

We Shall Overcome

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I believe living in peace on this planet is always our concern. Because this is the planet where we live and where our children will live in the future. But, reviewing the history of this world, I'm afraid we have to admit that the history of human beings is the history of wars.

There have been many wars in the past. Two of the biggest were World War I and World War II. Since so many people died in World War I, it was called "the war to end all wars." After it ended, most of the nations decided, "No more war." Nevertheless, World War II broke out, and the number of casualties rose up to 22 million all over the world. Now nobody can deny that if another world war should occur, it will mean the extinction of human beings.

Although we keep on saying that war is stupid, and that through hatred and violence, there is no solution for any problem, people are hating each other, despising each other and killing each other somewhere in this world. The Iran-Iraq War is one example, and the U.S. attack against Libya which occurred this past April was another. Also, some countries are devoting vast sums of money to massive weapons that could better be used to combat ignorance, poverty, and disease, helping those involved in wars.

Even if many people say, "Please do not fight any more," or "no more war!" it is not so easy to stop them from fighting with each other, because various reasons are involved in causing wars. International politics and international problems are too complicated to understand. People have different points of view and different kinds of religions. Many people are hating each other because of these differences. And because of these differences, many people died.

Of course, it is very hard and almost impossible to solve those differences. For they are based on our own traditions, history, our own background. But we must not just sit back and see people killing each other without doing anything. We have to seek the means by which those differences can be resolved. Even if we cannot end our differences, at least we can direct attention to our common interests. For as John F. Kennedy said in his speech "THE STRATEGY OF PEACE" our most common link is the fact that we live on this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.

I want to believe we human beings are not too stupid to understand this common link.

Suppose we are talking about Western Europe. As some of you know, countries in Europe fought against one another many times during its long history. From 1337 to 1453, England

and France fought each other in the Hundred Years War. In 1871, there was the France-Prussian War. And they have experienced world-wide wars twice. But in spite of these historical facts, they set up the European Community in 1967. In that community, the countries which once fought each other are now trying to help and encourage one another. Of course people did hate each other. Even now people do have different points of view. But still, they rose above their hate. They rose above their differences. And finally, they set up the European Community where all nations can help each other instead of hating each other. Isn't it a sign of human progress?

Some forty years ago, Charlie Chaplain in his movie 'The Great Dictator,' dreamed of a world where men live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery. Twenty-four years ago, Martin Luther King, Jr. dreamed of a world where black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics are able to join their hands. And now I dream of a world where all men rise above their hate, their brutality, their differences and can help each other. And when this happens, when we overcome these obstacles lying ahead of us, I believe true happiness shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

We shall overcome our hate. We shall overcome our differences. We shall overcome them someday. Deep in my heart, I do believe we shall overcome someday.

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