

Speaker 1 (00:00):

Go turn off your lights, please. The, uh, for introduced brother Sheard, I wanna welcome you all, um, to the haw campus and the 40th reunion of the student nonviolent coordinating committee that, uh, when we met here, oh, guy came, um, 40 years ago when I came from Orangeburg, it was South Carolina state, uh, at an invitation of Ms. Ella baker to attend the conference, uh, with Dr. Martin Luther king that, uh, we went to our campus advisor, Reverend McCullum in Orangeburg and say 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. And,

Speaker 1 (01:33):

And we came here and started the seeds of the beloved community and found, um, and had 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. It was the greatest love and friendships that we've ever known. Um, some of us have been in and out of various marriages and, and, um, and unions and still know that the SN family was the greatest family we ever had. Cause we chose to love each other. And now we've chosen to come back and it's so wonderful to see you all here because Lord knows, we didn't know that we would, uh, 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. I just don't know. But now while we are here, uh, let us celebrate the loved and caring respect that we have for each other, the, uh, old wounds and, um, and differences. Let us put aside and realized that we came together and chose to be together and struggled 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 it, uh,

Speaker 1 (03:22):

To us apart. Um, you know, we, um, when we were, when we were doing that movie freedom song, I remember some of the outside, um, observers. I remember, uh, the director said, said, this is fan strange thing said, he found, said he came here into his movie and found a community of people, people who didn't even like each other, loved each other. And that love of each other was what held us together all these years. And let us keep that foremost in our mind as we spend these few days deliberating and, uh, and exchanging ideas and planning for the future. Uh, now, um,

Speaker 1 (04:15):

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, um, future of, of the church was gathered here in, in, uh, in Raleigh. And it was in the fine hands because one, one of the first young ministerial students I met before I met, uh, all those Nashville people were the Virginia people. And, uh, and Charles <inaudible> was on the, was the first person I met from another campus. And, uh, and of course was one of the founding members of SNCC and has been in the storm all these many years, shard was one person who left or went to, uh, to, uh, Albany and, and, and is still there. I saw shard about three years ago, uh, at the dedication of the Albany civil rights museum. And he said, Mr. Kevin, can I come back to Atlanta? Now? I said, brother, the struggle is continuing down there and you are doing a wonderful job. Uh, Shira is going to lead us in devotion, Charles,

Speaker 2 (05:39):

Thank you. Do anything. No, I can't do anything easy from this pew. I'm asking you to make a circle from here. I'm asking all, everybody in their back to join hands from this pew, it'll be a circle that comes all way around the church. Will you do that right now? Stand don't feel like stand. We are one main message is to pass the torch, pass the torch. We must pass the torch. We gonna start by singing. Let us break bread together. Marsha Matthew,

Speaker 3 (08:15):

When we fall

Speaker 4 (08:58):

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 embedded yourself as image. And each of us gather here and every human being across the face of the earth, we're grateful for your grace, but we know our very lives, our 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 sixties and seventies. We're grateful that we can be here for this 40th gathering of the student conference at Shaw university and Easter weekend, 1960. Now help us to bend our energies together during these days

Speaker 4 (10:18):

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 to keep reaching out until and back. We can turn this nation around now guide and direct us, teach us, instruct us, give us new insight, reinforce the image of a beloved community of adjust and holy land as we gather. So that all that we do is 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, all that

Speaker 3 (11:39):

Praise, God let pray God together.

Speaker 2 (12:34):

The death angel had come and gone and Moses called the elders and said, these words,

Speaker 5 (12:54):

A reading from Exodus versus 21 through 27,

Speaker 5 (13:00):

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 you shall take a bunch of high stop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and strike the lenthil. And the two side post 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, sh will pass through to smite the Egyptians. And when he see if the blood upon the lenthil and on the two side post, the Lord will pass over the door and will not suffer the destroyer to come in until your house to smite you. And you shall observe this thing for an ordinance to the, and to the sons forever. And it shall come to pass. When you be in the land, which the Lord will give you. According as he has promised that you shall keep this service and when, and it shall come to pass. When your children say unto you, what mean you 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 Hemed the Egyptians and delivered our houses and the people bowed their heads and worshiped the word of the Lord.

Speaker 2 (14:37):

Thanks, welcome. We'll 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 had made, all the places that we have gone, all the knowledge, all the bruises that we have, it's time to pass the toys. We have a challenge. Each one of us, wherever we're coming from, wherever we go to, to grab 4, 5, 6, or seven young people and tell them what is up today. Moses had a staff in his hand and he threw it down and found that it was powerful. It 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 book will all the knowledge that we gather. There's no reason for this young man and that, and those young ladies did to make the same mistakes that we did. We got something to give that's beneficial. That's beautiful. That's, that's SNIC. That's peculiar to us. And somehow we must find a way to pass it on that way. It can live as it lives within us. Doesn't this bring back memories. The last song that we're gonna sing is going to be, this may be the last time,

Speaker 2 (16:50):

But isn't it. The power that we have received, we must openly give and be proud to give. See you don't give something when you wear, I don't know whether he is he gonna take it or not? I, I don't know how they gonna think about me. I don't know. I'm I'm an old foggy. I don't think they, no, we got something. I, we know we got something. The young boy, come here, young girl, come here. I 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 come from my heart. Can I speak to you from the bottom of my heart? Can I, can I ask you

Speaker 3 (17:49):

To drop out of this society? Can I ask you to, to give up all the golden apples that they dang for you for just a short time in your

Speaker 2 (17:57):

Life, knowing that if you drop, if you drop out and you never, you'll never go back, cuz it's something beautiful when they can't touch you with a job. When

Speaker 3 (18:15):

They can't touch you with

Speaker 2 (18:17):

A material thing, then you are free only,

Speaker 3 (18:23):

Only

Speaker 2 (18:23):

Then will you ever be free and your

Speaker 3 (18:26):

Whole life?

Speaker 2 (18:28):

And that's what we can, we can of you because there was one time in the history of our nation that freed people wrong, these surroundings, and they weren't

Speaker 3 (18:39):

Afraid of nothing. Many. I the anything in the ocean above the earth, anywhere, nothing, we

Speaker 2 (18:53):

Were afraid of it. And we want to give you that spirit, pass it on to free. You like we, one time of free. This may be the last time.

Speaker 3 (19:42):

The last time, maybe pray together. Yes. Maybe the last time we prayed together, the oh father, God, we stretch our arms today. 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 the wilderness into the world, confronted whatever they have to confront being whatever they have to be living a life, whatever they have to live and find the peace and love the name of our father. God, we pray. Amen.

Speaker 6 (22:15):

Amen.

Speaker 1 (23:05):

And if you all would, uh, if y'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 that you wanna see, but <laugh> try jump. Um, we're going to, soon as everybody gets, uh, situated, uh, we are about to start the, uh, panels and, and the program. Um, our adult advisor, uh, dog advisor and great, um, Timothy Lynell Jenkins talking about the blast from the past. And um, you all will see each other as we, as we go along, Martha Norman. Now we can begin, um, in 40 years ago, 40 years ago when we came to this campus, I remember there all these marvelous people, people who had already prepared for the nonviolent revolution for years before that, and, and Jim Lawson had prepared the people from Nashville to, um, start nonviolent demonstrations and sit-ins, and, and it was this accident of history that, however, on February 1st, 1960 in Greensboro, four freshmen sat down and started the modern revolution. Jim was there, here, um, and Braden was here. Connie Curry was here. Lonnie king was here. Rob 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. Kara started bringing us the songs it became the basis of, of, of sustaining us

Speaker 1 (26:02):

Through that long struggle. John Robert Zelner. We hired our first, our white boy. I said we could not have gotten a more perfect who blended in with the locals. Three generations of, of clan membership was broken by John Robinson. I want, I want y'all to know before he wasn't. Well, you know, he was, he was named after Bob Jones. <laugh> true story. Y'all you good story. Get, get him aside. He'll tell you. He is named after Bob Jones or Bob Jones university. Yes, he was. Um, but I, I don't want, want to wonder on, uh, bring us back, um, and to move these panels along, um, that's going to be done by Ivanhoe Donaldson who will be moderating the on,

Speaker 7 (27:28):

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Charles Frederick, McDo I enjoyed your indeed pleasure. You know, um, first I wanna thank, uh, the conveners of this, uh, conference, uh, honoring, uh, Ella baker and, uh, talking about SNCC. The I'm sure that perhaps they, when putting this together, didn't think they would be overwhelmed by this many SNCC 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. You know, we have talked yesterday about family and, and commitment and, uh, who we are. Well, the unique thing about Ella baker is that the average SNCC person in this room today, she was our age when she convened this meeting in 1960, maybe she was a year or two older than, you know, the majority of us, but she was a lady in her late fifties at that point in time.

Speaker 7 (28:41):

So you're indeed talking about a significant person at the end of this last century or whatever you want to view it. The last decade, there were all of these sort of who was the greatest athlete and who is the greatest American and who is the greatest man and who is the greatest woman and who is the greatest intellectual and the hundred greatest artists, you know, and I used to go

through this. I kind of got tired of those lists, but I would kind of peek through them just to see if there were someone there that I agreed with, you know? Um, 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 are really limiting her.

Speaker 7 (29:30):

She was a true 20th century champion of human justice and human rights. She ranked there with the boys and with everybody else and SNCC and the MFD P were in a way, the last of her legacies, because this was a political activist in the twenties, the thirties, the forties, the fifties, the sixties, and the seventies, activists, even in her death in the eighties. So we have to understand this person. She was not only the convener and therefore, in some ways the, the, the founder, you know, uh, of what became SNCC by convening this conference over Easter weekend, 40 years ago, she was also the director of branches for the NAACP in the forties, a black woman organizing throughout the south, traveling in de in buses that were not desegregated yet to organize these chapters. She was with the NAACP, she was with the Y you know, uh, or Ellie even did Baker, did this tour duty with the Urban League?

Speaker 7 (30:41):

Uh, I mean, this was a phenomenal human being and we are fortunate in many ways to have her in her life. Now, the one thing you can always say about her was she had an enormous amount of patience, you know, uh, because there she was in her late fifties and she was patient with these crazy 18, 19, 20 year olds. We saw Bob Moses as a senior citizen. And I think Bob was like 26 to 27 at the time, you know, um, 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 were in SNCC, you have to realize that any list that doesn't include the name, Ella, Joe Baker, is a list of just as an accurate, it's a list that just isn't accurate really it's a list that just isn't right.

Speaker 7 (31:37):

You know, cause she indeed was a major American personality. And to say that recognizing that she was a woman, you know, and had to come through all of what that meant, you know, as indeed phenomenal and a black woman. I remember a story that Anne Braden told Smithsonian, uh, a few years ago when she talked about what it was like to be in Alabama, growing up and going to get a job as a newspaper reporter, you know, uh, 50 years ago, actually longer than that. And, you know, uh, they didn't understand what this white woman, why she didn't go home and have babies and, you know, do the things that you should do in America at that point in time, you know, this was a contemporary of Ella Baker, but yet think of Ella Baker in that context, you know, and we recognize how truly profound the person she was and how fortunate an organization. We were to have an Ella Baker as our adult advisor to have an Ann Braden as our adult advisor to have Howard Zinn as our adult advisor, you know, and indeed as many in this room, know the person who established

Speaker 7 (32:56):

The beloved community, the concept, the frame of reference, the preamble that gave birth to this organization was one Jim Lawson, you know, uh, who the Nashville students, I guess in some ways, uh, he was their mentor, their guiding light, their spirituality. And was that here at this conference, at this university for the evolving SNCC the last time, this is a small world. Last time I saw, uh, Jim Lawson, I went to a service about, um, 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 the, uh, uh, a young man by the name of Walter Walter, Brenton the founder of the Brotherhood Crusade, uh, in LA, uh, was a friend of mine. And we were colleagues and comrades and struggle. And there were these United Black Funds being started all over the country.

Speaker 7 (33:47):

And Bremont had started the brotherhood crusade in LA with some colleagues of his. And I saw on the program that Jim Lawson was doing the service. And I said, no, I know it, Jim Lawson, but couldn't be the same Jim Lawson, you know, and I sat in the back of the church and I looked up and I saw this person. I said, my God, that's Reverend Lawson. You know, and I thought how small the world is and how constantly we overlap and inter you know, uh, face with each other, wherever we go, you know, they say the world's only six degrees apart. And I think in some ways it's really true. So we have to wonderful individuals at this moment, you know, to talk about the Ella baker this morning, Vince Harding on stand has not joined us yet. And when he does, I will, uh, say a few words about Vince. So in the meantime, I think so in the meantime, we're gonna begin our program, uh, and I give you without further commentary, Reverend James Lawson.

Speaker 4 (34:57):

Thank well, let me also welcome you and the words of Charles shad and Charles McDo and Ivanhoe, uh, all, um, words that I would emulate in various ways. Let me know, do, uh, do one additional moment of celebration. And that is, uh, let's see, uh, everyone who was here Easter weekend of 1960. If you will please stand wherever you are, let's see who you are and I'm gonna go one step further. I want you to remain standing. And if you will name yourselves, begin in the back. Yes. Name and spell. And where you coming from?

Speaker 8 (36:00):

Philadelphia, Virginia, from Massachusetts Virginia at the time I'm Connie Curry and I was from, and still am Josh. I was from Petersburg, Virginia, and I'm Chuck duke and I from South Carolina state in orange, South Carolina and Charles Jones, uh, from Charlotte, North Carolina Johnson, C Smith university. I am in Charlotte. Now I've been practicing law about 22 years in God knows. I'm glad Jim, God bless you

Speaker 4 (37:04):

Monroe. Good to see you, man.

Speaker 8 (37:05):

Thank you. You too.

Speaker 4 (37:07):

And Charles MC do. And I came from massly Ohio, uh, originally, and we, um, uh, found ourselves both in the south. Well now let me see how many people here became part of the stick movement directly, uh, 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.

Speaker 8 (37:47):

Can we get them to stand up

Speaker 4 (37:48):

Good garden? Can you

Speaker 8 (37:49):

Got children to stand up?

Speaker 4 (37:51):

Yes. If your children are here, let them stand up too. Here we go. Good. That's the,

Speaker 4 (38:01):

All right. I'm going to try to be very, very brief, although it's difficult to do that on an occasion like this and it, um, um, perplexing in so many different ways. I want to, um, indicate initially that in 19, by 1960 rather I was the Southern secretary for the fellowship of reconciliation was organizing full time in the Southeast. That's a long story. I will not go into it. Um, so that the workshops I did in 58, 59, 60 in various places across the Southeast in particular, uh, were a part of the preparation for the sit-in campaign everywhere I went in those days, I carried the comic book on 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 speed up the process of facing up to racism and doing something about it.

Speaker 4 (39:19):

I want to just, uh, give, make three major points. <laugh>, that's what I'm going to do, and I've written them down. So I try to stick within a, just a handful of minutes and will not try to expand upon them. Uh, we should recognize that the student conference had gathered in the Easter weekend in 1960, April of Shaw at Shaw university, uh, had, um, um, was, was a, a consequence of the sit-in movement that has spread by that time across the country. That sit-in movement was the first national movement in the sixties. Uh, and I say this for two or three reasons. One, because there were efforts in almost every state with, with the possible exception of, uh, Mississippi though. There were stirrings there as well, all across all of the Southern south central states had activity going on of some kind. Then in addition to that, because of the, it was indeed a student centered movement.

Speaker 4 (40:20):

It spread to all of the 50 states so that there were student groups, uh, uh, everywhere on college campuses in 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 Woolworths in Cincinnati, what do you mean not serving everyone in Nashville or in orange, in Orangeburg or, or, or, uh, Greensboro and the rest, but then they also turn their focus to their local scene. They recognize the message coming from the sitin 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 a preparation, the sewing of the seeds for the soil of what later became some of the student movements, some of the peace movements of the late sixties, 1970s.

Speaker 4 (41:24):

This is often ignored in many of the conversations and books about the 1960s. And I want to make certain that we understand that, uh, I operated not simply as one person, uh, committed to nonviolence, but I also operated as a scholar and student of the movement and sought to be not simply experimenting, but CA finding out what was going on and observing in 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 wrap, the rapaciousness of racism and violence and sexism and poverty and greed, that those conditions had to be changed.

Speaker 4 (42:23):

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 that 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 SCL three. 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, uh, Doug Moore, who was a campus minister in

Greensboro or someplace in North Carolina and in Durham, that's right in Durham. Um, and so, uh, 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.

Speaker 4 (43:22):

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 predetermined 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 sit-in campaigns in the Southeast and were here and were represented here in Nashville. We were enthusiastic about it. And the Nashville Christian leadership council, which was the organization in Nashville that had decided we would desegregate desegregate downtown Nashville of, of, out of the movement of finance the trip and saw it as an essential trip for our continued, uh, working abilities.

Speaker 4 (44:24):

We were a representative group. Um, we had north, we had representatives from the north. The point I would make here is that if we want to broaden 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's see SNCC, let us see SNCC 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, uh, in this 21st century of ours. So it was a representative working conference. There was only an opening speech, uh, Anna 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 McDo has already indicated. We decide, we found very early on that here was a gathering of the family here.

Speaker 4 (45:28):

There was love and understanding and 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 at 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 Robinson and the Christian coalition maintained 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.

Speaker 4 (46:43):

So we worked from consensus here. I don't remember if we took that many votes, but we tried primarily that if there were a vote that 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. 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 redrafted it and redrafted 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 on violent court in the committee, because there was unanimous agreement that that's what we wanted to call ourselves.



Speaker 4 (47:38):

We put temporary on it, not to indicate that we expected to go out of business, but because we was, we were trying to form and shape who we were and what we were and how we would proceed, what our structures were. So it was temporary only in that sense. Um, this participatory democracy was something that the Nashville movement, which was often called the model movement up to that time in our struggle, uh, demonstrated, we determined that in national, 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 co central committee, which was our primary, ideologic a, um, ideological and structured 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.

Speaker 4 (48:38):

We had a student majority so that we who were clergy, or we were, who were adult lay. People 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. And rather that each chair of the central committee would be for six months. And that's only a student could be chair of that central committee, which governed not only our strategy, our work together, our planning, but also the, the, uh, money and the politics of the, of the present and the future. That was the central com. That was the way in which we operated, uh, 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 a whole lot of other junk, um, uh, I refused to be a spokesperson for the central committee or the movement in Nashville.

Speaker 4 (49:43):

We instead 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 downtown to downtown Nashville and two, the, 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, the, uh, a, I think it was a Monday morning, maybe April the 19th. And he met us there. Uh, Diane Nash demonstrated her leadership in our midst. She was selected as the spokesperson, along with CT, Vivian, they both had their words that they were to say. And 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 co the lunch, the restaurants should be integrated. The segregation should be broken down. And that was a breaking point in Los Angeles in Nashville, rather. But the point I make is you want to broaden America 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.

Speaker 4 (51:24):

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 the 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 seen as 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 deceased that the indignities heaped upon too many people had to stop in Nashville. I shall never forget that in the spring, 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.

Speaker 4 (52:34):

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, uh, outward. You should know that the sit-in movement caused it in the south over 300 cities to begin the process of taking down signs from waiting rooms, from restaurants and counters, from airports, from train stations, bus stations, and the like, and to begin that slow tedious process of desegregation, the desegregation has not yet happened. You need to recognize that, wow, 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, boy, woman, or man everywhere in our land, Trent lot. And Jesse Helms are the symbols of the, of the abstinent Abdur 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, uh, where it's not a matter of right or left, but rather it's a matter of de of dismantling violence, dismantling sexism, dismantling the addiction in our nation, dismantling the materialism that ruins so many people dismantling, uh, the greed and the poverty in our land. It can be done, need common NCE.

Speaker 4 (54:33):

And then finally, I just wanna add to that. We had not only a common cause in that can't in that conference, but we had a common ideology. Let's not play games about the business of nonviolence. None of us, all of us, rather who gathered here that Easter weekend had been weaned on the violence of America. All of us played games with RO the, 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 risk to make that discipline and that common cause come alive.

Speaker 4 (55:29):

Uh, I could say much more about this, but the final thing, I guess I wanna say is that, uh, 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 in any yeah, 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 game. The handful of people who threw, who wanted to bur, uh, who wanted to break windows and so forth, the anarchist in Seattle, they may be very good intention, 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 of spiritual reasons or moral reasons, or for tactical reasons, all were encouraged to abide by a common social dimension that would enable them to get their tasks done. The little handful of breaking windows by a handful of people with 50,000 people came, 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 always 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.

Speaker 7 (58:08):

Thank you very much. Uh, Reverend Boston's the power of love if they say, you know, uh, um, we're still out here, we're still struggling. You know, we're still moving forward. Uh, I said something earlier about, um, I think Ms. Baker and the Y M C a and I think what I meant to say is the young Negro cooperative league back in the late twenties was, uh, one of her missions that she undertook when I think of Ann Braden, you know, um, it reminds me in many ways of, you know, SNCC was one of these organizations that I guess sort of assumed anybody could do anything. And I was in Atlanta, you know, uh, not, 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 up there. And I just dropped off some books at miles college and came over to Atlanta, was figuring out what my next mission was gonna be.

Speaker 7 (58:58):

I'd never been to Louisville. In fact, I don't think I've ever been to Kentucky except to pick up things in Louisville to take south, you know, uh, to Clarkdale, but, uh, Reggie Robinson and Bob Zelner, uh, 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 SNCC gave me \$25 and said go forth and organize a <laugh>. And, you know, it was just the way things work. You know, I got a car ride and \$25 and gave me home, fed me and, you know, the rest was just history. So we went down the west end and started organizing, you know, uh, demonstrations against, uh,