

- Don't turn off the lights, please. (laughter) Before I introduce Brother Sherrod, I want to welcome you all to the Shaw campus, and the 40th reunion of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. (crowd applauds) When we met here, Hello, Guy! And Candy. 40 years ago, when I came from Orangeburg, South Carolina State, at an invitation of Miss Ella Baker to attend a conference with Dr. Martin Luther King. We went to our campus advisor, Reverend McCullum in Orangeburg, and asked whether or not we should go. Reverend McCullum said, "I don't know about Luther King, but if Ella Baker said go, there's no question about whether it's going to be a wonderful time." (crowd applauds) And we came here and started the seeds of the beloved community, and found one of the most tremendous experiences that any of us ever had, because we found that we chose to love each other and care for each other, and it was the greatest love and friendships that we've ever known. Some of us have been in and out of various marriages (laughter) and unions, and still know that the 'snick' family was the greatest family we ever had. (crowd applauds) Because we chose to love each other. And now we've chosen to come back. It is so wonderful to see you all here, because Lord knows, we didn't know that we would be here, and the many times we sang "This May Be the Last Time," this may be the last time, it may be the last time,

Crowd: I don't know.

- I just don't know. But now, while we're here, let us celebrate the love and caring and respect that we have for each other. The old wounds and differences, let us put aside and realize that we came together and chose to be together and struggle together and laugh together and sing together and love one another. And let us celebrate that, let us remember what keeps us, and kept us, together, and forget about those times that tore us apart. You know, when we were doing that movie, "Freedom Song," I remember some of the outside observers I remember the director said this strange thing. Said I came here to do this movie, and found a community of people, people who didn't even like each other loved each other. (laughter) And that love of each other is what held us together all these years. And let us keep that foremost in our mind as we spend these few days deliberating and exchanging ideas and plans for the future. Now, 40 years ago when I came here, one of the first people I met was a young ministerial student. There were all these, I thought the whole future of the church was gathered here in Raleigh, and it was in the fine hands, because one of the first young ministerial students I met, before I met all those Nashville people, were the Virginia people, and Charles Sherrod was the first person I met from another campus, and of course was one of the founding members of 'snick', and has been in the storm all these many years. Sherrod was one person who went to Albany and is still there. I saw Sherrod about three years ago at the dedication of the Albany Civil Rights Museum. And he said, "Mr. Chairman, can I come back to Atlanta now?" And I said, "Brother, the struggle is continuing down here, and you are doing a wonderful job." Sherrod is going to lead us in a devotion. Charles?

Charles: Thank you. (crowd applauds)

Charles: You know I can't do anything easy. From this pew, I'm asking you to make a circle from here. I'm

asking everybody in the back to join hands from this pew. It'll be a circle that comes all the way around the church. Will you do that right now? Stand up. From this pew. If you don't feel like standing up, we'll join hands. (people talking quietly) (people talking quietly) Okay, y'all get in the circle. (laughter) They're reorganizing. We always reorganize. And it's no problem. We're going to hold hands, yeah. I have one main message. It's to pass the torch. Pass the torch. We must pass the torch. We're going to start by singing "Let us Break Bread Together." Marshall? Matthew? We can do it from here. ♪ Let us break bread together ♪ ♪ On our knees, on our knees ♪ ♪ Let us break bread together ♪ ♪ On our knees, on our knees ♪ ♪ When we've fallen on our knees, ♪ ♪ With our face to the rising sun, ♪ ♪ Oh Lord, have mercy on me ♪ ♪ On me. ♪ Let's hum. (crowd hums)

- Great God of the universe, you are more than everything that is, yet you are in everything that is. You are beyond all our imaginations, beyond our definitions, beyond our creeds, beyond our images, and yet, you who have invented yourself as image in each of us gathered here, and every human being across the face of the Earth. We're grateful for your grace, for we know our very lives are a sign of your presence and a sign of grace. We have not made ourselves. We did not make the historic and creative circumstances in which many of us found ourselves in the 1950s and the 1960s, but you have brought us through all of them, and we know that we are far better people because of it, and we know that this nation, though it has not yet recognized the fact, is a far better nation because of those struggles of the '60s and '70s. We're grateful that we can be here for this 40th gathering of the Student Conference at Shaw University Easter weekend, 1960. Now help us to bend our energies together during these days. To think together, to talk together, to argue, to quarrel, but above all, to be called in deep love and compassion one for another, for all the human family. Make us deeply aware of the nearly 1.2 billion people around our world who are on the very edge of extinction daily. Make us aware of the great numbers of people who hurt from racism and sexism, from violence and fear, and brokenness all around us in this land. Make us aware that we who are comfortable have a responsibility to keep struggling and keep reaching out, until in fact we can turn this nation around. Now guide us, teach us, instruct us, give us new insight, reinforce the image of a beloved community, of a just and holy land as we gather, so that all that we do and say and think, and all of our activities together will indeed strengthen each of us and strengthen the cause of truth and beauty in our nation. We pray this boldly in your extraordinary spirit. Amen.

- Praise God. ♪ Let us praise God together ♪ ♪ One our knees, on our knees ♪ ♪ Let us praise God together ♪ ♪ On our knees, on our knees ♪ ♪ When we fall on our knees ♪ ♪ With our face to the rising sun ♪ ♪ Oh Lord, have mercy on me ♪ The death angel had come and gone, and Moses called the elders and said these words.

- A reading from Exodus, verses 21 through 27. Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said unto them, "Draw out and take you a lamb "according to your families, "and kill the passover. "And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop "and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, "and strike the lintel and two sideposts with the blood that is in the basin. "And none of you shall go out the door of his house "until the morning, "for the Lord will pass through "to smite the Egyptians, "and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, "and on the two sideposts, "the Lord will pass over the door, "and will not suffer the destroyer to come in "unto your house to smite you. "And you shall observe this thing for an ordinance "to thee, and to they sons, forever.

"And it shall come to pass "when ye be in the land which the Lord will give you, "according, as he has promised, "that ye shall keep this service. "And it shall come to pass when your children "say unto you, what mean ye by this service? "that you shall say it is the sacrifice "of the Lord's passover, "who passed over the houses "of the children of Israel in Egypt "when he smote the Egyptians "and delivered our houses. And the people bowed their heads and worshiped. The word of the Lord.

Charles: Thanks be to God. We've come through fire. We have come through death. We have come to the wilderness, and we have one task left. All our suffering and all the things that we have done, all the individual sacrifices that we have made, all the places that we have gone, all the knowledge, all the bruises that we have, it's time to pass the torch. We have challenge, each one of us, wherever we're coming from and wherever we go to. To grab four, five, six, or seven young people and tell them what is of the day. Moses had a staff in his hand, and he threw it down and found that it was powerful, there was power in that staff. God gave him some power. And each one of us has a torch in his or her hand. We can pass that torch if we but will. All the knowledge that we've got. There's no reason for this young man, and those young ladies there, to make the same mistakes that we did. We've got something to give that's beneficial, that's beautiful, that's 'snickish', (laughter) that's peculiar to us. And somehow we must find a way to pass it on. That way, it can live. As it lived within us. Doesn't it bring back memories that the last song that we're going to sing is going to be "This May Be the Last Time"? But isn't it? The power we have received, we must openly give, and be proud to give. See, if you don't give something, well I don't know if he or she's going to take it or not. I don't know how they're going to think about me. I don't know, I'm old and foggy, I don't think they... No, we've got something! And we know we've got something. Young boy, come here. Young girl, come here. I've got something for you. I want to speak with you just a few moments. You hearing that conference down there? I need to go to that conference if I hear about it. I need to say something to you that comes from my heart. Can I speak to you from the bottom of my heart? Can I ask you to drop out of this society? Can I ask you to give up all the golden apples they dangle before you for just a short time in your life? Knowing that if you drop out, you never go back. 'Cause there's something beautiful. When they can't touch you with a job, when they can't touch you with a material thing, then you are free. But only then will you ever be free in your whole life. And that's what we can offer you, because there was one time in the history of our nation that a free people roamed these surroundings. And they weren't afraid of nothing! Not life, not death. Anything under the Earth, or anything in the ocean, or above the Earth, or anywhere, nothing! We weren't afraid of it. And we want to give you that spirit. Pass it on to free you like we one time were free. This may be the last time. (congregation humming) ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ May be the last time I don't know ♪

- ♪ Well, this may be the last time we pray together ♪ ♪ May be the last time, ♪ ♪ I don't know ♪

- ♪ Yes, this may be the last time we pray together ♪ ♪ May be the last time, ♪ ♪ I don't know ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ May be the last time ♪ ♪ I don't know ♪

Charles: ♪ Well, this may be the last time ♪ ♪ We clap together ♪

Congregation: ♪ May be the last time, ♪ ♪ I don't know ♪

Charles: ♪ Well, this may be the last time ♪ ♪ We clap together ♪ ♪ - [Congregation] ♪ May be the last time, ♪ ♪ I don't know ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ This may be the last time ♪ ♪ May be the last time, ♪ ♪ I don't know ♪ (congregation hums) Oh, Father God, we stretch our arms to thee. No other help we know. Oh, Father, touch the hearts of our young people. Give them the strength and the spirit to go forth, out of the wilderness, into the world confronting whatever they have to confront, being whatever they have to be, living their life whatever they have to live, and finding peace and love. In the name of our Father God, we pray. Amen. (crowd applauds) (people talking quietly) (people talking quietly)

Woman: Glory, glory! (people talking)

- If you all would if you all would get seated, I know you don't... Curtis, I was just saying I know y'all don't move as rapidly to your places nowadays as you once did. (laughs) Charlie Jones. We're going to, as soon as everybody gets situated, we are about to start the panels and the program. Our adored advisor, Anne Braden. Timothy Lynnell Jenkins. Talk about a blast from the past. (people talking quietly) You all will see each other as we go along. Martha Norman. Now we can begin. (laughter) (crowd applauds) 40 years ago. 40 years ago is when we can to this campus. I remember there were all these marvelous people, people who were already prepared for the nonviolent revolution for years before that, and Jim Lawson had prepared the people from Nashville to start nonviolent demonstrations and sit-ins and it was this nascent of history. However, on February 1st 1960, in Greensboro, four freshman sat down and started a modern revolution. Jim was there, and here, Anne Braden was here, Connie Curry was here, Lonnie King was here, Sherrod was here, I was here, and we started to talk. Charlie Jones, come up from Johnson C. Smith, and we started to meet together. Guy Carawan started bringing us the songs that became the basis of sustaining us through that long struggle. John Robert Zellner, we hired our first white boy. (laughter) (crowd applauds) I said, we could not have gotten a more perfect one, (laughter) who blended in with the locals. Three generations of Klan membership was broken by John Robert Zellner. (crowd laughs and applauds) I want you all to know... But you know, he was named after Bob Jones. (laughter) True story. Get him aside, he'll tell you. He was named after Bob Jones, of Bob Jones University, yes he was. But I don't want to wander off, I'll bring us back. And to move these panels along, that's going to be done by Ivanhoe Donaldson, who'll be moderating today. Ivanhoe? (crowds applauds) Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Charles Frederick McDew. (laughter) I enjoyed your movie. It was indeed a pleasure. You know, first I want to thank the conveners of this conference, honoring Ella Baker and talking about 'snick'. I'm sure that perhaps when putting this together didn't think they'd be overwhelmed by this many 'snick' people. But I have to tell you that, for us, this is really indeed a significant commitment statement, because probably many of us have never had an opportunity to truly honor Miss Ella Baker, you know, to recognize her greatness, to thank her for being there for us. We talked yesterday about family and commitment and who we are. Well, the unique thing about Ella Baker is that the average 'snick' person in this room today, she was our age when she convened this meeting in 1960. Maybe she was year or two older than the majority of us. But she was a lady in her late 50s at that point in time. So you're indeed talking about a significant person. At the end of the last century, or whatever you want to view it, the last decade, there were all these sort of who was the greatest athlete, and who was the greatest American, and who was the greatest man, and who was the greatest woman, and who was the greatest

intellectual, and the hundred greatest artists. You know, I used to go through this, and I kinda got tired of those lists. But I would kind of peek through them to see if there was someone there that I agreed with. You know, and indeed I think that when you talk about Ella Baker, you're indeed talking about someone who was truly a giant of the 20th century. This is a person who defined that century, and I think that when we talk about her in terms of civil rights, we're really limiting her. She was a true 20th century champion of human justice and human rights. She ranked there with DuBois, and with everybody else. And 'snick', and the MFDP were, in a way, the last of her legacies. Because this was a political activist in the '20s the '30s, the '40s, the '50s, the '60s, and the '70s, activist even in her death in the '80s. So we have to understand this person. She was not only the convener, and therefore in some ways the founder of what become 'snick', by convening this conference over Easter weekend 40 years ago, she was also the director of branches for the NAACP in the '40s, a black woman, organizing throughout the South, traveling in buses that were not desegregated yet to organize these chapters. She was with the NAACP. She was with the Y. Ella even did a tour of duty with the Urban League. I mean, this was a phenomenal human being, and we are fortunate, in many ways, to have shared in her life. Now, the one thing you can always say about her was she had an enormous amount of patience, you know, because there she was, in her late 50s, and she was patient with these crazy 18, 19, 20-year-olds, we saw Bob Moses as a senior citizen, (laughter) and I think Bob was 26 or 27 at the time, you know, so this panel will begin, or continue on, in some ways, the process of honoring this great person, indeed, and when you think of the 20th century, those of you who weren't in 'snick', you have to realize that any list that doesn't include the name Ella Jo Baker is a list that just isn't accurate. It's a list that just isn't right. 'Cause she indeed was a major American personality. And to say that, recognizing that she was a woman, and had to come through all of what that meant in indeed phenomenal, and a black woman. I remember a story that Anne Braden told Smithsonian a few years ago, where she talked about what it was like to be in Alabama growing up, and going to get a job as a newspaper reporter, 50 years ago (laughs), actually longer than that, and you know, they didn't understand what this white woman, why she didn't go home and have babies and do the things that you should do in America at that point in time. This was a contemporary of Ella Baker. But think of Ella Baker in that context. And we recognize how truly profound a person she was, and how fortunate an organization we were to have an Ella Baker as our adult advisor, To have an Anne Braden as our adult advisor, To have Howard Zinn as our adult advisor. And indeed, as many in this room know, the person who established the beloved community, the concept, the frame of reference, the preamble that gave birth to this organization, was one Jim Lawson, you know, who the Nashville students, I guess in some ways, he was their mentor, their guiding light, their spirituality, and was that here at the conference at this university, for the evolving 'snick'. Last time, this is a small world, the last time I saw Jim Lawson, I went to a service, about, I don't know, I guess 15, 20 years ago now, at least I think it was. Maybe it was 10 years ago, you lose track after a while. (laughter) A young man by the name of Walter Bremond, the founder of the Brotherhood Crusade in L.A. was a friend of mine, and we were colleagues and comrades in struggle. And there were these united black funds being started all over the country, and Bremond had started the Brotherhood Crusade in L.A., with some colleagues of his. And I saw in the program that Jim Lawson was doing the service. And I said, "You know, I know a Jim Lawson, but it couldn't be the same Jim Lawson." And I sat in the back of the church, and I looked up and I saw this person, and I said "My God, that's Reverend Lawson." And I thought how small the world is, and how constantly we overlap, and interface with each other wherever we go. They say the world's only six degrees apart, and I think in some ways it's really true. So we have two wonderful individuals at this moment to talk about Ella

Baker this morning. Vince Harding I understand has not joined us yet, and when he does, I will say a few words about Vince. So in the meantime, so in the meantime, we're going to begin our program, and I give you, without further commentary, Reverend James Lawson. (crowd applauds)

- Let me see, thank you very much. (crowd applauds) Let me-- (crowd applauds) Well, let me also welcome you, and the words of Charles Sherrod, and Charles McDew, and Ivanhoe, all words that I would emulate in various ways. Let me, though, do one additional moment of celebration, and that is let's see everyone who was here Easter weekend of 1960, if you will please stand, wherever you are. Let's see who you are. (crowd applauds) And I'm going to go one step further. I want you to remain standing, and if you will name yourselves. Begin in the back, yes.

Woman: (indistinct)

- And where are you coming from?

Woman: Philadelphia.

Man: (indistinct) I'm from Atlanta, Georgia, but I'm coming from Columbia, Maryland.

Second Man: (indistinct)

Second Woman: Virginia Staunton, from Birmingham, Massachusetts, once from Virginia.

Connie Curry: I'm Connie Curry, and I was from Atlanta, and I still am. (laughter)

Charles Sherrod: Charles Sherrod, I was from Petersburg, Virginia, and now I'm from Albany, Georgia.

Charles McDew: I'm Chuck McDew, and I was from South Carolina State College in Orangeburg, South Carolina, and I now live in Minneapolis, close to the Canadian border. (laughter)

Charles Jones: Charles Jones, from Charlotte, North Carolina, Johnson C. Smith University. I'm in Charlotte now, been practicing law about 22 years, and glad, glad, glad, God knows I'm glad to be here. (laughter) Jim, God bless you, my brother.

- Good to see you, man.

- Thank you, you too. And Charles McDew and I came from Masland, Ohio originally, and we found ourselves both in the South. Now let me see, how many people here became part of the 'snick' movement directly, who became either members of the committee itself, or field people, or participated in some of the efforts across the South? Let's see you all stand now. (crowd applauds) (crowd applauds)

Woman: (indistinct) Yes, if your children are here, let them stand up, too. Here we go, good. (crowd

applauds) That's passing the torch. Alright, I'm going to try to be very, very brief, although it's difficult to do that on an occasion like this, perplexing in so many different ways. I want to indicate initially that by 1960, I was the Southern secretary for the Fellowship of Reconciliation was organizing full-time in the Southeast. It's a long story, I will not go into it. So that the workshops I did in '58, '59, '60, in various places across the Southeast in particular were part of the preparation for the sit-in campaign. Everywhere I went in those days, I carried the comic book on the Montgomery bus boycott, which was a small but very effective tool for showing that we had a power and a methodology and tools that we could use to bring about social change. I was fulfilling a part of my own dream as a college student to one day work in the South, where it seemed to me, all across the nation, we needed in some ways to speed up the process of desegregation. To speed up the process of facing up to racism and doing something about it. I want to just make three major points (laughs). That's what I'm going to do. I've written them down, so I'm going to try to stick with just a handful of minutes, and will not try to expand upon them. We should recognize that the student conference that gathered in the Easter weekend of 1960, April at Shaw University, was a consequence of the sit-in movement that had spread by the time across the country. That sit-in movement was the first national movement in the '60s, and I say this for two or three reasons. One, because there were efforts in almost every state, with the possible exception of Mississippi, though there were stirrings there as well. All of the southern, south-central states had activity going on of some kind. Then, in addition to that, because it was indeed a student-centered movement, it spread to all 50 states, so that there were student groups everywhere, in campuses and communities like Cincinnati, Ohio, who joined with people in the community, and said we must support what is going on in the South, and they themselves then began to ask Woolworth's in Cincinnati, what do you mean, not serving everyone? In Nashville, in Orangeburg, or Greensboro, and the rest. But then they also turned their focus to their local scene. They recognized the message coming from the sit-in campaigns in the South, and said now, what are the issues here that we need to concretely address? And that, of course, was a prelude, and preparation, the sowing of the seeds for the soil of what later became some of the student movements, some of the peace movements of the late '60s, 1970s, this is often ignored in many of the conversations and books about the 1960s, and I want to make certain that we understand that. I operated not simply as one person, committed to nonviolence, but I also operated as a scholar, a student of the movement, and sought to be not simply experimenting, but finding out what was going on, and observing, and listening, and analyzing what it meant in terms of our struggle. Because none of us, including Martin King and Ella Baker, knew what we were doing. We had a commitment to the fact that this nation had to change. We did have a vision of democracy and justice and freedom and liberty and the rest of it. We did have a vision that the way people were treated in this land out of the rapaciousness of racism and violence and sexism and poverty and greed that those conditions had to be changed. And we had that vision. We did not know how to do it, but we were about the business of trying to make it happen anyway, and we oftentimes made mistakes, no doubt, but the mistakes were a part of our effort to experiment and go forward. The student conference were brought together at the initiative of Martin King and Ella Baker. Ella Baker was the executive, the interim executive director of SALC. She called me, and I know a number of other people, to talk about it, and to help put together the agenda. She called also Doug Moore, he was a campus minister in Greensboro or someplace in North Carolina. In Durham, that's right, in Durham. Several of us across the South, therefore, were pushing it and organizing it. Over the phone, we created the agenda. It was my insistence that it should be a working conference. That is, we did not want to have lots of speeches, but let students come from all the different places, and let us talk about where we were, what we

were trying to do, and where we wanted to go, and let the conference itself make the decisions about the future. And I came without a pre-determined set of ideas about what the conference may or may not do. I was one of the adults in the process of organizing it, and we became a working conference. We did get, as I recall, people from over 12 states. We did get over a hundred and some folk who were here. Most of the major senate campaigns in the southeast were here, and were represented here. In Nashville, we were enthusiastic about it, and the Nashville Christian Leadership Council is the organization in Nashville that decided to desegregate downtown Nashville. Out of the movement financed the trip, and saw it as an essential trip for our continued working abilities. We were a representative group. We had representatives from the North. The point I would make here is if we want a broadened democracy in the United States, let us look at the student conference and some of the work since then as one of the ways that that broadening of American democracy can take place. Let us see 'snick', the student conference, and the ensuing years as a metaphor for how we get a better understanding of where we are and where we want to go in this 21st century of ours. So it was a representative working conference. There was only an opening speech and a closing speech. In between, we formed the great variety of discussions and proceeded to see if we could be of one mind. We discovered very early on, as Charles McDew has already indicated, we found very early on that here was a gathering of the family, here there was love and understanding, an effort to forgive, forget, but to pull together for a common cause. So the conference was a participatory conference. Do we need to broaden democracy and make it more participatory? Amen, it must be done. It has to be done. For we are now in a time where we have strong economic and political forces. We have strong military forces, whose notion is that this nation should be governed by an exclusive elite, and by a small and smaller number. Pat Robertson and the Christian Coalition maintain that this nation should be governed by a theocracy, in which only their form of religion, only people who accept and adopt their form of religion, which is an atrocious distortion of what religion is about, should be elected to public offices, or should be appointed to public offices. That assault from the right is an assault upon diminishing any people's effort to broaden the scope of our understanding, and to broaden our scope of participation. So we work from consensus here. I don't remember if we took that many votes, but we tried primarily, if it were a vote, that vote would be an overwhelming vote in one direction. If it wasn't, we kept on talking, until we found ourselves going in the same direction. That is participatory democracy.

Man: Teach.

- We decided to write a little mission statement, and I was on that committee, and I was asked to draft that committee. I know that in places, that statement is seen as Jim Lawson's statement, It wasn't. It was the statement of the conference. I drafted it. We re-drafted it and re-drafted it until the conference said this is what we want. It was a consensus of the student conference that Easter weekend. We put temporary in front of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee because it was unanimous agreement that that's what we wanted to call ourselves. We put temporary on it, not to indicate that we expected to go out of business, but because we were trying to form and shape who we were and what we were and how we would proceed and what our structures were. So it was temporary only in that sense. This participatory democracy was something that the Nashville movement, which was often called the model movement up to that time in our struggle, demonstrated. We determined that in Nashville, there would not be division between university and community or student and adults of the community. We decided there would not be division between



male and female. So in our central committee, which was our primary ideological and structure committee, planning all the strategy, we worked to make that happen among ourselves, so there were adults and students. All the schools were represented on that central committee. We had a student majority, so that we who were clergy, or we who were adult laypeople, could not dominate by any kind of vote or takeover. We also, in order to have participatory democracy, insisted there would be no one single chairman or chairperson. We insisted, rather, each chair of the central committee would be for six months, and that only a student could be chair of that central committee, which governed not only our strategy, our work together, our planning, but also the money and the politics of the present and the future. That was the way in which we operated in Nashville as a participatory unit. No one leader. And consequently, when the press began to attack me primarily as the organizer of the Nashville movement, calling me a communist and whole lot of other junk, I refused to be a spokesperson for the central committee or the movement in Nashville. We said move the speaking around. When we did a press conference, we selected who would do the speaking, and what the issues were we were going to raise. There is that great scene on April the 19th, when 5,000 of us marched silently from Tennessee State to downtown Nashville into the mayor's office, where we had bombarded him with telegrams. He was not meeting with us, and we said meet us there on Monday morning. I think was a Monday morning maybe, April the 19th, and he met us there. Diane Nash demonstrated her leadership in our midst. She was selected as the spokesperson along with C.T. Vivian. They both had their words to say. Then, with the opening, Diane, with her great intellectual understanding of what we were about, pushed the mayor to say, for the first time in the deep South by any mayor, the restaurants should be integrated. Segregation should be broken down. (crowd applauds) And that was a breaking point in Nashville. But the point I make is you want to broaden American democracy? Then let's have a democracy in which we include people rather than constantly excluding them. Even if it means it takes pain for some of us older folk to make the adjustments to who is included, let's move towards an inclusive kind of society and community, and let's be an inclusive people, as we move to make that happen as never before. (crowd applauds) And then the third and final thing I'd like to lift up is we want to broaden democracy, then let's have a common cause. For that student conference with a handful of adults who were there, we had a common cause. We knew that segregation had to end. If there are difficulties today with words like integration or what some of us may call ourselves, let that be simply the pains of growth and movement. We had a common cause. We knew that the signs needed to come down in this nation, white, colored, and so forth, that the insulting had to cease, that the indignities heaped upon too many people had to stop. In Nashville, I shall never forget that in the Winter and Spring of 1959, as we did workshops around the issue where do we want to go from here? It was the women in our midst who insisted that we ought to move on downtown Nashville, where they did most of the shopping for the families in the black community in Nashville. And it was that which impacted at least my own mind, and made me recognize that our target to desegregate downtown Nashville was the task that we needed to take upon ourselves. We had a common cause. In Nashville, that common cause lasted for the central committee some 10 or 15 years, where generation after generation joined with the adults who already engaged to move the desegregation from downtown outward. You should know that the sit-in movement caused, in the South, over 300 cities to begin the process of taking down signs from waiting rooms, from restaurants and counters, from airports and train stations, but stations and the like. And to begin that slow, tedious process of desegregation. The desegregation has not yet happened. You need to recognize that. The dismantling of racism is still the number one task that this nation must adopt if the nation would become a nation where indeed equality

and justice is available for every girl or boy, woman or man, everywhere in our land. Trent Lott and Jesse Helms are the symbols of the obstinate, obdurate white power in this nation, that is also economic power that wants this nation to become an authoritarian society, and we must get a common cause.

Woman: Yes.

- Where it's not a right or left, but rather it's a matter of dismantling violence, dismantling sexism, dismantling the addiction in our nation, dismantling the materialism that ruins so many people, dismantling the greed and the poverty in our land. It can be done. We need a common cause. (crowd applauds) And then finally, I just want to add to that. We had not only a common cause in that conference, but we had a common ideology. Let's not play games about the business of nonviolence. All of us who gathered here that Easter weekend had been weaned on the violence of America. All of us played games with the romance of violence that this nation still holds so dear. We were not unanimous in saying that nonviolent was the ideology we would abide by. We were unanimous in understanding that in the cause of dismantling segregation, we had to have a common discipline, and a willingness to take the risks to make that discipline and that common cause come alive. I could say much more about this, but the final thing I guess I want to say is, the romantic rhetoric among those of us who think we are progressive people is nothing but romantic rhetoric, which has no basis in the reality of this America. The violence in this nation is institutional and systemic. And any and all who seek to change it will be subject to the rapaciousness of the CIA, the military intelligence, the FBI, and the police, and then, if that doesn't work, the Pentagon itself. Let's not play games. (crowd applauds) The handful of people who wanted to break windows and so forth, the anarchists in Seattle, they may be very good-intentioned, but they are wrong. For Seattle, which was an enormous demonstration of people power, around nonviolent preparation and discipline and training. Everyone was trained to carry out their strategies and tactics whether they did it for ideological reasons, or spiritual reasons, or for tactical reasons. All were encouraged to abide by a common social dimension that would enable them to get their tasks done. Their little handful of breaking windows, or a handful of people with 50,000 people became the way that the media could then interpret Seattle and pretend that something enormous had not happened, and the press will always do this, for they do not want ordinary people like ourselves to recognize that we have a life-giving power in our own hearts if we tap it and use it. We can still see the second revolution in America take place and turn over these thresholds of pain and hurt and create that beloved society. (crowd applauds) (crowd applauds) (crowd applauds)

- Thank you very much, Reverend Lawson. It's the power of love, as they say. We're still out here, we're still struggling, we're still moving forward. I said something earlier about I think Miss Baker and the YMCA, and I think what I meant to say is the Young Negro Cooperative League back in the late '20s, which was one of her missions that she undertook. When I think of Anne Braden, you know, it reminds me in many ways, you know 'snick' was one of these organizations that sort of assumed anybody could do anything. I was in Atlanta, you know, I don't even know if I was old enough to vote. And foreman told me, well you need to go to Louisville and help out over there. And I just dropped off some books at Miles College and came over to Atlanta, was figuring out what my next mission was going to be. I'd never been to Louisville. Matter of fact, I don't think I'd ever been to Kentucky, except to pick up things to take south to Clarksdale. But Reggie Robinson and Bob Zellner drove me up to Louisville, Kentucky, and I met, I'd seen her before in Atlanta, but I

met Anne Braden and Carl Braden. I stayed in their home. And we proceeded, I think 'snick' gave me like 25 dollars, and said go forth and organize a movement. (laughter) It was just the way things work, you know. I got a car ride and 25 dollars, Anne gave me a home, fed me, and the rest was just history, so we went down to the West End and starting organizing demonstrations against (no audio) (no audio)