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Julian Bond

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Julian Bond: "Speech on racial equality in the United States"
Portland State University
May 22, 1970

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HOST: I'd like to acknowledge the beautiful people. Once again, I see we're right on schedule. Our time. [laughter and applause] Like to acknowledge President Wolfe, radical students, left-wingers, right-wingers, in-betweeners, and to togetherness. Together. [applause and cheers]

Talking about introducing to you a very controversial individual, the symbol, the epitome of togetherness in this nation today. Talking about a man that everyone has put up under their little microscopes and tried to dissect and analyze, came up with no positive conclusion. Talking about a man who sat up in the balcony down there in—I think they call it Georgia. And was told that people that look like him couldn't sit up there with those lily-white people, 'cause, you know. [laughter] But he decided to put a fly in the buttermilk, and was elected to a seat in the legislature there, in the House. And it seems that this young man made a couple statements that kind of made those soda crackers down South a little bit, you understand, nervous. Seems to me that Lyndon Baines Johnson was participating in some kind of a undeclared war. Seems to me the young man made a statement to the fact that he was against this involvement and this gave those crackers all the salt they needed. [laughter]

So, talking about an incident where a beautiful brother was, once more, ostracized, and not given a seat in this beautiful, parliamentary, whatever they call it, House. So we all know what happened. He went through all the legal channels, and it went all the way up to the Supreme Court, in which, of course, he won. Now without further ado, I'd like to introduce to you Mr. Julian Bond.

[applause]

JULIAN BOND: Thank you. Thank you very much. It is a habit of speakers like myself to begin by telling the audience what a great pleasure it is to be here. It is a great pleasure to be here. And it's also the habit for any kind of speaker, whether he is a minister in church or a lecturer in the classroom, to begin by telling the audience a series of hilarious anecdotes, the purpose of which is to put the audience in a good frame of mind, and also to hope that if the speakers says something offensive later on in his remarks, the audience will just remember the hilarious anecdotes. The kind of hilarious anecdotes I tell are called "rib-ticklers" or "thigh-slappers," and here is the first hilarious anecdote. [laughter]

This is about the Vice-President of the United States. [laughter and applause] It has to do with something, which like most of the things which go on in Washington, has been suppressed and kept from the American people, but now the awful truth can be told. It seems that about a week or ten days ago, a violent electrical storm hit the city of Washington and caused all the electricity in the White House to go out. When the lights came back on, President Nixon asked Vice-President Agnew if he wouldn't undertake the very important job of finding out what the exact time was so all the clocks could be put back on the right time, so the government would run on time. So being nobody's fool, Vice-President Agnew went right to the one place where you can be sure of getting the correct time all the time, and that's the Naval Observatory. And in his haste, he called up and didn't even tell them who he was, he simply called up and said, "Give me the correct time." Well, a young man, probably a yeoman in the Navy, answered the phone and didn't know he was speaking to the Vice-President, and refused to give him the correct time, saying that this is not the telephone company, we're not equipped here to give the correct time to every Tom, Dick, and Spiro who call up. [laughter] So the Vice-President was irritated, as I think anybody would have been in his position. He very quickly identified himself; he said, "This is the Vice-President, I'm the second-in-command; I insist that you give me the correct time." The young man was embarrassed and apologetic, and said, "I'm awfully sorry, sir. I didn't know that this was the Vice-President I was speaking to. I will give you the time." He said, "If you're a civilian, it's six o'clock. If you're in the armed services, it's 0600 hours. But if you're the Vice-President of the United States, the big hand is on twelve..." [laughter erupts; applause]

Now, I have one other, which I ought to tell you, some people have told me is tasteless and off-color, and borders on the obscene, and that it's OK to tell this next hilarious anecdote in evil, sophisticated New York or wild and outgoing and ritzy San Francisco or Los Angeles, but when you get away from those two large urban centers and get into the heartland of America, as we are here, then quite possibly you may come across someone who may take offense at this next hilarious anecdote. But first, it seems to me that ought to be offensive, really, to you, because

all of you, presumably, are adults of college age that are ready to weigh with proper judicial restraint anything that you hear. And secondly, I will be gone, myself, in a matter of hours, so what do I care? [laughter]

This is about another government figure, and has to do with a visit about two months ago of the Premier of France to the United States, and the great controversy that that visit caused. There were demonstrations against him, and in favor of him, and a great many questions raised in Washington about whether or not this meant the beginning of some new kind of political relationship between the United States and France. So an enterprising reporter, thinking to get some inside information, decided to call the one man in Washington who is closest to President Nixon, and that is the Attorney General, Mr. John Mitchell. He called Mr. Mitchell's home to ask him a question about this visit of the Premier of France, and discovered, much to his dismay, that Mr. Mitchell was not at home. But fortuitously, his lovely wife Martha was. So the reporter decided that he would go ahead and put the question to Mrs. Mitchell. The question was, "What does your husband think of Premier Pompidou's new French position?" And... [laughter] and she said, "I don't know what he thinks of it, but it hurts my back." [laughter and applause]

I want to talk about two or three different things, one being simply a repetition of an old analysis of the problems Black people face in this country, an analysis which is not new, but which is not heard as often as it ought to be. And secondly, some of the political assumptions necessary for both Black and white people in this country if the problem of race is ever to approach a solution. We can begin by stating that the United States of America, particularly so at the beginning of the decade of the 1970s, is a colonial society, with all of the Black people being colonial subjects, and all of the white people, consciously or not, or willingly or not, being colonialists. Now the first fact is sure to be disputed by some people. The second one cannot be, because even the prestigious Kerner commission report, the official establishment statement on the crisis of race in America, has said what white Americans have never fully understood, but what Black Americans can never forget, is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.

But the colonial status of America's Black people has never received the recognition as has the colonialist status of America's white people. On the contrary. It is argued that since Black people in this country are American, rather than foreign, since we have in theory equal Constitutional rights with white people, and since we are not the traditional source of raw material that a colonial people are, then the argument goes that the colonial analysis must be faulty. The argument goes that if the colonial analysis is faulty, then the traditional colonial solution—revolutionary nationalism—must be unthinkable here. In point of fact, the reverse is

true. It is true that we are Americans, at least by birth, partly by language, less so by culture. We came here as did every other group of immigrants, but unlike all of them, we came as involuntary immigrants. When the European arrived, he gained an immediate, if low-level, economic foothold by providing the unskilled labor needed by industry. The first Black immigrants, the slaves, provided needed labor to be sure, but at no profit whatsoever to themselves. When Black people made the migration from country to city, we found an already developed economy with little use for us except as consumers. Even before then, the system of chattel slavery had destroyed African cultures and the African family, had imposed a strange and alien religion on an already religious group of people, while the European was allowed to draw his political and economic strengths from the traditions and religions that he has been allowed to preserve to this very day. As slavery passed, we entered into a permanent status of underemployment, while the European thrived in an expanding economy and a growing age of entrepreneurial opportunities.

It's also certainly a fact that at least in popular theory, Black and white people in this country enjoy equal Constitutional status. Although some of the rights which every schoolboy knows are guaranteed in the Constitution, like the right to vote, are still the subject of intense argument, not just in the Unreconstructed South, but in the halls of Congress and the highways and byways of the White House as well. It's also true that Black people in America offer no source of raw material, like the traditional colonial people do. And increasingly, in a technological and increasingly automated society, offer no source of cheap labor either. A fact from which only the most alarming conclusions can be drawn. It can be argued that under the old form of colonialism, the colonized people enjoyed protection from fears of genocide, because they were needed to make the colonial equation add up. Under this new form of colonialism, in which the colonial subjects are fast becoming a surplus, and a useless people, there is nothing to prevent genocide, or a new kind of slavery, if the ruling powers become too irritated at the slaves' demands.

The single kind of conclusion to be drawn is that the solutions which have worked in integrating and assimilating the European into the American mainstream cannot be depended upon to do the same thing in the case of American Blacks. The processes which elevated the European: hard work, self-help, ethnic identification, political activism, economic separatism, intellectual striving; these can at best only minimally improve the condition of the mass of Black people in this country. So, while American society has always presented the opportunity for *some* Black people to rise to positions of influence and affluence, and while society presently presents the opportunity for general, if only minimal, improvements to be won through the regular channels, it has not yet shown any indication or willingness to change its three-hundred-year-

old history of exploitation and suppression based on race, and an economic system which has always believed that property is more important than people.

What further complicates the possibility of such change existing or occurring is that over the past five years, the discussion about social change in this country has become so cloudy and unreal. As an example, while 500,000 American troops are engaged in an imperialist occupation of one small country, and the vicious, aggressive invasion of another; while both countries are being destroyed by American bombs, napalm, and defoliants, back at home, Black people are cautioned against the use of senseless violence. Further example: in Latin America, where the alliance for progress has had the singular result of increasing the flow of dollars from South American client states back into the United States, here at home, similar schemes under the guise of corporate liberalism or minority entrepreneurship are touted for the ghetto. Another example: in those nations where it is thought that American imperial interests are being threatened, particularly in Vietnam or Cuba or the Dominican Republic, American military might has been demonstrated to be a helpless force in the face of nationalism and the rising expectations of oppressed people. But here at home, the same bankrupt military solutions are tried again and again in the domestic Black colony, and now even on the college campus, again, with only temporary success. A further example: an innocuous and innocent method of transporting children to school through vehicles powered by the internal combustion machine, an old practice in each of the fifty states in the Union, a practice presently engaged in by over half of the public school children in the United States, becomes, in the mouth of the President, a strange, alien, un-American, atheistic practice. The evil and vicious forced busing, calculated to destroy the psyche of the white school child, and to violate the most sacred of all American concepts, the much-beloved neighborhood school. A further example: the basis upon which most of public higher education in the United States is built; the almost century-old policy of open admissions becomes in the sour mouth of the gatemouth Marilyn Farmer, who presides over the Senate, an anti-elitist practice which will destroy the value of an academic degree. A further example. Picking up beer cans from the public highway is touted as proper social activism by the administration, while the corporate murderers who manufacture filth to poison the air and the water go free. A further and final example: in this nation over the past couple of years, law and order has become the platitude of the day, while corporate executives conspire to deliver faulty and malfunctioning parts to American military airplanes.

The continuing tragedy in the relationship between the United States and her colonial subjects, both here and abroad, is that this nation has always chosen the preservation of order rather than the risk of reform. Now that is certainly the history of our involvement in Vietnam, where brutal, anti-democratic, but importantly for us, of course, anti-Communist regimes are supported, and that is the history at home, where reformist efforts aimed at improving the

quality of life for Black people are always halted at the very last minute whenever order is threatened. Thus, the reports of the commissions into the riots of 1919, of 1935, of 1943, the commission investigating the causes of the Watts rebellion, appear in the eyes of one observer as a kind of Alice in Wonderland. The same moving picture shown over and over again, the same analysis, the same recommendations, the same inaction.

Now for Black people, the way out of this colonial status seems rather clear. First, one would hope we could adopt an analysis which would suggest that the social system in the United States as it is presently organized is both incapable of solving the problem and at the same time it is a very crucial part of the problem, and cannot be appealed to or relied upon as an independent judge in power conflicts of which it is a dominant part. Next, we have to assume that most white Americans lack the will, the courage, and the intelligence to voluntarily grant Black people our freedom, and that they must be forced to do it by pressure.

We have to also assume some things which may seem rather self-evident, but which need restating nonetheless. The first is that people do not discriminate for the fun of it, but that the function of prejudice is to reinforce certain special interests: social, economic, political, psychological, sexual, and that appeals made to the fair play of prejudiced people are like saying prayers to the wind. Next, that the old colonial pattern will change, and colonialists will relinquish their power, only if they are forced to make a clear-cut choice between continuance of the old relationship and another clear-cut or highly cherished value, such as economic gain or civil peace. Next, that conflict and struggle and confrontation are vital, and necessary for social change; and finally, that the rights and lives of real human beings are at stake, and these are, in the long run, neither ballotable nor negotiable. That such negotiations, if they ever take place, to be meaningful, must take place between equals, acting in good faith, and the issue here is precisely the good faith, if not the good sense, of white Americans.

Now, for white people, the question becomes whether or not they can give up the benefits, economic profit, political power, social status, psychological rewards, that are derived from the status quo. Such a movement, we are told, is beginning to develop among young white people, motivated, perhaps, by a surfeit of things American, and the debasement of what they were taught was thought to be good. They see their cities made unlivable, they see meaningless hard work done by the many for the benefit of the few, they see themselves chattered by parents, schools, and draft boards, they see that their passions and skills cannot find an outlet in present-day society. The question for their future, but most importantly for our future, is whether or not they can be counted upon to discontinue the American tradition of racial arrogance.

But for white people in general, for those who with all evident sincerity profess a willingness to do something about what they like to think of as “the Negro problem,” and who however profess ignorance as to what can be done to solve “the Negro problem,” an old man named Frederick Douglass, who lived a hundred years ago, proposed a program for such people in 1894. He said then, “What the real problem is, we all ought to know. It is not now and never has been a Negro problem, but in every sense is a great white problem. The Negro has as little to do with the cause of the problem as he has to do with its cure. The problem involves the simple question of whether or not, after all of their boasted civilization, their Declaration of Independence, their matchless Constitution, their sublime Christianity, their wise...” [alarm goes off in background] “...statesmanship,” [alarm stops] “whether or not they as a people have virtue enough to solve their problem. But how, they like to ask, can the problem be solved? Let the white people of the North and South conquer their prejudices. Let them give up the idea that they can be free while making the Negro a slave. Let them give up the idea that to degrade the colored man is to elevate the white man. They are not required to do very much. They are only required to undo the evil they have done in order to solve their problem. Let them cultivate kindness, humanity, Christianity, civilization. Let them put away their race prejudice. Let them banish the idea that one class must rule over another. Let them recognize the fact that the rights of the humblest of citizens are as worthy of protection as the rights of the highest, and all their problems will be solved, and what ever will be in store for them in the future, whether prosperity or adversity, whether they have foes without or foes within, whether there shall be peace or war, if they could only live their lives based on the eternal principles of truth, justice, and humanity, with no class having cause for complaint or grievance, then their republic would stand and flourish for ever.” Thank you.

[applause]

HOST: How about that? [applause continues] Right now, ladies and gentlemen, for you who want to ask a few questions of Mr. Bond, he is available for a question and answer period. So, if you want to ask something, you’ll have to speak very loud and clear, and then he’ll answer you.

BOND: Does anyone have a question? Yes, miss.

[questioner inaudible]

BOND: The question is, the young lady says that she thought the end of my address was hopelessly naïve, and that people, after all, do not do things because they are right to do, but do them because of selfish interests. Is that a correct paraphrase? And wonders whether or not I have any suggestions as to what can be made to make people do the right thing, if for the

wrong reason, or for the right reason, for that matter. I don't really have any very specific suggestions, but I tried to suggest that two things are necessary. That people will not do the right thing unless they are forced to do so, and that society in general will never grant to Black people the kinds of lives we ought to expect to have unless society in general is forced to make a choice between doing that and losing something else which is highly cherished by it. Such as economic gain or civil peace. If society has to choose between those two things, it may end up choosing granting us what we need; it may, on the other hand, end up in some sort of more repressive situation than we have now. But I think that is the way the choice has to be posed. You either do this thing, or something worse will happen.

[questioner inaudible]

BOND: Are you trying to tell me something? [...] The question asked was what's going on in Augusta, Georgia, since six people were shot by policemen in self-defense in the back. Ahh... [applause gathering momentum] I don't know what's going on right there in the city of Augusta. For those of you who like marches, there's a big march, which culminates in Atlanta tomorrow. And what is really going to be done as a result of that I just don't know. I've been home since then, and people are confused about what might be a proper response.

[...]

Well, I think the mood of violence, aggressive violence on behalf of the oppressor, is expanding. That because he has a friend in the White House, he knows that he can shoot people down in the streets, and that little or nothing will be done to him. He knows he can return to his old ways of viciousness and brutality and bloodletting, and that little or nothing will be done to him. So I think that's an expansion, there's going to be an expansion over the summer. The difference is, I think, some people like to liken this to the Reconstruction period, or the period following the Reconstruction when the carpetbagger regimes were chased out, the Black politicians were suppressed. The difference is that I think that in this era, the Black population is not as quiescent as it was in that era. It's much more aggressive, it is armed, it is not willing simply to be shot at, but is willing indeed to shoot back. [applause] So I don't think the outcome would be exactly the same. Yes.

[questioner in background]

BOND: Well, it may be because in war, everyone is interested first in his life, his own life, and secondarily in the life of the person next to him, on the theory that if his life is saved, then he will protect my life. Once you're here, and there are no bullets flying, not most of the time

anyway, what necessity is there for you to be your brother's keeper? There is none. I think that's probably the difference. It's preservation. In the foxhole, it's your own self-preservation. Your life and your brother's life and your co-foxhole occupant's life are tied together. You have to support each other. You're saving each other's lives. But when you get back on the sidewalk, you don't have to do that anymore. Although I'd think that the situation is exactly the same, but... I think that's the reason.

[...]

Well, because a lot of people don't want to play on a team, or they want to play by their own rules, they don't like the rules that the team is playing under, or they want to be coach, you know. Some of them don't want to be... they want to be manager, you know. [laughter] And carry the money. Yes?

[...]

Well, I would be willing to support a fourth party. I don't know what Senator McCarthy's fourth party would be like. I assume, because I think he is a fine man, that it'll be a fine party. But I'll tell you what I do think also, that by 1972 it'll be too late, unless you're thinking about the elections in 1984. Because you cannot mount a... I don't believe you can mount a, build a brand-new political party in the space of a few months, between January first 1972 and November fifth 1972. It just can't be done. George Wallace didn't do it that way, and he had resources that are not available to people on the Left. He had the resources of the state of Alabama, he had his own undoubtable charisma, he had... [laughter] he had a cause that has fervent believers and... [alarm bell going off] ...in every part of the United States, so it's just not an easy thing. I think 1972 would be too late. Yes.

[...]

The impact of the War on Poverty? Well, the only familiarity I have with any of the offices of the... or any of the offshoots of the War on Poverty is in Atlanta. So it's hard for me to characterize it nationally. My feeling about what it's done is that it's given jobs to people who may have gotten jobs anyway, and the people who would not have gotten jobs anyway, and some of them are going through their third or fourth training period, to train for jobs which don't exist when they get through the training period. They're training to be spot welders... [applause] ...they're trained to be spot welders and they get out and discover that there's a surplus of spot welders on the Atlanta labor market. I'll tell you one thing it has done very promisingly in Atlanta, is that it's put some organization into Black communities. Probably not

intentionally, but through community action programs, and through... I don't know the names of the others, but through some of its programs in which you have neighborhood aides going around to people's houses began to build a feeling of organization in Black communities which didn't exist previously.

[...]

Do I favor Black economic separatism? Well, I'll tell you, I am generally an anti-capitalist, but I'll also tell you this. [applause] I'll tell you this, I own, I own some small businesses. And if a Black guy got a chance to be president of General Motors tomorrow, I would be very happy. Not because I would think that that would change General Motors from the kind of corporation it is, that manufactures machines which are malfunctioning after 18 months. Not because simply having a Black guy at the head of it would make it a better, healthier, more socially responsible business entity, but simply because I'm glad to see Black people get ahead. [applause] If somebody Black wants to be president of Dow Chemical, then I'm happy to see him there, because I'm sure he wouldn't make napalm, but I'd be glad to see him making Saran wrap and all that other stuff... [laughter] I'd be very pleased. I'm very pleased when I see Black people engage in any kind of economic activity, communalistic, or socialistic, or capitalistic. Yes?

[...]

Well, I think the first important thing is to convince more people that repression occurs now. A great many people are of the notion, I think, that it isn't a fact that... there is no repression in this country, that what you simply have are a few lawbreakers, and that those people in responsible positions have done the right thing by shooting them in the back of the head while they sleep in bed, by locking them up and holding them under \$150,000 or \$200,000 bond. So I think the first step is to convince people that an era of repression has begun. Not that it is about to begin or may begin if something else happens, but it already has begun. Hopefully, although I'm not convinced of this, hopefully when people believe it's here, then they begin to move against it. But I think they'll never move against it if they don't believe that it's happening. And most people, I don't think, believe that it's happening.

[...]

Well, I think... I don't want to denigrate that, I think that's very important. But I think the educational process has to precede even that. Or the two may take place together, but people are not going to be interested in eliminating Richard Nixon if they don't believe Richard Nixon is an evil. Now maybe the people in this room believe that Richard Nixon is an evil, but we are far

from a majority of the people in this ten-block city area. So it doesn't do any good if we all think Richard Nixon is an evil man. It only does good if your mothers and fathers think Richard Nixon is an evil man, and until your mothers and fathers do, then the Richard Nixons of this world are likely to continue to be the Richard Nixons of this world. Yes?

[...]

Well, let me talk about that one plus the Chicago one. I think the two are connected and separate at the same time. Now, the Chicago one was the beginning of a message to the people of the country. Here's what the message said: it said, first, if you are a leader, like Bobby Seale or Tom Hayden or Dave Dillinger or Abby Hoffmann or Jerry Rubin or Rinny Davis, if you are a leader and you make speeches that are unpopular with people in government, then you may be put in jail. But there's another message in that. The other message was that if you are a follower, like John Froines or Lee Weiner, if you are just a follower, not a leader—if you're a follower and you associate with these "evil" people, Bobby Seale, Tom Hayden, Rinny Davis, Abby Hoffmann, Jerry Rubin, then you'll go to jail too. So that's the message. Don't play around with those people, because if you do, you'll go to jail. That's the first message. Now with the New Haven thing, the message is this: that if you are a head of an aggressive, militant organization, if you have demonstrated that you are utterly fearless and have no regard for your own life but all regard for your people, then you can expect to be charged with murder. You can expect that police informers will tell lies about you, you can expect that the people associated with you will be brutalized into telling lies about you, and you will place yourself in very great hazard. I think that's the lesson of both of those. But... pardon?

[...]

Is that first, you cannot turn your back on Bobby Seale. That you cannot allow him to be treated in such a fashion. That you cannot allow other people, in fact, the really broad lesson, I think, above and beyond what happened with him, is that you cannot allow leadership to be selected for you, other people to set standards of leadership for you. That you cannot have someone say that this is responsible leadership and this is not. Or even pit the two against each other, to say that Roy Wilkins is good and Bobby Seale is bad. I happen to take the broad view that I'm glad that Roy Wilkins is alive, you know, that... before I was born, he did things that I might not have done if I had been alive when he was alive. Or he still is alive, as a matter of fact. But, I'm glad he's here, and I don't like people putting the two of them in opposition and creating an argument between Bobby Seale and Roy Wilkins. I think the lesson is that you have to, that we have to support our leadership, and choose our leadership. That for too long it's been chosen

for us, and the standards of acceptability have been set for us by other groups of people. Yes, sir.

[...]

Yes. If the McCarran act is still law in this country, that's the act under which the Japanese Americans were put, placed into concentration camps, their properties seized, their homes sold, all their earthly belongings taken away from them. It's still law in this country. Now, the Nixon administration has moved to repeal that section of the McCarran act, which is a concession to those people who believe that you shouldn't have concentration camps in the United States, a small minority as we may be. But what's important about it—suppose Richard Nixon wants to put you in a concentration camp. Do you think he needs a law to do that? I mean, all he's got to do, he doesn't need a law to make war. He doesn't need a law to tap your phone. He doesn't need a law to shoot you in the back. Why does he need a law to put you in a concentration camp? [applause]

[...]

Well, I think you can go further back in history than that, back to 1968, when at a small Black school in Orangeburg, South Carolina, there were forty Black young men and some women who were all shot in the back by South Carolina state troopers. They were shot in the back of the head, in the buttocks, and in the soles of their feet. It's a well-known fact that if you attack on a policeman he will shoot you in the soles of your feet. Now, three of these young men were killed, all, again, shot in the back with double-ought shotgun shells, pellets. Very close range, as close as I am to you. And on that occasion, there were no hundred thousand students gathered around to watch the memorial in Washington. The presidents of Harvard University and Vanderbilt College in Nashville did not go to Washington to see President Johnson then, the Secretary of the Interior, who I guess was Morris Eudahl, it's Walter Hickel now, did not write a letter, "Dear Lyndon," the way this one has written "Dear Richard," the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, who was then, I don't know who, didn't get too perturbed about it, as this one has had a stroke, he's gotten so excited about it. There were no student strikes, no campuses shut down, no students demanding no more graduation, no more grades, or anything. Now why, you ask yourself, did this not happen in 1968 at Orangeburg but did happen in 1970 at Kent? Could it be because there were only three killed at Orangeburg and four killed at Kent? That might be it. Could be, it's OK to kill three, but not to kill four. Or, could it be that when that happened at Orangeburg, it wasn't on TV. Or in the newspapers. I don't think it was that, because I saw it on TV, and read about it in the newspapers, in the *Atlanta Journal* and the *Atlanta Constitution*, and the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* and

every other newspaper in this country. Could it be that there was a strong anti-war movement on the campus now, and there wasn't any then? In 1968? On the contrary, I think there was a stronger anti-war movement on the campus then, because a great many young men whose numbers are now from 150 to 365, were much more interested in the war then than they are now. There was a strong anti-war movement. What possibly could have been the difference between 1968 at Orangeburg State College, and 1970 at Kent State College in Ohio? It could only have been one possible difference. That it's all right to shoot people who look like you and I in the back, but it's not all right to shoot people who look like most of the people sitting here in the back. That is the sole, single, solitary, only difference between what happened at South Carolina State and what happened at Kent. And that, I think, is why in that big crowd in Washington on the weekend, two or three weekends ago, you only saw about fifteen Black people. It's not, I don't think, that we weren't sorry that those poor young people were killed, but that we've had those funerals before. Had one at Texas Southern in 1969, one at North Carolina A & T in 1969. Had them before then, and will have them before then. So we're all funeraled out. That's the reason. [applause]

[...]

On the Southern strategy. Well first, yes, well. The Southern strategy I think is not aimed at people who live south of Washington D.C. as much as it is aimed at people who live anywhere in the United States who think like most of the people do who live south of Washington D.C. So you can live in this state and not be a "Southerner," but be one of the recipients of the Southern strategy. It's not just aimed at us in the South. The theory is that if Richard Nixon can only get to the right of George Wallace, then all the people who voted for George Wallace in 1968 will vote for Richard Nixon in 1972. The trouble is that only one person in history has ever been to the right of George Wallace, and he is reputed to be living in Argentina right now. [applause] The other thing is Nixon thinks by going slow on school integration, he can satisfy the white South. There's only one thing that will satisfy the white South, and that's a return to slavery. You cannot appeal to them in that fashion. You give them an inch and they'll take a mile, see? [applause]

So, the other thing interesting is that Republicans are not the only ones with a Southern strategy. The Democrats have one too. The Democratic National Committee, if you don't know, has divisions, you know, an educational division, a youth division, and so on. And it always has had a minority division. That was for us. And as Chicanos become politically active, occasionally they do something for them, but it was mostly for Black people, who have been staunch Democrats, staunch and strong Democrats, particularly since the days of FDR. Well, three weeks ago, the Democratic National Committee, under the chairmanship of the great liberal,

Lawrence O'Brien, dismissed the minorities division. Which meant that there were no Black people at all on the political—on the national committee of the political party that has, I'm sure, in some of the homes, in some of the neighborhoods you live in, only two pictures, three pictures. One of King, one of Christ, and one of Kennedy. See? The party that gave us all our [...] John F. Kennedy. Robert Kennedy. They fired the two men, two men who took care of all the Black democrats in the United States. Now, Black people made some protest about it, and they rehired these guys, but they castrated them and eliminated a lot of their powers. So the Democrats have their own Southern strategy, too. The Republicans are not the only villains in that. Yes?

[...]

That the economic system of the Soviet Union? I don't... I've never been to the Soviet Union, but I've been to other socialist countries where racism abounds. I don't think capitalism is a necessary function of... that racism is a necessary function of capitalism. I do like to think, however, that it thrives in a capitalist system, and that in a socialist society, you'd like to believe that the state is the enemy of racism. But I have been to socialist nations where racism is evident. And I've been to socialist nations where it is not. I know Black people who have been to the Soviet Union, and who felt they were victims of great, great racism. So I assume that the Soviet Union just hasn't been able to do it. We've got one more?

[...]

No, I wouldn't say that. I would say that... the question is, wouldn't I say that most of the Negro's problems come from the fact that he has been relegated to second-class citizenship? I really don't think that's exactly the case. I think the case is that we have been living in a country with a group of people who have simply not been willing to give us a chance to live, and breathe, and work. It has nothing to do with our citizenship as far as political affairs are concerned, but just our lifestyle has not been able to live. [...] Oh, there is undoubted oppression among young people, against young people, against poor white people, against women, Black and white, against Latin Americans, Mexican Americans, American Indians, all these groups face their discrimination and face oppression. It is certainly a problem of the powerful against the powerless, but. The problems that we have are different from the problems all these other groups of people have. They are complicated and colored by the fact of race. You take the Irish immigrants who came here fifty, a hundred years ago, named O'Callahan. If he chose, he could change his name to Smith. When people saw him, no one would say, "There goes that dirty Irisher." But if I change my name to O'Callahan, how many people are going to think I'm Irish? No one! [applause]

Now... let me... let me say a few words on the very pressing question among Black people is the question of the women question versus the race question. Now which has priority? OK? Frederick Douglass, when the... who you can quote on any subject, just like Mao Tse-Tung, Frederick Douglass, when the Fourteenth Amendment was being considered by Congress, there were several very strong feminists in the abolitionist movement. They came to Frederick Douglass and said, "Douglass! Don't support the Fourteenth Amendment! Because all it does is give the right to vote to Black men. It doesn't do anything for white women and Black women." So Douglass said, "Well, you don't have any urgency." And the women said "What do you mean, we don't have any urgency? Aren't we discriminated against, brutalized, treated badly?" And Douglass said, "When women, because they are women, are snatched from their homes, their babies torn from their arms, their brains smashed against every lamppost, when they are hung from every tree in every town and hamlet in the South, then and only then will they have an urgency." And the people said, "Douglass! Isn't that true about Black women?" And he said, "Yes. But not because they are women, but because they are Black." Thank you.

[applause]

HOST: For the benefit of those who might be interested, there will be a reception in North Lounge at 2:30. We hopefully will have Mr. Bond there for a little while. Thank you very much.

[program ends]