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"I Have A Dream"

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Born on January 15, 1929, Martin Luther King is remembered as one of the most influential Negro leaders in the United States Civil Rights Movement.

His career began in 1955, when a racial crisis thrust him into the leadership of a local boycott of the Montgomery City Transit - the incident will forever be recalled as the beginning of the black civil rights movement in the United States. When Rose Parks, a tired Montgomery seamstress refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white person, her subsequent arrest sparked a citywide Negro boycott of buses which lasted 382 days.

"We will not degrade ourselves with hatred."

In 1957, King organised the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to broaden the movement which had now begun. Involved in numerous non-violent demonstrations throughout the southern United States, King was frequently arrested and jailed; but he never gave up the Gandhian principles of non-violence which guided his movement from the beginning. "We will not resort to violence," he once said, "We will not degrade ourselves with hatred. Love will be returned for hate."

The highlight of King's career occurred on August 28, 1963, with the "March on Washington". This was the most impressive protest demonstration ever to occur in the United States and it received world-wide acclaim. Close to 250,000 Americans of all colours joined King and other civil rights leaders in a demonstration of solidarity with oppressed southern blacks.



Top Left: Martin Luther King

Bottom Right: Nelson Mandela

In 1964, King received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his efforts to bring peaceful change to America.

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King's career was cut short by an assassin's bullet. In the following days and weeks,

upheaval shook the USA, and it took nearly 13,000 troops to bring Chicago alone, back under the government's shaky control.

In the United States, January 15 is celebrated as a national holiday in remem-

brance of King and his work in the black civil rights movement. Although his dream of a time when the evils of prejudice and segregation will vanish has not yet occurred, the time could be said to be one step closer.

Coincidentally, as the United States celebrates Martin Luther King's birthday, Nelson Mandela, the symbolic leader of anti-Apartheid forces, begins his 25th year as a political prisoner in a South African prison.