

**Let Another World Be Born: Text of a Speech Delivered by Stokely Carmichael at the Spring Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam Outside the United Nations, New York City, April 15, 1967**

Brothers and Sisters,

I am here today not just as the Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, not just as an advocate of black power, but as a black man -- a human being who joins you in voicing opposition to the war on the Vietnamese people.

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee took a stand against that war in 1965 because it is a brutal and racist war. We took our stand because we oppose the drafting of young Afro-Americans to defend a so-called democracy which they do not find at home. We took that stand because this war forms part and parcel of an American foreign policy which has repeatedly sought to impose the status quo, by force, on colored peoples struggling for liberation from tyranny and poverty. Only the white powers of the West will deny that this is a racist war. When the colored peoples of the world look at that war, they see just one thing. For them, the U.S. military in Vietnam represents international white supremacy.

We black people have struggled against white supremacy here at home. We therefore understand the struggle of the Vietnamese against white supremacy abroad. We black people have struggled against U.S. aggression in the ghettos of the North and South. We therefore understand the struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. aggression abroad.

This is why there can be no question of whether a civil rights organization should involve itself with foreign issues. It must do so, if it claims to have any relevance to black people and their day-to-day needs in the United States of America. It must do so, if it lays any claim to that humanism which declares: no man is an island. We therefore fully support Dr. Martin Luther King's stand and that of CORE. We call attention to the fact that Dr. King was once awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It seems that at least in Sweden, the connection between ending war and ending racism is clear.

Yet there are those who would remind us that it is tactically unwise to speak out against the war. It will alienate support. It will damage our fundraising. We have a question for these advocates of expediency: in the words of the Bible, "What would it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

We would remind these advocates of expediency of the Nuremberg trials, which affirmed that a man has a responsibility to speak out against murder and genocide -- no matter what the opinion and standing rule of his country might be. This nation sent hundreds of Germans to jail after World War II precisely because they did not act on their consciences. Where is the voice of conscience today?

Those who attack us for opposing the bombing of mothers, the napalming of children, the wiping out of whole villages, are in

fact supporting the war whether they admit it or not. No neutralism is possible in the face of such acts. Would those same critics have advocated silence when Medgar Evers was murdered in Mississippi? Would those same critics have urged expediency when the four young girls were bombed in a Birmingham church?

To these critics, we would quote the words of Frederick Douglass:

"Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its waters. Power concedes nothing without a demand -- it never has and it never will."

We have not only a right to speak out -- we have an obligation. We must be involved, we must fight racism in all its manifestations. We must also look truthfully at this land of the free and home of the brave, and remember that there is another side to that land -- a side better known to the rest of the world than to most Americans. There is another America, and it is an ugly one. It is an America whose basic policy at home and abroad can only be called genocide.

When we look at the America which brought slaves here once in ships named Jesus, we charge genocide. When we look at the America which seized land from Mexico and practically destroyed the American Indians -- we charge genocide. When we look at all the acts of racist exploitation which this nation has committed, whether in the name of manifest destiny or anti-Communism, we charge genocide.

We must look at the America which deplores apartheid in South Africa while our banks and private business keep the South African economy alive and thus maintain the most brutal legalized system of white oppression to be found in the world today. It is not merely the whites in South Africa who suppress the huge black majority. It is also white Westerners of several other nations, including this one. The United States rescued the South African economy six years ago. Today, almost 200 American companies are there with an investment of half a billion dollars. An American company helped South Africa to build its first atomic reactor. American companies are helping white South Africa arm to destroy a black revolution.

There is an almost endless list of these other Americas, but they all add up to the same thing: this nation was built on genocide and it continues to wage genocide. It wages genocide in many forms -- military, political, economic and cultural -- against the colored peoples of our earth. This nation has been not only anti-revolutionary but anti-poor, anti-wretched of the earth.

Most Americans do not wish to look at these truths. They prefer to claim that we are a moral people, fighting a holy war against Communism. We claim that we want peace in Vietnam. Last December, the American Ambassador to the United Nations, Arthur Goldberg, wrote to Secretary General U Thant: "We turn to you... with the hope and the request that you will take whatever steps you consider necessary to bring about the necessary discussions which would lead to a cease-fire." And U Thant offered his proposals. The United States ignored them.

Meanwhile, up on the 38th floor of this building -- the United Nations-- sits the Honorable Dr. Ralph Bunche, who once marched

against police brutality in Selma, Alabama and today condemns those of us who would speak out against the war.

This nation's hypocrisy has no limits. Newspapermen speak of LBJ's credibility gap; I call it lying. President Lyndon Baines Johnson talks of peace while napalming Vietnamese children, and I can think of just one thing: he's talking trash out of season, without a reason. Let's not call it anything but that.

It is up to you -- to the people here today -- to make your fellow citizens see this other side of America. In your great numbers lies a small hope. But this mass protest must not end here. We must move from words to deeds. We must go back to our communities and organize against the war. Black people must begin to organize the ghettos for control by the people and against exploitation. Exploitation and racism do not exist only in this nation's foreign policy, but right here in the streets of New York.

It is crystal clear to me that white people, in their turn, must begin to deal with the fundamental problems of this country: racism and exploitation. You must go into the white community, where racism originates. You must go into the white community, where the Vietnam war originated. You must work there, organize there, strike against the American system at its base. You must begin to organize in the poor white community as SDS has done in Chicago. We urge you to help make the Vietnam Summer now being planned in Boston into a nationwide effort.

You must raise the question: why is there a Department of War and not a Department of Peace? You must go into the churches and tell the churchmen that you heard they followed the one who wanted to bring good news to the poor. Tell them that you heard they taught love and nonviolence. Tell them that you heard they worshipped the one who said: the world belongs to all peoples. Tell them that you wait for their answer, and that answer must be action.

We must all speak out more strongly against the draft. Our position on the draft is very simple: hell no, we ain't going.

The draft exemplifies as much as racism the totalitarianism which prevails in this nation in the disguise of consensus democracy. The President has conducted war in Vietnam without the consent of Congress or of the American people -- without the consent of anybody except maybe Luci, Linda, and Ladybird. In fact, the war itself is for the Birds -- with the omission perhaps of George and Pat. The President sends young men to die without the consent of anyone. There is nothing new about this. For years, we have seen how peacetime conscription has allowed the President to extend this nation's power without the consent of its citizens. For years we have seen the Pax Americana in operation. The United States invaded one country after another to suppress social revolution. The United States has invaded one country after another to start reactionary revolts where social progress threatened to materialize. The draft takes the enslaved black youth of this society and uses them to support enslavement abroad. The draft says that a black man must spend two years of his life learning how to kill people of his own color and people of his own kind: poor and powerless.

The draft is white people sending black people to make war on yellow people in order to defend the land they stole from red

people. The draft must end: not tomorrow, not next week, but today.

We must also ask the question now heard in certain circles: is it true, Mr. President, that there is a planned invasion of North Vietnam? I ask this question in all seriousness. We recall that millions of Americans once watched a President speak on television and assure us that there was no planned invasion of Cuba. So is it true, Lyndon, that there is a planned land invasion of North Vietnam? Lyndon - we're listening.

Practical suggestions for ending the war abound. We will not offer new proposals. The problem we face is not one of finding a formula. But if we can admit that this country is indeed a rapist of the colored peoples on this earth-- a rapist, today, of Vietnamese freedom -- then let me just ask this: if you were being raped, would you call for negotiation or withdrawal?

Brothers and sisters, the future and the issues are yours. We urge that the Spring Mobilization be fully supported so that it may lead to a summer mobilization and fall mobilization and on to a great amassing of people who shall speak out against this war.

It may seem that such opposition has little effect on policy. But there is good reason to believe that the war would have been escalated even more had it not been for the opposition already manifested. We must sustain our declaration of war on the Vietnam war, on racism, on genocide. To everyone whom the Vietnam war affects, to all the poor and powerless, and particularly to black youth, let me read these words of a black poet, Margaret Walker:

"For my people standing staring trying to fashion a better way from confusion from hypocrisy and misunderstanding, trying to fashion a world that will hold all the people all the faces all the adams and eves and their countless generations; Let a new earth rise. Let another world be born. Let a second generation full of courage issue forth, let a people loving freedom come to growth, let a beauty full of healing and a strength of final clenching be the pulsing in our spirits and our blood. Let the martial songs be written, let the dirges disappear. Let a race of men now rise and take control!"