keep the element of confrontation alive throughout the speech. More importantly, to demonstrate the urgency of a peaceful resolution as the only way of avoiding violence. For instance, when Malcolm X suggests to bring the United States before the United Nations for Human Rights violations this is an example of how he wants to use the political system. Malcolm X uses the phrase to demonstrate that the ballot could be stronger than the bullet especially before the U.N.; nevertheless, there is an element of confrontation that remains with the use of the phrase (Paragraphs 31-35). With the use of the key phrase Malcolm X states, "Let the world know how bloody his hands are. Let the world know the hypocrisy that's practiced over here. Let it be the ballot or the bullet. Let him know that it must be the ballot or the bullet" (Paragraph 34).

The next managerial situation where Malcolm X uses the phrase is when he begins to explain his philosophy about Black Nationalism (Paragraph 42). Malcolm X specifically equates a ballot with a bullet as it

pertains to politics. Malcolm X makes the argument that a ballot is just as powerful as a bullet if used properly. Malcolm X says, "The black man in the black community has to be re-educated into the science of politics so he will know what politics is supposed to bring him in return. Don't be throwing out any ballots. A ballot is like a bullet. You don't throw your ballots until you see a target, and if that target is not within your reach, keep your ballot in your pocket" (Paragraph 42).

After he has explained his philosophy of Black Nationalism, Malcolm X uses the phrase again when he discusses the need for all Black Nationalist to organize (Paragraph 50). Malcolm X uses the phrase when he discusses the need for the Black community to take complete advantage of the political process. He wants all Black Nationalists to convene to hear new ideas and new solutions to their problems (Paragraph 50). Then he states, "And at that time, if we see fit then to form a black nationalist party, we'll form a black nationalist party. If it's necessary to form a black nationalist army, we'll form a black nationalist army. It'll be the ballot or the bullet. It'll be liberty or death" (Paragraph 50). Here again, Malcolm X equates the phrase "Liberty or Death" with the "Ballot or the Bullet." Each phrase implies that a peaceful resolution through the political process would be preferred; however, violence will be used if a peaceful resolution can not be found.

Malcolm X used a problem, cause, solution as a basic structure of his speech. By using this structure, Malcolm X easily identified the problems faced by the Black community, what and who were the cause of these problems and the solutions needed to correct the problems. Malcolm X also alternated a managerial stance with a confrontational stance within the main

structure of the speech. The first reason for this was to demonstrate that he did seek a peaceful resolution to the problems the Black community faced. Secondly, Malcolm X countered a managerial approach with a confrontational one also to demonstrate that if the government was unwilling to cooperate, all necessary action would be taken to achieve equal rights. Thirdly, this method was used to shock and remind his audiences that the threat of violence must always remain in order to make the political process move faster. Malcolm X did not want people to die, but it was important for him to show the lengths to which he and the Black community would be willing to go to achieve equal rights.

The confrontational theme remained in view throughout the speech because of the repeated use of the phrase the "Ballot or the Bullet." Malcolm X used the phrase and at the beginning or end of those solution sections that had confrontational aspects. Again, it was repeated to show that violence was a legitimate option. Less obviously however, Malcolm X also used the phrase in some managerial sections of the speech to encourage the Black community to get more involved politically so that the government can work for them. By getting involved the likelihood of violence would decrease and the Black community would become more independent. Still, strong hints of confrontation remained within each managerial section.

III. CONCLUSION

To this day, Malcolm X remains a controversial and not enigmatic figure. His fame is greater and he receives more praise today than when he was alive. Moreover, today considerable money is made by marketing his image. In his own day Malcolm X was considered only the second, third or

even merely the fourth man in the struggle for Civil Rights. The praise and the honors bestowed on Martin Luther King in his life time have now been given to Malcolm X only more than twenty years after his death. Malcolm X would probably not have been reassured by this belated recognition, largely because so much of it reflects white approval (Ling, 1993, p. 14). He would have suspected that this recognition showed he was not successful in the fight for Black people. Nevertheless, the voice and spirit of Malcolm X have reached a new generation of both Blacks and Whites in America today. Yet, the precise impact of Malcolm X's legacy has yet to be determine because of the lack of analysis of his work, of his message, and the misconceptions about the man himself.

Today's discussions about Malcolm X usually revolve around the question who the man was and what was his legacy. Many argue that even though there has been an increased interest in the life of Malcolm X, the man and his message are still misunderstood. Some argue that many people (even scholars) will not even attempt to do a thorough investigation of the man and his work. Some argue that Malcolm X has been commercialized to the point that the political impact of his message has been much diminished or lost altogether. Both conservatives and liberals find it en-vogue to claim that Malcolm X had a positive influence on their lives and embodies their beliefs and values. Even though, when he was alive he was not considered to be a conservative or a liberal, rather a radical. Most importantly, people want to know what does Malcolm X mean to today, especially to a new generation just being exposed to his message. Yet, this is difficult to determine because the misconceptions about his beliefs inhibit people's understanding of his

meaning today. Thus, it can be argued that Malcolm X represents a symbol of radical revolution, while to others he is a symbol of the fight against racism and poverty. This reflects the complexity of his position revealed in this thesis. Malcolm X was against the system and ready to abandon it if necessary, but at the same time trying to work within the system in order to bring about significant changes in it if possible. I have tried to get beyond the catchy sound bites and give his work the differentiating attention it deserves.

Many believe, due to Spike Lee's movie, that there is an increased interest in Malcolm X. James Cone describes the recent interest in Malcolm X as the "belated realization that Malcolm X was not a racist demagogue or an adversary of Martin Luther King as the media often portrayed him" (Whitaker, 1992, p. 124). Cone is right in saying Malcolm X was not a racist, but the contention that he was not an adversary of Martin Luther King is incorrect. His strategy in the "Ballot or the Bullet" was clearly quite different from Martin Luther King at that time. The perception that the two were not that far apart on such issues probably has more to do with Martin Luther King's change in position than with re-reading Malcolm X. Their difference in strategy was again evident after Martin Luther King won the Nobel Peace Prize. Malcolm X was quoted as saying, "If I'm following a general and he's leading me into battle, and the enemy tends to give him rewards, I get suspicious of him. Especially if he gets a peace award before the war is over" (Ling, 1993, p. 14).

The movie, the man and the myths surrounding his life have been the subject of network news stories, press conferences, magazine features and television talk shows (Baker-Woods, 1993, p. 44). And for many young

African-Americans, the X likeness has been translated into a hybrid fashion and social statement (p. 44). Even before the movie was released, it and Malcolm X himself received a substantial amount of coverage from the press. People were talking about the man and his message. However, Malcolm X was ostensibly recast by the media as a complicated and misunderstood human being (p. 46). In doing so, the media contributed to the metamorphosis of his character, thus making him more acceptable and palatable to mass audiences (p. 46).

The movie about Malcolm X did not only create a fashion and social statement among a new generation, it encouraged more scholars to investigate the life and the works of Malcolm X. However, John Woodford author of: "The Malcomized Moment: En-Gendering and Re-Politicizing the X Man," claimed that many scholars still do not do a very good job of analyzing Malcolm X. Woodford stated, "A psychologist or historian specializing in political rhetoric might be interested in the failed essays, however, because they do reveal the continuing mind-numbing absorption in talking about 'Black identity' and 'gender' that is afflicting oh so many intellectuals" (Woodford, 1993, p. 24). The spread of shoddy scholarship and misinformation is the downside of the resurgent interest in Malcolm X (p. 24). Fear that Spike Lee's movie did not adequately convey the man's complexity has sparked further interest and controversy, a phenomenon many say is not altogether bad (Whitaker, 1992, p. 118). History is now judging Malcolm X differently, making him more socially acceptable. That judgment however is not a unified one. There is some agreement that he no

longer has the image of a violent demagogue. To many he simply represents the symbol of freedom.

A broader social acceptance is due to the fact that different people accept different ideas. To some Malcolm X was a supporter of self help and to others he advanced claims for help on behalf of the poor. What many fail to see is that none of these characterizations give a full account of Malcolm X because he combine aspects of all these approaches. This is why part of his message can now be used by people throughout the political and social spectrum. Not only were his beliefs at any giving time changing, a complex mixture of different approaches were also changing, especially during the time of his break from the Nation of Islam to his violent death. This transformation is part of the complexity and the many faces which make up Malcolm X. According to Charles Whitaker, "the trouble is that Malcolm X's persona history, like his philosophy, defies easy categorization. Even scholars who knew him and have spent considerable time studying his life and speeches maintain that Malcolm is not readily accessible to them" (Whitaker, 1992, p. 118).

Who Malcolm X was and what he would have been today is still a matter for debate. Some people will never be able to separate Malcolm X from the rhetoric he produced when he was a member of the Nation of Islam. What many people fail to realize is that Malcolm X's political beliefs did not always coincide with that of the Nation of Islam which is one of the reasons for his departure. Malcolm X was a changing figure and the ideas and beliefs he expressed after his departure from the Nation of Islam are a better reflection of his firmly held beliefs because he was no longer fettered by the

need to reflect the dogma of an organization. He could now be more ready to change his ideas and beliefs in response to the current and social situation. Vincent Harking, professor of religion and social transformation at the Illif School of Theology in Denver, stated that part of the difficulty scholars and others face when attempting to pin down the essence of Malcolm X is that he was felled at a critical moment in his personal and philosophical development. "Malcolm was a person who was still working out who he was at the time of his death," Harking says. He was still looking for that next step and wrestling with this central question of how to empower the poor" (Whitaker, 1992, p. 122).

This is why so many individuals within and outside the political system feel able to claim Malcolm X as one of their own. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas claimed to adhere to Malcolm X's political philosophies, as do a number of rap music artists (Baker-Woods, 1993, p. 46). Since Malcolm X was an ardent proponent of self-determination this has led even conservatives such as Robert Woodson, Shelby Steele, Alan Keyes and Glen Loury to suggest that if Malcolm were alive today he would be in their camp (Boyd, 1993, p. 26). Tony Brown told Juan Williams in GO, "I think Malcolm X was essentially a black Republican by today's standards" (Boyd, 1993, p. 26). "I use two basic criteria to come to that conclusion. Number one, Malcolm was for individual opportunity. Number two, he was for self-help. This is a Republican philosophy. It is right in line with Marcus Garvey, Elijah Muhammad, Booker T. Washington, and most of all, Malcolm X. And that philosophy stands in contradiction to those who believe in integration and in the government as the first and last resort of the black man" (p. 26). Malcolm

X indeed supported individual opportunity and self help, but he wanted to these as tools in addition to economic concession from the White establishment for a radical transformation of society which is definitely not what these new admirers wanted.

The image of Malcolm X as a Republican willing to work within the system is far different from the image of the militant hate monger painted by earlier political conservatives when he was still alive. Still, for many others Malcolm X is still a revolutionary who spoke out against the injustices of the system and was willing to fight it. Even though Malcolm X encouraged Blacks to use the system to bring about change, he was not sure that such efforts would be successful and therefore was prepared to work against the system if necessary; an approach which will not be approved by today's new found conservative admirers of Malcolm X. He also linked the struggle of Blacks in America with that of many people of color from around the world, not including the Viet Cong, a bold stand to take as the Vietnam conflict was escalating in 1964.

Malcolm X was and still is popular among the Black youth. However, his appeal has expanded to people of other cultures who feel they have been left out of the system. The issues that Malcolm X was addressing when he was alive are largely determined by race, now to many they are also determined by class. "Malcolm's non southern inner-city constituency made the issues of unemployment, inadequate housing, schools and social services, and police brutality natural themes for his speeches. In this context, the racial division so central to the nation's philosophy overlay another divide of class. This has enabled later left-wing commentators to paint Malcolm as one of

their own. Strengthening this tendency is the fact that after his break with the Nation of Islam in March 1964, Malcolm strove to connect the struggles of black Americans to those of Third World revolutionaries" (Ling, 1993, p. 14).

Malcolm X still has a strong appeal for Black youths because he speaks out against the injustices of a system in which they live. This is why rap artists use parts of his message. To support Malcolm X is a way for many to show their distrust or hatred for the current system. Many Black people then and now support Malcolm X because he so boldly and articulately expressed his feelings about a system which many feel was and still is exploiting them. "Malcolm X emboldened his people as he told it like it was to the white man face" (Ling, 1993, p. 14). Also, "Malcolm X seemed to have articulated the feelings and aspirations of so many young people of the previous generation, feelings that are not unlike those of young people today," said Eric Lincoln professor of religion and culture at Duke University (Whitaker, 1992, p. 122, 124).

Malcolm X specifically spoke out against problems still facing America today. Some of these problems are poverty, unemployment, inadequate housing, and racial discrimination just to name a few. However, these problems have expanded into other communities. Malcolm X expresses the anger that the Black youths feel against both Black and White leaders in this country. "Black Americans remain more likely than whites to be poor and jobless; to live in blighted neighborhoods; to suffer debilitating disease; to leave school or become pregnant or die prematurely; to go to prison and to die violently. In the late 1960's when America's major cities experienced violent ghetto revolts, unemployment among young non-white males was

roughly a third its present level. Malcolm's anger at whites and civil rights leaders expressed the feelings of this group, both then and now. Malcolm X died just as the focus of the movement shifted from the evils of legal segregation and disenfranchisement in the South to those of institutional discrimination and powerlessness nationwide" (Ling, 1993, p. 14). Even though Malcolm X's image has changed and is admired by a new generation, most people have not taken the time to do an in-depth research of his works. Many Black youths wear the shirts and the hats with his likeness, but most do not even know what he stood for, and are still less likely to have studied his life and views in more depth, for instance by reading his autobiography. Many people associate Malcolm X with his catchy phrases, for example "By any means necessary" or "You didn't land on Plymouth Rock, Plymouth Rock landed on you." However, he was more complicated and his messages had deeper meanings than what is taken out of context by such slogans. "There is no hard evidence that large numbers are being affected in ways that will benefit the Black community. Indeed many black youths (even on college campuses!) who wear clothing marked with the now popular 'X' have not the slightest idea as to what it stand for or who was Malcolm X" (Burrow, 1996, p. 105).

The youth are not the only ones guilty of avoiding a thorough investigation of Malcolm X. Many scholars and members of the press have not done an adequate job either. Malcolm X's legacy is difficult to determine, but we know his appeal has crossed color lines, class divisions and all sides of the political spectrum. His image has changed from an angry Black militant to a defender of human rights. People may take many different messages

from his works. However, some things have stayed the same. Malcolm X fought against racial discrimination, fought to empower the poor, supported the method of self defense and was for self determination. Malcolm X was a revolutionary, fighting to make change within a political system in which he also fought from the outside.

Most people, radicals and conservatives alike, can argue that Malcolm X did uphold some of their values and beliefs. However, it is the combination of these values and beliefs that make up a distinctive characteristic. We need to resist the temptation to make Malcolm X "one" or the "other". People can not take what they like about Malcolm X's beliefs and claim him as one of theirs, in the meantime disregarding the rest of his beliefs. By doing this people are ignoring and misunderstanding his message altogether. In paragraphs twenty six and twenty seven, Malcolm X clearly wanted monetary compensation from the current system: "This is our investment. This is our contribution--our blood. . . . We have made a greater contribution and collected less" (Paragraph 27). However, he did not want to rely on governmental assistance, nor did he expect the government would actually make up for its past injustices. Therefore, he supported the philosophy of self-determination. Malcolm X supported self-determination not only because it was the right thing to do, he supported it out of necessity. Malcolm X supported the system whenever possible, but he was willing to fight against it when ever necessary.

ENDNOTES

¹Molefi Kete Asante was formally known as Arthur L. Smith

²There is a copy of "The Ballot or the Bullet" in the appendix. The copy in the appendix is numbered by paragraph and all further reference to paragraph numbers are to the appendix.

³Malcolm X's views about women were greatly shaped by the very strict laws and teachings of the Nation of Islam. There was a strong belief that race and not gender, was the primary factor determining the life chances of Blacks. However, Malcolm X changed his beliefs and felt women did and should play an important role in society.

⁴This may not be the exact wording of the original speech. Since no one recorded the speech, Mayer reported that William Wirt conducted interviews with and collected memoranda from some of the people who were at the Virginia Convention and pieced together the speech according to their accounts.

⁵In my readings there were no specific references which confirmed or denied that Malcolm X read the works of Frederick Douglass, but given the strong similarities of their arguments in the battle for freedom it is rather likely that he did.

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APPENDIX

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III. THE BALLOT OR THE BULLET

Ten days after Malcolm X's declaration of independence, the Muslim Mosque, Inc., held the first of a series of four Sunday night public rallies in Harlem, at which Malcolm began the job of formulating the ideology and philosophy of a new movement. In the opinion of many who heard these talks, they were the best he ever gave. Unfortunately, taped recordings of these meetings were not available in the preparation of this book. Simultaneously, however, Malcolm began to accept speaking engagements outside of New York—at Chester, Pennsylvania; Boston; Cleveland; Detroit; etc.—and tapes of some of these were available.

In the Cleveland talk, given at Cory Methodist Church on April 3, 1964, Malcolm presented many of the themes he had been developing in the Harlem rallies. The meeting, sponsored by the Cleveland chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, took the form of a symposium entitled "The Negro Revolt—What Comes Next?" The first speaker was Louis E. Lomax, whose talk was in line with CORE doctrine and was well received by the large, predominantly Negro audience. Malcolm's talk got even more applause, although it differed in fundamental respects from anything ever said at a CORE meeting.

"The Ballot or the Bullet," Malcolm's own title for his speech, was notable, among other things, for its statement that elements of black nationalism were present and growing in such organizations as the NAACP and CORE. For various reasons, the black nationalist convention, which in this talk he projected for August 1964, was not held.

| Mr. Moderator, Brother Lomax, brothers and sisters,

friends and enemies: I just can't believe everyone in here is a friend and I don't want to have anybody out. The question tonight, as I understand it, is "The Negro Revolt, and Where Do We Go From Here?" or "What Next?" In my little humble way of understanding it, it points toward either the ballot or the bullet.

2. Before we try and explain what is meant by the ballot or the bullet, I would like to clarify something concerning myself. I'm still a Muslim, my religion is still Islam. That's my personal belief. Just as Adam Clayton Powell is a Christian minister who heads the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York, but at the same time takes part in the political struggles to try and bring about rights to the black people in this country; and Dr. Martin Luther King is a Christian minister down in Atlanta, Georgia, who heads another organization fighting for the civil rights of black people in this country; and Rev. Galemason, I guess you've heard of him, is another Christian minister in New York who has been deeply involved in the school boycotts to eliminate segregated education; well, I myself am a minister, not a Christian minister, but a Muslim minister; and I believe in action on all fronts by whatever means necessary.

3. Although I'm still a Muslim, I'm not here tonight to discuss my religion. I'm not here to try and change your religion. I'm not here to argue or discuss anything that we differ about, because it's time for us to submerge our differences and realize that it is best for us to first see that we have the same problem, a common problem — a problem that will make you catch hell whether you're a Baptist, or a Methodist, or a Muslim, or a nationalist. Whether you're educated or illiterate, whether you live on the boulevard or in the alley, you're going to catch hell just like I am. We're all in the same boat and we all are going to catch the same hell from the same man. He just happens to be a white man. All of us have suffered here, in this country, political oppression at the hands of the white man, economic exploitation at the hands of the white man, and social degradation at the hands of the white man.

4. Now in speaking like this, it doesn't mean that we're anti-white, but it does mean we're anti-exploitation, we're

anti-degradation, we're anti-oppression. And if the white man doesn't want us to be anti-him, let him stop oppressing and exploiting and degrading us. Whether we are Christians or Muslims or nationalists or agnostics or atheists, we must first learn to forget our differences. If we have differences, let us differ in the closet; when we come out in front, let us not have anything to argue about until we get finished arguing with the man. If the late President Kennedy could get together with Khrushchev and exchange some wheat, we certainly have more in common with each other than Kennedy and Khrushchev had with each other.

5. If we don't do something real soon, I think you'll have to agree that we're going to be forced either to use the ballot or the bullet. It's one or the other in 1964. It isn't that time is running out — time has run out! 1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed. The most explosive year. Why? It's also a political year. It's the year when all of the white politicians will be back in the so-called Negro community jiving you and me for some votes. The year when all of the white political crooks will be right back in your and my community with their false promises, building up our hopes for a letdown, with their treachery and their treachery, with their false promises which they don't intend to keep. As they nourish these dissatisfactions, it can only lead to one thing, an explosion; and now we have the type of black man on the scene in America today — I'm sorry, Brother Lomax — who just doesn't intend to turn the other cheek any longer.

6. Don't let anybody tell you anything about the odds are against you. If they draft you, they send you to Korea and make you face 900 million Chinese. If you can be brave over there, you can be brave right here. These odds aren't as great as those odds. And if you fight here, you will at least know what you're fighting for.

7. I'm not a politician, not even a student of politics; in fact, I'm not a student of much of anything. I'm not a Democrat, I'm not a Republican, and I don't even consider myself an American. If you and I were Americans, there'd be no problem. Those Hunkies that just got off the boat, they're already Americans; Polacks are already Americans; the Italian refugees are already Americans. Everything that came out of Europe, every blue-eyed

The Ballot or the Bullet

26

Malcolm X Speaks

thing, is already an American. And as long as you and I have been over here, we aren't Americans yet.

Well, I am one who doesn't believe in deluding myself. I'm not going to sit at your table and watch you eat, with nothing on my plate, and call myself a diner. Sitting at the table doesn't make you a diner, unless you eat some of what's on that plate. Being here in America doesn't make you an American. Being born here in America doesn't make you an American. Why, if birth made you American, you wouldn't need any legislation, you wouldn't be faced with civil-rights filibustering in Washington, D.C., right now. They don't have to pass civil-rights legislation to make a Polish an American.

No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or a flag-waver, or a flag-waver — no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare.

These 22 million victims are waking up. Their eyes are coming open. They're beginning to see what they used to only look at. They're becoming politically mature. They are realizing that there are new political trends from coast to coast. As they see these new political trends, it's possible for them to see that every time there's an election the races are so close that they have to have a recount. They had to recount in Massachusetts to see who was going to be governor, it was so close. It was the same way in Rhode Island, in Minnesota, and in many other parts of the country. And the same with Kennedy and Nixon when they ran for president. It was so close they had to count all over again. Well, what does this mean? It means that when white people are evenly divided, and black people have a bloc of votes of their own, it is left up to them to determine who's going to sit in the White House and who's going to be in the dog house.

It was the black man's vote that put the present

administration in Washington, D.C. Your vote, your dumb vote, your ignorant vote, your wasted vote put in an administration in Washington, D.C., that has seen fit to pass every kind of legislation imaginable, saving you until last, then filibustering on top of that. And your and my leaders have the audacity to run around clapping their hands and talk about how much progress we're making. And what a good president we have, if he wasn't good in Texas, he sure can't be good in Washington, D.C. Because Texas is a lynch state. It is in the same breath as Mississippi, no different; only they lynch you in Texas with a Texas accent and lynch you in Mississippi with a Mississippi accent. And these Negro leaders have the audacity to go and have some coffee in the White House with a Texan, a Southern cracker — that's all he is — and then come out and tell you and me that he's going to be better for us because, since he's from the South, he knows how to deal with the Southerners. What kind of logic is that? Let Eastland be president, he's from the South too. He should be better able to deal with them than Johnson.

In this present administration they have in the House of Representatives 257 Democrats to only 177 Republicans. They control two-thirds of the House vote. Why can't they pass something that will help you and me? In the Senate, there are 67 senators who are of the Democratic Party. Only 33 of them are Republicans. Why, the Democrats have got the government sewed up, and you're the one who sewed it up for them. And what have they given you for it? Four years in office, and just now getting around to some civil-rights legislation. Just now, after everything else is gone, out of the way, they're going to sit down now and play with you all summer long — the same old giant con game that they call filibuster. All those are in cahoots together. Don't you ever think they're not in cahoots together, for the man that is heading the civil-rights filibuster is a man from Georgia named Richard Russell. When Johnson became president, the first man he asked for when he got back to Washington, D.C., was "Dicky" — that's how tight they are. That's his boy, that's his pal, that's his buddy. But they're playing that old con game. One of them makes believe he's for you, and he's got it

12

not a government that is made up of representatives of the people. Half of the people in the South can't even vote. Eastland is not even supposed to be in Washington. Half of the senators and congressmen who occupy these key positions in Washington, D.C., are there illegally, are there unconstitutionally.

I was in Washington, D.C., a week ago Thursday, when they were debating whether or not they should let the bill come onto the floor. And in the back of the room where the Senate meets, there's a huge map of the United States, and on that map it shows the location of Negroes throughout the country. And it shows that the Southern section of the country, the states that are most heavily concentrated with Negroes, are the ones that have senators and congressmen standing up filibustering and doing all other kinds of trickery to keep the Negro from being able to vote. This is pitiful. But it's not pitiful for us any longer; it's actually pitiful for the white man, because soon now, as the Negro awakens a little more and sees the vice that he's in, sees the bag that he's in, sees the real game that he's in, then the Negro's going to develop a new tactic.

These senators and congressmen actually violate the constitutional amendments that guarantee the people of that particular state or county the right to vote. And the Constitution itself has within it the machinery to expel any representative from a state where the voting rights of the people are violated. You don't even need new legislation. Any person in Congress right now, who is there from a state or a district where the voting rights of the people are violated, that particular person should be expelled from Congress. And when you expel him, you've removed one of the obstacles in the path of any real meaningful legislation in this country. In fact, when you expel them, you don't need new legislation, because they will be replaced by black representatives from counties and districts where the black man is in the majority, not in the minority.

If the black man in these Southern states had his full voting rights, the key Districts in Washington, D.C., which means the key Democrats in Washington, D.C., would lose their seats. The Democratic Party itself would

fixed where the other one is so tight against you, he never has to keep his promise.

So it's time in 1964 to wake up. And when you see them coming up with that kind of conspiracy, let them know your eyes are open. And let them know you got something else that's wide open too. It's got to be the ballot or the bullet. The ballot or the bullet. If you're afraid to use an expression like that, you should get on out of the country, you should get back in the cotton patch, you should get back in the alley. They get all the Negro vote, and after they get it, the Negro gets nothing in return. All they did when they got to Washington was give a few big Negroes big jobs. Those big Negroes didn't need big jobs, they already had jobs. That's camouflage, that's trickery, that's treachery, window-dressing. I'm not trying to knock out the Democrats for the Republicans, we'll get to them in a minute. But it is true—you put the Democrats first and the Democrats put you last.

Look at it the way it is. What alibi do they use, since they control Congress and the Senate? What alibi do they use when you and I ask, "Well, when are you going to keep your promise?" They blame the Districts. What is a District? A Democrat. A District is nothing but a Democrat in disguise. The titular head of the Democrats, also the head of the Districts, because the Districts are a part of the Democratic Party. The Democrats have never kicked the Districts out of the party. The Districts boxed themselves once, but the Democrats didn't put them out. Imagine, these lard-head Southern segregationists put the Northern Democrats down. But the Northern Democrats have never put the Districts down. No, look at that thing the way it is. They have got a con game going on, a political con game, and you and I are in the middle. It's time for you and me to wake up and start looking at it like it is, and trying to understand it like it is; and then we can deal with it like it is.

The Districts in Washington, D.C., control the key committees that run the government. The only reason the Districts control these committees is because they have seniority. The only reason they have seniority is because they come from states where Negroes can't vote. This is not even a government that's based on democracy. It is

lose its power. It would cease to be powerful as a party. When you see the amount of power that would be lost by the Democratic Party if it were to lose the Dixiecrat wing, or branch, or element, you can see where it's against the interests of the Democrats to give voting rights to Negroes in states where the Democrats have been in complete power and authority ever since the Civil War. You just can't be long to that party without analyzing it.

19 I say again, I'm not anti-Democrat, I'm not anti-Republican, I'm not anti-anything. I'm just questioning their sincerity, and some of the strategy that they've been using on our people by promising them promises that they don't intend to keep. When you keep the Democrats in power, you're keeping the Dixiecrats in power. I doubt that my good Brother Lomax will deny that. A vote for a Democrat is a vote for a Dixiecrat. That's why, in 1964, it's time now for you and me to become more politically mature and realize what the ballot is for; what we're supposed to get when we cast a ballot; and that if we don't cast a ballot, it's going to end up in a situation where we're going to have to cast a ballot. It's either a ballot or a bullet.

20 In the North, they do it a different way. They have a system that's known as gerrymandering, whatever that means. It means when Negroes become too heavily concentrated in a certain area, and begin to gain too much political power, the white man comes along and changes the district lines. You may say, "Why do you keep saying white man?" Because it's the white man who does it. I haven't ever seen any Negro changing any lines. They don't let him get near the line. It's the white man who does this. And usually, it's the white man who grins at you the most, and puts you on the back, and is supposed to be your friend. He may be friendly, but he's not your friend.

21 So, what I'm trying to impress upon you, in essence, is this: You and I in America are faced not with a segregationist conspiracy, we're faced with a government conspiracy. Everyone who's filibustering is a senator—that's the government. Everyone who's flagging in Washington, D.C., is a congressman—that's the government. You don't have anybody putting blocks in your path but people who are a part of the government. The same gov-

ernment that you go abroad to fight for and die for is the government that is in a conspiracy to deprive you of your voting rights, deprive you of your economic opportunities, deprive you of decent housing, deprive you of decent education. You don't need to go to the employer alone, it is the government itself, the government of America, that is responsible for the oppression and exploitation and degradation of black people in this country. And you should drop it in their lap. This government has failed the Negro. This so-called democracy has failed the Negro. And all these white liberals have definitely failed the Negro.

22 So, where do we go from here? First, we need some friends. We need some new allies. The entire civil-rights struggle needs a new interpretation, a broader interpretation. We need to look at this civil-rights thing from another angle—from the inside as well as from the outside. To those of us whose philosophy is black nationalism, the only way you can get involved in the civil-rights struggle is give it a new interpretation. That old interpretation excluded us. It kept us out. So, we're giving a new interpretation to the civil-rights struggle, an interpretation that will enable us to come into it, take part in it. And these handkerchief-heads who have been dillydallying and pussyfooting and compromising—we don't intend to let them pussyfoot and dillydally and compromise any longer.

23 How can you thank a man for giving you what's already yours? How then can you thank him for giving you only part of what's already yours? You haven't even made progress, if what's being given to you, you should have had already. That's not progress. And I love my Brother Lomax, the way he pointed out we're right back where we were in 1964. We're not even as far up as we were in 1964. We're backed where we were in 1964. There's more segregation now than there was in 1964. There's more racial animosity, more racial hatred, more racial violence today in 1964, than there was in 1964. Where is the progress?

24 And now you're facing a situation where the young Negro's coming up. They don't want to hear that "turn-the-other-cheek" stuff, no. In Jacksonville, those were tear-gas agents, they were throwing Molotov cocktails. Negroes have

never done that before. But it shows you there's a new deal coming in. There's new thinking coming in. There's new strategy coming in. It'll be Molotov cocktails this month, hand grenades next month, and something else next month. It'll be ballots, or it'll be bullets. It'll be liberty, or it will be death. The only difference about this kind of death—it'll be reciprocal. You know what I mean by 'reciprocal'? That's one of Brother Lomax's words, I stole it from him. I don't usually deal with those big words because I don't usually deal with big people. I deal with small people. I find you can get a whole lot of small people and whip hell out of a whole lot of big people. They haven't got anything to lose, and they've got everything to gain. And they'll let you know in a minute: 'It takes two to tango when I go, you go.'

25 The black nationalists, those whose philosophy is black nationalism, in bringing about this new interpretation of the entire meaning of civil rights, look upon it as meaning, as Brother Lomax has pointed out, equality of opportunity. Well, we're justified in seeing civil rights, if it means equality of opportunity, because all we're doing there is trying to collect for our investment. Our mothers and fathers invested sweat and blood. Three hundred and ten years we worked in this country without a dime in return—I mean without a *dime* in return. You let the white man walk around here talking about how rich this country is, but you never stop to think how it got rich so quick. It got rich because you made it rich.

26 You take the people who are in this audience right now. They're poor, we're all poor as individuals. Our weekly salary individually amounts to hardly anything. But if you take the salary of everyone in here collectively it'll fill up a whole lot of baskets. It's a lot of wealth. If you can collect the wages of just these people right here for a year, you'll be rich—richer than rich. When you look at it like that, think how rich Uncle Sam had to become, not with this handful, but millions of black people. You and my mother and father, who didn't work an eight-hour shift, but worked from 'can't see' in the morning until 'can't see' at night, and worked for nothing, making the white man rich, making Uncle Sam rich.

27 This is our investment. This is our contribution—our

blood. Not only did we give of our free labor, we gave of our blood. Every time he had a call to arms, we were the first ones in uniform. We died on every battlefield the white man had. We have made a greater sacrifice than anybody who's standing up in America today. We have made a greater contribution and have collected less. Civil rights, for those of us whose philosophy is black nationalism, means: 'Give it to us now. Don't wait for next year. Give it to us yesterday, and that's not fast enough.'

28 I might stop right here to point out one thing. Whenever you're going after something that belongs to you, anyone who's depriving you of the right to have it is a criminal. Understand that. Whenever you are going after something that is yours, you are within your legal rights to lay claim to it. And anyone who puts forth any effort to deprive you of that which is yours, is breaking the law, is a criminal. And this was pointed out by the Supreme Court decision. It outlawed segregation. Which means segregation is against the law. Which means a segregationist is breaking the law. A segregationist is a criminal. You can't label him as anything other than that. And when you demonstrate against segregation, the law is on your side. The Supreme Court is on your side.

29 Now, who is it that opposes you in carrying out the law? The police department itself. With police dogs and clubs. Whenever you demonstrate against segregation, whether it is segregated education, segregated housing, or anything else, the law is on your side, and anyone who stands in the way is not the law any longer. They are breaking the law, they are not representatives of the law. Any time you demonstrate against segregation and a man has the audacity to put a police dog on you, kill that dog, kill him, I'm telling you, kill that dog. I say it, if they put me in jail tomorrow, kill—that—dog. Then you'll put a stop to it. Now, if these white people in here don't want to see that kind of action, get down and tell the mayor to tell the police department to pull the dogs in. That's all you have to do. If you don't do it, someone else will.

30 If you don't take this kind of stand, your little children will grow up and look at you and think 'thame.' If you don't take an uncompromising stand—I don't mean

go out and get violent; but at the same time you should never be nonviolent unless you run into some nonviolence. I'm nonviolent with those who are nonviolent with me. But when you drop that violence on me, then you've made me go insane, and I'm not responsible for what I do. And that's the way every Negro should get. Any time you know you're within the law, within your legal rights, within your moral rights, in accord with justice, then die for what you believe in. But don't die alone. Let your dying be reciprocal. This is what is meant by equality. What's good for the goose is good for the gander.

34 When we begin to get in this area, we need new friends, we need new allies. We need to expand the civil-rights struggle to a higher level—to the level of human rights. Whenever you are in a civil-rights struggle, whether you know it or not, you are confining yourself to the jurisdiction of Uncle Sam. No one from the outside world can speak out in your behalf as long as your struggle is a civil-rights struggle. Civil rights comes within the domestic affairs of this country. All of our African brothers and our Asian brothers and our Latin-American brothers cannot open their mouths and interfere in the domestic affairs of the United States. And as long as it's civil rights, this comes under the jurisdiction of Uncle Sam.

35 But the United Nations has what's known as the charter of human rights, it has a committee that deals in human rights. You may wonder why all of the atrocities that have been committed in Africa and in Hungary and in Asia and in Latin America are brought before the UN, and the Negro problem is never brought before the UN. This is part of the conspiracy. This old, tricky, blue-eyed liberal who is supposed to be your and my friend, supposed to be in our corner, supposed to be subsidizing our struggle, and supposed to be acting in the capacity of an adviser, never tells you anything about human rights. They keep you wrapped up in civil rights. And you spend so much time barking up the civil-rights tree, you don't even know there's a human-rights tree on the same floor.

36 When you expand the civil-rights struggle to the level of human rights, you can then take the case of the black man in this country before the nations in the UN. You can

take it before the General Assembly. You can take Uncle Sam before a world court. But the only level you can do it on is the level of human rights. Civil rights keeps you under his restrictions, under his jurisdiction. Civil rights keeps you in his pocket. Civil rights means you're asking Uncle Sam to treat you right. Human rights are something you were born with. Human rights are your God-given rights. Human rights are the rights that are recognized by all nations of this earth. And any time any one violates your human rights, you can take them to the world court. Uncle Sam's hands are dripping with blood, dripping with the blood of the black man in this country. He's the earth's number-one hypocrite. He has the audacity—yes, he has—imagines him posing as the leader of the free world. The free world—and you over here singing "We Shall Overcome." Expand the civil-rights struggle to the level of human rights, take it into the United Nations, where our African brothers can throw their weight on our side, where our Asian brothers can throw their weight on our side, where our Latin-American brothers can throw their weight on our side, and where 800 million Chinamen are sitting there waiting to throw their weight on our side.

34 Let the world know how bloody his hands are. Let the world know the hypocrisy that's practiced over here. Let it be the ballot or the bullet. Let him know that it must be the ballot or the bullet.

35 When you take your case to Washington, D.C., you're taking it to the criminal who's responsible; it's like running from the wolf to the fox. They're all in cahoots to gether. They all work political chicanery and make you look like a champ before the eyes of the world. Here you are walking around in America, getting ready to be drafted and sent abroad, like a tin soldier, and when you get over there, people ask you what are you fighting for, and you have to stick your tongue in your cheek. No, take Uncle Sam to court, take him before the world.

36 By ballot I only mean freedom. Don't you know—I disagree with Lomax on this issue—that the ballot is more important than the dollar? Can I prove it? Yes. Look in the UN. There are poor nations in the UN; yet those poor

nations can get together with their voting power and keep the rich nations from making a move. They have one nation—one vote, everyone has an equal vote. And when those brothers from Asia, and Africa and the darker parts of this earth get together, their voting power is sufficient to hold Sam in check, Or Russia in check. Or some other section of the earth in check. So, the ballot is most important.

37 Right now, in this country, if you and 1, 22 million African-Americans—that's what we are—Africans who are in America. You're nothing but Africans. Nothing but Africans. In fact, you'd get further calling yourself African instead of Negro. Africans don't catch hell. You're the only one catching hell. They don't have to pass civil-rights bills for Africans. An African can go anywhere he wants right now. All you've got to do is tie your head up. That's right, go anywhere you want. Just stop being a Negro. Change your name to Hoogagaagoohe. That'll show you how silly the white man is. You're dealing with a silly man. A friend of mine who's very dark put a turban on his head and went into a restaurant in Atlanta before they called themselves desegregated. He went into a white restaurant, he sat down, they served him, and he said, "What would happen if a Negro came in here?" And there he's sitting, black as night, but because he had his head wrapped up the waitress looked back at him and says, "Why, there wouldn't no nigger dare come in here."

38 So, you're dealing with a man whose bias and prejudice are making him lose his mind, his intelligence, every day. He's frightened. He looks around and sees what's taking place on this earth, and he sees that the pendulum of time is swinging in your direction. The dark people are waking up. They're losing their fear of the white man. No place where he's fighting right now is he winning. Everywhere he's fighting, he's fighting someone your and my complexion. And they're beating him. He can't win any more. He's won his last battle. He failed to win the Korean War. He couldn't win it. He had to sign a truce. That's a loss. Any time Uncle Sam, with all his machinery for warfare, is held to a draw by some niggers, he's lost the battle. He had to sign a truce. America's not supposed to sign a truce. She's supposed

to be bad. But she's not bad any more. She's bad as long as she can use her hydrogen bomb, but she can't use hers for fear Russia might use hers. Russia can't use hers, for fear that Sam might use his. So, both of them are weaponless. They can't use the weapon because each's weapon militates the other's. So the only place where action can take place is on the ground. And the white man can't win another war fighting on the ground. Those days are over. The black man knows it, the brown man knows it, the red man knows it, and the yellow man knows it. So they engage him in guerrilla warfare. That's not his style. You've got to have heart to be a guerrilla warrior, and he hasn't got any heart. I'm telling you now.

39 I just want to give you a little briefing on guerrilla warfare because, before you know it, before you know it—it takes heart to be a guerrilla warrior because you're on your own. In conventional warfare you have tanks and a whole lot of other people with you to back you up, planes over your head and all that kind of stuff. But a guerrilla is on his own. All you have is a rifle, some sneakers and a bowl of rice, and that's all you need—and a lot of heart. The Japanese on some of those islands in the Pacific, when the American soldiers landed, one Japanese sometimes could hold the whole army off. He'd just wait until the sun went down, and when the sun went down they were all equal. He would take his little blade and slip from bush to bush, and from American to American. The white soldiers couldn't cope with that. Whenever you see a white soldier that fought in the Pacific, he has the shakes, he has a nervous condition, because they scared him to death.

40 The same thing happened to the French up in French Indochina. People who just a few years previously were rice farmers got together and ran the heavily-mechanized French army out of Indochina. You don't need it—modern warfare today won't work. This is the day of the guerrilla. They did the same thing in Algeria. Algerians, who were nothing but Bedouins, took a rifle and sneaked off to the hills, and de Gaulle and all of his highbushin' war machinery couldn't defeat those guerrillas. Nowhere on this earth does the white man win in a guerrilla warfare. It's

not his speed. Just as guerrilla warfare is prevailing in Asia and in parts of Africa and in parts of Latin America, you've got to be mighty naive, or you've got to play the black man cheap, if you don't think some day he's going to wake up and find that it's got to be the ballot or the bullet.

44 I would like to say, in closing, a few things concerning the Muslim Mosque, Inc., which we established recently in New York City. It's true we're Muslims and our religion is Islam, but we don't mix our religion with our politics and our economics and our social and civil activities — not any more. We keep our religion in our mosque. After our religious services are over, then as Muslims we become involved in political action, economic action and social and civic action. We become involved with anybody, anywhere, any time and in any manner that's designed to eliminate the evils, the political, economic and social evils that are afflicting the people of our community.

45 The political philosophy of black nationalism means that the black man should control the politics and the politicians in his own community; no more. The black man in the black community has to be re-educated into the science of politics so he will know what politics is supposed to bring him in return. Don't be throwing out any ballots. A ballot is like a bullet. You don't throw your ballots until you see a target, and if that target is not within your reach, keep your ballot in your pocket. The political philosophy of black nationalism is being taught in the Christian church. It's being taught in the NAACP. It's being taught in CORE meetings. It's being taught in SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee] meetings. It's being taught in Muslim meetings. It's being taught where nothing but athletes and agonists come together. It's being taught everywhere. Black people are fed up with the dilapidating, pussyfooting, compromising approach that we've been using toward getting our freedom. We want freedom now, but we're not going to get it saying "We Shall Overcome." We've got to fight until we overcome.

46 The economic philosophy of black nationalism is pure and simple. It only means that we should control the economy of our community. Why should white people

be running all the stores in our community? Why should white people be running the banks of our community? Why should the economy of our community be in the hands of the white man? Why? If a black man can't move his store into a white community, you tell me why a white man should move his store into a black community. The philosophy of black nationalism involves a re-education program in the black community in regards to economics. Our people have to be made to see that any time you take your dollar out of your community and spend it in a community where you don't live, the community where you live will get poorer and poorer, and the community where you spend your money will get richer and richer. Then you wonder why where you live is always a ghetto or a slum area. And where you and I are concerned, not only do we lose it when we spend it out of the community, but the white man has got all our stores in the community tied up; so that though we spend it in the community, at sundown the man who runs the store takes it over across town somewhere. He's got us in a vice.

47 So the economic philosophy of black nationalism means in every church, in every civic organization, in every fraternal order, it's time now for our people to become conscious of the importance of controlling the economy of our community. If we own the stores, if we operate the businesses, if we try and establish some industry in our own community, then we're developing to the position where we are creating employment for our own kind. Once you gain control of the economy of your own community, then you don't have to picket and boycott and beg some cracker downtown for a job in his business.

48 The social philosophy of black nationalism only means that we have to get together and remove the evils, the vices, alcoholism, drug addiction, and other evils that are destroying the moral fiber of our community. We ourselves have to lift the level of our community, the standard of our community to a higher level, make our own society beautiful so that we will be satisfied in our own social circles and won't be running around here trying to knock our way into a social circle where we're not wanted.

So I say, in spreading a gospel such as black nationalism, it is not designed to make the black man re-evaluate

the white man—you know him already—but to make the black man re-evaluate himself. Don't change the white man's mind—you can't change his mind, and that whole thing about appealing to the moral conscience of America—America's conscience is bankrupt. She lost all conscience a long time ago. Uncle Sam has no conscience. They don't know what morals are. They don't try and eliminate an evil because it's evil, or because it's illegal, or because it's immoral; they eliminate it only when it threatens their existence. So you're wasting your time appealing to the moral conscience of a bankrupt man like Uncle Sam. If he had a conscience, he'd straighten this thing out with no more pressure being put upon him. So it is not necessary to change the white man's mind. We have to change our own mind. You can't change his mind about us. We've got to change our own minds about each other. We have to see each other with new eyes. We have to see each other as brothers and sisters. We have to come together with warmth so we can develop unity and harmony that's necessary to get this problem solved ourselves. How can we do this? How can we avoid jealousy? How can we avoid the suspicion and the divisions that exist in the community? I'll tell you how.

47) I have watched how Billy Graham comes into a city, spreading what he calls the gospel of Christ, which is only white nationalism. That's what he is. Billy Graham is a white nationalist; I'm a black nationalist. But since it's the natural tendency for leaders to be jealous and look upon a powerful figure like Graham with suspicion and envy, how is it possible for him to come into a city and get all the cooperation of the church leaders? Don't think because they're church leaders that they don't have weaknesses that make them envious and jealous—no, everybody's got it. It's not an accident that when they want to choose a cardinal [as Pepe] over there in Rome, they get in a closed so you can't hear them cussing and fighting and carrying on.

48) Billy Graham comes in preaching the gospel of Christ, he evangelizes the gospel, he stirs everybody up, but he never tries to start a church. If he came in trying to start a church, all the churches would be against him. So, he

just comes in talking about Christ and tells everybody who gets Christ to go to any church where Christ is; and in this way the church cooperates with him. So we're going to take a page from his book.

49) Our gospel is black nationalism. We're not trying to threaten the existence of any organization, but we're spreading the gospel of black nationalism. Anywhere there's a church that is also preaching and practicing the gospel of black nationalism, join that church. If the NAACP is preaching and practicing the gospel of black nationalism, join the NAACP. If CORE is spreading and practicing the gospel of black nationalism, join CORE. Join any organization that has a gospel that's for the uplift of the black man. And when you get into it and see them pussyfooting or compromising, pull out of it because that's not black nationalism. We'll find another one.

50) And in this manner, the organizations will increase in number and in quantity and in quality, and by August, it is then our intention to have a black nationalist convention which will consist of delegates from all over the country who are interested in the political, economic and social philosophy of black nationalism. After these delegates convene, we will hold a seminar, we will hold discussions, we will listen to everyone. We want to hear new ideas and new solutions and new answers. And at that time, if we see fit then to form a black nationalist party, we'll form a black nationalist party. If it's necessary to form a black nationalist army, we'll form a black nationalist army. It'll be the ballot or the bullet. It'll be liberty or it'll be death.

51) It's time for you and me to stop sitting in this country, letting some cracker senators, Northern crackers and Southern crackers, sit there in Washington, D.C., and come to a conclusion in their mind that you and I are supposed to have civil rights. There's no white man going to tell me anything about my rights. Brothers and sisters, always remember, if it doesn't take senators and congressmen and presidential proclamations to give freedom to the white man, it is not necessary for legislation or proclamation or Supreme Court decisions to give freedom to the black man. You let that white man know, if this is a country of

freedom, let it be a country of freedom; and if it's not a country of freedom, change it.

53 We will work with anybody, anywhere, at any time, who is genuinely interested in tackling the problem head-on, nonviolently as long as the enemy is nonviolent, but violent when the enemy gets violent. We'll work with you on the voter-registration drive, we'll work with you on rent strikes, we'll work with you on school boycotts—I don't believe in any kind of integration; I'm not even worried about it because I know you're not going to get it anyway; you're not going to get it because you're afraid to die; you've got to be ready to die if you try and force yourself on the white man, because he'll get just as violent as those crackers in Mississippi, right here in Cleveland. But we will still work with you on the school boycotts because we're against a segregated school system. A segregated school system produces children who, when they graduate, graduate with crippled minds. But this does not mean that a school is segregated because it's all black. A segregated school means a school that is controlled by people who have no real interest in it whatsoever.

54 Let me explain what I mean. A segregated district or community is a community in which people live, but outsiders control the politics and the economy of that community. They never refer to the white section as a segregated community. It's the all-Negro section that's a segregated community. Why? The white man controls his own school, his own bank, his own economy, his own politics, his own everything, his own community—but he also controls yours. When you're under someone else's control, you're segregated. They'll always give you the lowest or the worst that there is to offer, but it doesn't mean you're segregated just because you have your own. You've got to control your own. Just like the white man has control of his, you need to control yours.

54 You know the best way to get rid of segregation? The white man is more afraid of separation than he is of integration. Segregation means that he puts you away from him, but not far enough for you to be out of his jurisdiction; separation means you're gone. And the white man will integrate faster than he'll let you separate. So

we will work with you against the segregated school system because it's criminal, because it is absolutely destructive, in every way imaginable, to the minds of the children who have to be exposed to that type of crippling education.

55 Last but not least, I must say this concerning the great controversy over rifles and shotguns. The only thing that I've ever said is that in areas where the government has proven itself either unwilling or unable to defend the lives and the property of Negroes, it's time for Negroes to defend themselves. Article number two of the constitutional amendments provides you and me the right to own a rifle or a shotgun. It is constitutionally legal to own a shotgun or a rifle. This doesn't mean you're going to get a rifle and form battalions and go out looking for white folks, although you'd be within your rights—I mean, you'd be justified; but that would be illegal and we don't do anything illegal. If the white man doesn't want the black man buying rifles and shotguns, then let the government do its job. That's all. And don't let the white man come to you and ask you what you think about what Malcolm says—why, you old Uncle Tom. He would never ask you if he thought you were going to say, "Amen!" No, he is making a Tom out of you.

56 So, this doesn't mean forming rifle clubs and going out looking for people, but it is time, in 1964, if you are a man, to let that man know. If he's not going to do his job in running the government and providing you and me with the protection that our taxes are supposed to be for, since he spends all those billions for his defense budget, he certainly can't begrudge you and me spending \$12 or \$15 for a single-shot, or double-action. I hope you understand. Don't go out shooting people, but any time, brothers and sisters, and especially the men in this audience—some of you wearing Congressional Medals of Honor, with shoulders this wide, chests this big, muscles that big—any time you and I sit around and read where they bomb a church and murder in cold blood, not some grownups, but four little girls while they were praying to the same god the white man taught them to pray to, and you and I see the government go down and can't find who did it.

57 Why, this man—he can find Eichmann hiding down in Argentina somewhere. Let two or three American soldiers, who are minding somebody else's business way over in South Vietnam, get killed, and he'll send battalions, sticking his nose in their business. He wanted to send troops down to Cuba and make them have what he calls free elections—this old cracker who doesn't have free elections in his own country. No, if you never see me another time in your life, if I die in the morning, I'll die saying one thing: the ballot or the bullet, the ballot or the bullet.

58 If a Negro in 1964 has to sit around and wait for some cracker senator to filibuster when it comes to the rights of black people, why, you and I should hang our heads in shame. You talk about a march on Washington in 1963, you haven't seen anything. There's some more going down in '64. And this time they're not going like they went last year. They're not going singing "We Shall Overcome." They're not going with white friends. They're not going with placards already painted for them. They're not going with round-trip tickets. They're going with one-way tickets.

59 And if they don't want that non-violent army going down there, tell them to bring the filibuster to a halt. The black nationalists aren't going to wait. Lyndon B. Johnson is the head of the Democratic Party. If he's for civil rights, let him go into the Senate next week and declare himself. Let him go in there right now and declare himself. Let him go in there and denounce the Southern branch of his party. Let him go in there right now and take a moral stand—right now, not later. Tell him, don't wait until election time. If he waits too long, brothers and sisters, he will be responsible for letting a condition develop in this country which will create a climate that will bring seeds up out of the ground with vegetation on the end of them looking like something these people never dreamed of. In 1964, it's the ballot or the bullet. Thank you.