

CD-1096 Transcription

Bayard Rustin 75th birthday tribute. 18 March 1987.

Ernest Green:

Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Ernest Green, and I am your Master of Ceremonies for tonight. I would like to welcome you all here tonight, as we celebrate this wonderful occasion. Now out in the hall, I think most people said, "We knew that Bayard would be here to celebrate his seventy-fifth birthday; we weren't sure that we would all be here." It is a singular honor to recognize him, to be able to honor him, to share a meal with him, and to talk about the good times, the bad times, and just plain times. This is hopefully going to be an evening in which you are going to enjoy it; it's going to move quickly. [01:00] You're going to learn a lot. You're going to enjoy it a lot, and we're all going to be better off for having celebrated Bayard Rustin's seventy-fifth birthday. At this time it is my honor to ask Jim Dumpson to come to the podium, former commissioner twice of Human Resources Administration, City of New York. And we'll present Bayard with some views, as many of us haven't had an opportunity to hear of when they were in college together. Dr. Dumpson? (applause)

Jim Dumpson:

It's a new, unique privilege to have this opportunity to salute Bayard. It's unique chiefly because it comes after a half-century [02:00] of friendship and association with this warrior for peace and social justice. The roots of Bayard's total commitment to peace and social justice are deep in his past, and I come to speak of that past, of which only one who has known this man for 50 years can speak. Yes, I knew him early when. I knew him when the life roots of inspiration, of commitment, of action, were being nourished. Fifty years ago, Bayard Rustin and I became alumni at what is now Cheyney University. It has been founded by a Quaker in 1837, the oldest institution in this country for post-secondary education for black youth. And when Bayard was a student at Cheyney, Dr. Leslie Pinckney Hill was the president of that institution. [03:00] Added to the Quaker heritage of dedication to world peace and social justice was the nourishment of Leslie Pinckney Hill for the roots of Bayard's development. Dr. Hill, a protégé of Booker T. Washington, exalted the Negro spirituals, that unique contribution of black America to the musical heritage of these United States. And so no one wonders when in the '60s and '70s at the height of the Civil Rights Movement, or at a labor meeting, Bayard would end his speech with an outburst of song. Usually that Negro spiritual that said, "Oh freedom, freedom! Before I'll be a

slave, I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord in freedom." But Bayard was singing what he knew to sing. [04:00]

At Cheyney, and in the area around that institution, Bayard was recognized as a tenor singer of promise. Roland Hayes, the great American tenor, heard Bayard sing at one of Bayard's many presentations, and offered Bayard a summer coaching at Roland Hayes' studio in Boston. Press clippings of the 1935 and 1936 cite the following, and I quote: "In the *Philadelphia Ledger* of January 11, 1935, it was reported: *Run Mary Run*, featuring the gifted and popular tenor Bayard Rustin." And for an Armistice Day broadcast, radio station WFIL, that's CBS affiliated, reported, and I quote again, "The talented quartet of which Bayard Rustin [05:00] is a leading member, appeared." A board of judges, composed of five radio stations, among whom was Ted Husing, awarded for first prize gold medals to each of the members of the quartet. Bayard Rustin was identified as the first tenor. The beginning of an enviable career as one of America's great tenors. But the roots committed to the world of peace, to social justice, grew deeper and stronger in the man we salute tonight. And on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1937, the public press reported the following. I quote: "To prove that war is the greatest single menace facing the student world, and the world at large today, 60 college students, including Bayard Rustin

from Cheyney State Teachers College, gave up their summer vacation [06:00] to work in 63 centers in 22 states under the youth division of the Emergency Youth Campaign, to make more articulate and effective the already existing peace sentiment of the people throughout rural America." Yes, peace and social justice had already captured the mind and soul of Bayard Rustin the student. And today, we celebrate Bayard's commitment and action role over these 50 years, to a world that so desperately needs what Bayard has given, and continues to need what Bayard has to give: peace and social justice. Bayard, for your life of dedication to peace and social justice, all of us here, and your friends and admirers throughout the world, salute you with honor and warmest best wishes. [07:00]

**Vernon Jordan:**

When you become an ex-civil rights leader you don't get introduced; you have to introduce yourself. And for some of you who may have forgotten, my name is Vernon Jordan. Former president of the National Urban League, and I'm here to speak for the civil rights leadership. Bayard Rustin occupies one of the most unique position of any civil rights leader of our time. Bayard Rustin is the consummate advisor to the entire civil rights leadership. [08:00] From A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Martin King, Whitney Young, Dorothy Height, to Ben Hooks, John

Jacob, Norman Hill, Marion Edmonds, Jesse Jackson. We counted on Bayard Rustin for intellectual firepower, for strategic thinking, for long-range planning. Bayard was the chairman of the ideas committee for all of us. Bayard captured the spirit of heated debates among us, and drafted an eloquent statement of compromise and consensus. We each sought him out privately to ask his thoughts on our individual organizational agendas. Yes, Bayard Rustin, without staff, research assistants, interns, budget, or massive library, [09:00] was our intellectual bank, our Brookings Institution. An intellectual bank where we all had unlimited accounts, and upon for requests for withdrawals were never told that we were overdrawn. But Bayard Rustin was more than that. In the 1963 March on Washington, he demonstrated capacities some of us never knew he had. He proved to us that he was a first-rate organizer, logician, tactician, mobilizer, peacemaker, strategist, and coalition builder, as he led the Civil Rights Movement to one of its finest hours. And when the leadership in the movement were on the horns of a dilemma, facing imminent defeat, our spirits low, [10:00] our heads bowed, not knowing what next or which way to turn, it was Bayard Rustin's quiet eloquence, his inspiring words, his deep faith, his bright optimism that lifted our hearts, expanded our minds, inspired us, renewed us, reinvigorated us, to move to another mountain. Bayard Rustin is not only one with us, but he goes

with us, stands by us, and props us up on every leaning sign. He is, for us, a rock in a weary land. When hungry for ideas, he feeds us. When thirsty for tactics, he gives us water. When naked for inspiration, [11:00] he clothes us with thoughts and insights. Bayard's lifetime devotion to the cause of civil rights invokes the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes, who wrote: "That his life is action and passion, it is required of man to share the action and passion of his times, at the risk of being judged not to have lived." Bayard, you truly live, because you share and have shared with us the action and passion of the times. And I am honored and privileged to be here on behalf of the Civil Rights Movement, those gone and those here, to say thank you, Bayard, and happy birthday. [12:00]

**Dorothy Height:**

I'm Dorothy Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women. I cannot tell you what a joy it is to have the honor to share in this tribute to Bayard Rustin. He's indeed a friend, a scholar, a teacher, an organizer, a strategist, an author. He's a very good example of one who has a lifetime of purposeful activism. When you look back and see that in 1947, when he was part of the first Freedom Ride, when the Mason-Dixon Line was being challenged in transportation, and the decision in the Irene Morgan case had outlawed racial discrimination [13:00],

Bayard Rustin was arrested as they arrived in North Carolina. And he was placed 30 days on a chain gang. Here was a person whose eloquence and ability to lift beyond himself, to see this great injustice, and tell the story in such a commanding way that he was able, by that very getting the message out, to get the action started that led to the outlawing of the chain gang in North Carolina. Bayard Rustin is one of those persons who, to know is really to love and appreciate. He's also a great organizer. He helped Martin Luther King, Jr., with the Montgomery boycott. And he also helped to organize the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. [14:00] But perhaps we think of him most as the genius, the architect of the March on Washington, which led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

I think tonight we should say thanks to Bayard Rustin, because for me, one of the things he has done that has lasting value is that he has brought before us the importance of remembering the contribution of A. Philip Randolph. Mr. Randolph trusted Bayard, and he has proved worthy of that trust. I remember in 1962, a part of the Civil Rights Movement that I don't even think has been written about, because it was then that Stephen Currier, the Taconic Foundation, called together a group of people: Martin Luther King, Jr. [15:00] of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Roy Wilkins of the NAACP; Whitney Young,

Jr. of the National Urban League; James Farmer of CORE; James Forman of SNCC; Jack Greenberg of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund; A. Philip Randolph, and I was there. The assignment was to take a look at what was happening to black people in the United States, and to what extent philanthropic agencies were responding to their needs. There was a kind of agreement that everyone had, that they would meet, and they met about every six weeks for about 14 months. And that agreement was that they would make it a point to be there. And that they would not send proxies, but that that group would somehow [16:00] stay together and work on the issues. In the middle of it all, Medgar Evers was assassinated. And that made a whole turn. What was a group of people working and studying became what was called the United Civil Rights Leadership. And I thought it was very significant that the one person who was there, because Mr. Randolph was ailing, who was not the principal, if you would call it that, was Bayard Rustin. Bayard Rustin was no proxy. He was, as Vernon Jordan has already said, a very central figure. His thinking, his council, his guidance, his sensitivity, his capacity to put into words what we were thinking and to bring us together and help to get consensus, all contributed to what later became sharper and sharper, the Civil Rights Leadership. [17:00] And I think that all of us owe a debt of gratitude, because it was Bayard Rustin who not only loved



and worked with Mr. Randolph, but who helped us to see the importance of institutionalizing some of the things that Mr. Randolph taught about collective power, about economic betterment, about social justice, about organizing, and about efforts. And he did it in the same spirit as Martin Luther King, because he saw us seeing ways in which we worked not just for ourselves, but for all people. And he was forever helping us to bring together people of many different backgrounds. Because as you will remember, Dr. King said so well: "The black man needs the white man to free him of his fear, and the white man needs the black man to free him of his guilt." In that spirit, [18:00] and with that kind of determination that A. Philip Randolph had not only demonstrated but had taught, Bayard was always in there, helping us to move steadily forward.

I think we need to think too, as I think of Bayard, think of him as a person. And I hear so much about the weakness in the black family. I want to say a special word for him, and to him, because Bayard always reminds us of the strength there is in many black families, no matter what their compositions, when he tells us of what it meant to him to have his great grandmother. And then of course, I cannot think of any person who has contributed more to the development of a youth leadership among us. Around this room tonight there are so many. Hundreds of

young people, as John Lewis could speak of from SNCC. But literally hundreds have benefited [19:00] through not only the recruitment and training program, and the minority women's program. But they have not only been beneficiaries; they have been leaders. Who else could purport that a president could appoint an Assistant Secretary of Labor, as in Ernie Green; a youngest director of the Women's Bureau, as in Alexis Herman; and have all of that come as the fruits of their labors. And I think, Bayard, we have to say thank you, for your example in helping us to see the importance of developing the leadership of the future. And I can't help but say that I stand here tonight, grateful because of the way in which Bayard has championed the cause of women. I remember one time, he was making a very important speech, and he suddenly stopped, and he looked in the audience [20:00] and said to me, "Dorothy, should I say 'chairperson' or 'chairwoman,' or what?" And I said, "Bayard, say 'chaircreature' and keep moving." And he did. But his sensitivity, his awareness, means that as he works, he's always on that cutting edge, and always wanting to know, even what the latest words are that are expressing something. Bayard, we're here tonight because we love you. We wish you not only a happy birthday, but we wish that you would stay on that cutting edge, because all of us need your example. Thank you very much.

(applause)

(break in audio)

RUSTIN: Well, I didn't get in trouble for singing the song; I got in trouble for sitting in the front of the bus in North Carolina and got on the chain gang for it. [21:00] I sat in the front of the bus --

Q: (inaudible)

RUSTIN: -- and well, obviously a little too much pigmentation. And then the cops come up; they arrest us; they take us --

Q: What did they say?

RUSTIN: They told us to get in the back.

Q: And what did you say to them?

RUSTIN: We told them we felt that we had an obligation to sit in the front because the Supreme Court had made a ruling that Negroes could sit front or back when they were traveling interstate travel.

Q: What did they say?

RUSTIN: They said, well that's what the Supreme Court may say, but we work for the state of North Carolina. Then they took us off, took us to the courthouse, they gave us a trial. At the trial they gave us 30 days on the chain gang. On the chain gang they gave us a lot of work to do; we did it. We got off in 22 days, eight days for good time, God bless

them. And we came home. Well, the fact of the matter is, everybody on the chain gang is treated very badly. But from the stories [22:00] which the white fellas told us, who also got in trouble for sitting in the back with Negroes, they were treated worse than we were. Now that's not difficult to explain, because in one sense, because the judge was much more resentful of white people who would associate with Negroes than Negroes who were seeking their own rights.

(break in audio)

**Bayard Rustin:**

Well I'm going to sing a song for you now, "You Don't Have to Ride Jim Crow." In fact, I helped to write it. One summer in Washington, a group of us were down in the nation's capital, where we get a bunch of college kids every year to fight against Jim Crow. And we were sitting in the park one day, and fooling around singing, and in about 15 or 20 minutes we had half the song, and in the next half hour we had the rest of it.

*You don't have to ride Jim Crow,  
No, you don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
On June the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the high court said  
When you ride interstate, Jim Crow is dead.  
You don't have to ride [23:00]Jim Crow.  
And when you get on the bus,  
And when you get on the bus,*

Get on the bus, set any place,  
'cause Irene Morgan won her case.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
On June the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the high court said  
When you ride interstate, Jim Crow is dead.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
Now you can set anywhere.  
Now you can set anywhere.  
Set anywhere, don't raise no fuss.  
Keep cool, brother, your cause is just.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
On June the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the high court said,  
When you ride interstate, Jim Crow is dead.  
You don't have to ride [24:00] Jim Crow.  
And if the driver man says move,  
And if the driver man says move,  
If driver say move, speak up polite,  
But sit there tight, you're in the right.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
No, you don't have ride Jim Crow.  
Go quiet-like, if you face arrest,  
NAACP will make a test.  
You don't have to ride Jim Crow.  
And someday, we'll all be free.  
Yes, someday we'll all be free.  
When united action turns the tide,  
And black and white sit side by side,  
Oh someday we'll all be free. [25:00]

**Tom Donahue :**

I'm not listed on your program, and you may not know me, which is why I never leave home without my union privilege credit card. Which reads Tom Donahue, Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO. Bayard, I am delighted to substitute for Lane Kirkland this evening, to bring you his and my and the Federation's greetings

and good wishes. As you well know, Lane is recovering from surgery and coming along very well. For more than 15 years now, I've been going to testimonial dinners for Bayard Rustin. And I hope to be invited to many more. The reality is, I think I met my wife at a Rustin testimonial dinner. And one of the things [26:00] she brought to our marriage, a souvenir of her many years of association with Bayard, is a wonderful tape of Bayard and Jim Farmer, back in their Fellowship of Reconciliation days, with Jim Farmer narrating and Bayard singing gospel songs. I wish I had brought it along. It is good for all of us to be here with Bayard. Good for us to rub elbows with such a man whenever you get the chance. Good for your heart, and your mind, and your spirit. We've seen people by the hundreds of thousands marching and working together to change their country for the better, once Bayard brought them face to face. We've seen democracy strengthened and energized by some wonderfully constructive institutions, like the A. Philip Randolph Institute, that Bayard designed and set in motion. Not everyone realizes how meticulously [27:00] Bayard prepared himself for this life work, or how deeply he probed the roots of human experience. He learned the principles of nonviolent protest from Gandhi. He learned trade unionism at the side of Phil Randolph. He was a pioneer four decades ago in the fight against apartheid in South African segregation in the American South. He was a friend and

mentor of Martin Luther King, long before most Americans knew that name. But everyone who's had the great good fortune to work closely with Bayard, and to count him as a personal friend, knows that what's most extraordinary about him is not what he's done, but what he is: a leader who inspires leadership in others, wherever he goes in this world, in the cause of human liberty and brotherhood. For every one of us who's able to be here tonight to pay honor to Bayard Rustin, there are many thousands in many lands speaking many languages [28:00] who honor him in their daily lives by honoring the things he stands for. What we're doing tonight on their behalf and on our own, is not to say thanks for what Bayard has done in the past, but to express a hope that in the future, each of us might become a little bit more like him. And that, my friends, is a very high ambition. Thank you. (applause)

**Leo Cherne:**

I'm Leo Cherne, and I'll endeavor to instill, in a very few moments, Bayard's indefatigable work as an officer of the International Rescue Committee, and far beyond that. For the refugees who have fled terror and tyranny. I have many unforgettable recollections of Bayard's missions [29:00], of which I will only recall one. December 1978. Pulau Bidong, a volcanic isle off the coast of Malaysia. Forty thousand

Vietnamese boat people, 40,000, are packed into an area the size of 85 wretched, mountainous acres. No wonder it was called Hell Island. Bayard is there, as a member of our Citizens' Commission of Indochinese Refugees. And at the end of the day, thousands of the Vietnamese jam into a small clearing. And Bayard climbs onto a primitive platform, and announces, "I will start a song that is new to you. And I want you to join me [30:00]." And he sings "We Shall Overcome." After a minute or two, thousands join him, their voices rising in volume and intensity. It is clear from their faces that they sense what it is they're singing and saying. And that once again, this episode made it so clear that Bayard had brought hope and a glimpse of a future and freedom to people who could not imagine those qualities. And within months, thanks to his heroic efforts, his work helped bring, transform hope to reality. [31:00] Now suddenly once again, it is urgent to convert despair, especially among the Cambodians and the mountain Laos, to convert that despair into some small measure of humanity and hope. Thailand has been the country of first sanctuary for thousands who have felt the desperation of the three Indochinese and now Marxist countries. The countries of the West, and most notably the United States, have for years resettled a significant number of these victims. However, unemployment in Europe, budget pressure in Washington, compassion fatigue, and most regrettably of all, growing



xenophobia [32:00] everywhere, have sharply reduced our willingness to resettle those who are still in those camps in Thailand. Some of them, for seven years. Tragic news carried by the *New York Times* just yesterday tells us of Laos refugees who are being forced back into their own country. And of Cambodians who have been declared illegal immigrants by Thailand, and are scheduled to be forced back to the border within sight of the Vietnamese army. I know of no more appropriate tribute to Bayard on this occasion than to make the strongest appeal to our own government to increase [33:00] the numbers we will resettle, to set an example to the countries of western Europe, and thereby reassure the Thais that our obligation to these people, borne in tragedy, and continuing inhumanity, has not grown stale. And to the extent that we can succeed, we honor Bayard by doing what he has done so relentlessly, for so many years. We have never enjoyed the presence of one who has more enriched every civilized impulse. I reach for a line by one of his fellow poets and humanists, name of Will Shakespeare, [34:00] to express one small element of my admiration for Bayard, knowing that it's yours as well: "Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale his infinite variety." Happy birthday, Bayard. We love you.

**M1:**

Bayard, my friend. I am trying to trace back the origins of our

friendship. And I know I am mistaken. For somehow, I have the feeling that you have been part of my inner landscape even before we first met. [35:00] Is it because of our journeying together to so many faraway places? In the Talmudic tradition, which is mine, one may not say someone's full place in his or her presence, and therefore, Bayard, I shall only speak of one of your virtues: your relentless fight against idolatry. But then, idolatry has many faces. Racism is idolatry, as is ethnic hatred or religious bigotry, or anyone who believes that he or she, or his or her group are superior to any other group; they are committing a sin of idolatry. I remember Moscow [36:00] 1979. Taken on a guided tour to the Kremlin, you, Bayard, stopped the bus when you heard the program. "What?!" you shouted. "A visit to Lenin's tomb? I refuse to worship idols." And our tour guide, it had never happened to her before. But then, she had not met anyone like you before. Nor have I. That is why we traveled together to so many places. I remember our journey to Thailand. I remember it especially tonight, since we heard our friend Leo speak of Thailand today, of what is happening there, that once more, thousands and thousands of refugees are waiting for a place, waiting [37:00] for a sign, waiting for an invitation to be offered a haven, a refuge. We have seen them, survivors of the Kmer Rouge atrocities. I remember we have seen children, not only victims, but children

who had been killers. What moved us then, what shook us to the depths of our being, was to see those teenage Kmer Rouge boys who had been killers. And what hurt us more, children who had been victims, or children who had been victimizers? I remember that trip, and I remember so many other trips that we had taken in the past, Bayard. We went to Poland [38:00]. We went to Paris. Whenever there was a situation, when your presence was needed, a 24-hour notice was enough. So where have I met you? I think I met you somewhere in our respective exiles. That's when we decided, each in his own language and tradition, that victims of persecution and oppression must create their own community, their own fraternity. No, I think it is much earlier than that. I think that we met some 3,500 years ago, when we all heard a strange voice, both silent and thunderous, reminding us that every human being is sovereign; that no human being may own slaves; that no human being may become a slave. [39:00]For we are free, but not free to renounce our freedom. And that voice that has inhabited you, is still ringing today. Is it the reason why I remember you so well? Not only is our memory filled with images and words linked to yours, our memory is also filled with gratitude. For what you have done for your people, and for what you have done for my people, the Jewish people, for what you have done for so many communities that needed someone to speak up with courage, with elegance. And above all, for what you have

done in trying to humanize [40:00] destiny. For introducing an element of humanity in every one of your endeavors, and ours. In every situation. In every encounter. For giving humanity a sense of elevation, I see you, Bayard, as my magnificent, melodious friend, our friend. (applause)

**Ernest Green:**

As the next speaker comes up from Table 2, I have to depart from the program and just tell you that Marian Logan, as dinner chairman, deserves a round of applause before she comes up. Marian? [41:00] (applause)

**Marian Logan:**

Thank you, Ernie, you weren't supposed to do that. This has been a warm, wonderful evening of nostalgia, as we had hoped. We're delighted so many people have come to pay a tribute, which in my opinion is long overdue. I must salute the committee and the staff of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, headed by Walter Nagel, without whom this evening would not have been possible. Thank you, Walt. Some call him "Bay-ard." Some call him "By-ard." I call him "Barnyard." You didn't think I would do it, did you? I've had the pleasure of his company [42:00] for many years, having shared tremendously moving moments and experiences, glad and sad. It is my privilege, with much

respect, admiration, and deep love, to present to our honoree, this token of our esteem and affection. Bayard? Where is it? Oh. You want love? (inaudible, applause) Oh, please do. (inaudible, applause) Oh, he won't let me touch it. OK. It's enough already! Thank you.

**Bayard Rustin:**

I'll make my remarks now.

**Marian Logan**

Yeah, make them short. Two minutes. (laughter)

**Bayard Rustin:**

You know, Marian Logan's [43:00] been telling me what to do for over 30 years.

**Marian Logan:**

How many?

**Bayard Rustin:**

Forty years. And the tragedy is, I pay attention to her. So I shall be short. I want to say, first of all, I want to thank Marian very much for being chairman of this dinner. I cannot tell her how much it means to me. And I want to thank my dear,

dear friend Walter Nagel, with Marian, for all the long hours that he put in with her and others in trying to make this a success. They deserve it.

Now, I want to introduce you to the dearest person here to me tonight, and that is my sister Anna, who is 93 years of age -- 91? (inaudible) She's getting older and older, [44:00] and I think the truth of the matter is, when she was younger, she lied so much about her age, she's not quite sure anymore. But would you put the light on, Anna? I want them to see you, dear. Turn around so they can see you. Turn around. Many, many years ago, in the little town of Westchester, Pennsylvania, she and I had a long talk. And she said something to me I've never forgotten. She said, "This little town is too prejudiced and too small for you. Get out of here." And I left. But I was happy to come back a few years later, and that little town had changed so, that if I were there now, she'd tell me, "Stay, it's comfortable." Thank you, Anna, very much.

I have four other members [45:00] of my family here, and I would like them to stand up, please. Now, I want also to introduce a few young people here tonight, at a table. They are representatives of a group called Hotline. This is a group that works in East Harlem, and they themselves, these kids, when they

were teenagers, some are still teenagers, set up a hotline so that anybody in East Harlem who was young and in trouble, could telephone them. And they have stopped so many suicides. They have dealt with so many tragedies with dope addiction. [46:00] They have helped so many people get work that I introduce them, because I look upon them as a part of my family, my young children. Where are the Hotline youngsters? Stand up. Without an association with the likes of them, I would feel dead indeed.

Now, my friends, I had planned to talk about Project South Africa, which is our project in helping the people who are interested in democracy and nonviolence in South Africa, but I will not do so. I had planned to talk about a new problem that we are facing in the black community, and that is the extraordinary number of black people who are tragically [47:00] hurt by AIDS. I was going to tell you about a new conference that some of us in the NAACP, Urban League, and others are going to have next October, and then I said, that's ridiculous, why do that tonight? I had so many things I was going to say, and then a thing happened. In 1941, I was invited to Smith College in Massachusetts to speak. Two years ago, the young lady who invited me to speak met me at a dinner in New York. And she said, "Bayard, I cannot tell you how that speech of yours at Smith changed my life." So I said, well I better find out what I

did in that speech that was so important. So I said, "My dear, can you tell me [48:00] what points did I make?" She scratched her head, and she thought and she thought, and then she said (laughter), "I can't think of a word you said, but you sang 'Go Down, Moses.'" So that gave me a clue. And with the help of a good friend of mine that I just met a half hour ago, [Shelley Clark?], I'm going to sing a couple of songs for you, and sit down. Now, this may be a collision course, because I simply told him the name of the song and the key. I like to be spontaneous. And [49:00] out of necessity and no time for rehearsal, this will be a spontaneous rendition. I would like to sing, first of all, a song that Jimmy Dumpson mentioned, which is my favorite, "Oh Freedom."

*Oh freedom, oh freedom, oh freedom over me.  
And before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord and be free.  
No more master, no more master, no more master calling  
me.  
And before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord [50:00] and be free.  
No more misery, no more misery, no more misery over  
me.  
And before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord and be free.  
Oh freedom, oh freedom, oh freedom over me.  
And before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord and be free. [51:00]*

*I met my brother the other day  
And I gave him my right hand.  
Soon as ever, my back was turned  
He scandalized my name.  
Do you call that a brother? No, no.  
Do you call that a brother? No, no.*



*Do you call that a brother? No, no.  
He scandalized my name.  
I met my sister the other day.  
I gave her my right hand.  
Soon as ever, my back was turned,  
She scandalized my name.  
Do you call that a sister? No, no.  
Do you call that a sister? No, no. [52:00]  
Do you call that a sister? No, no.  
She took and scandalized my name.  
I met my preacher the other day.  
I gave him my right hand.  
Soon as ever, my back was turned,  
He scandalized my name.  
Do you call that a preacher? Uh-uh.  
Do you call that a preacher? Uh-uh.  
Do you call that a preacher? No, no.  
He scandalized my name.*

END OF AUDIO FILE