

How could king be more upset with moderate whites than violent extremists like cl...

[History](#), [American History](#)



According to Martin Luther King Jr., the white moderates are highly irresponsible. Thus, extremists like the KKK are far much better as they take responsibility for their actions and completely express their hatred and racial sentiments for black people. The “ white moderates “ are impartial, yet claim to be aligned to the woes of the black people in their quest for freedom.

The essay examines the various reasons why King was upset with the white moderates. Considering the events taking place in the United States at the time, as well as how the black people were being treated, King could not have phrased his disappointment any better.

In his letter, King is trying to persuade and win the authority of the white man who in the real sense had acted as a hindrance to the attainment of the various goals of the black people. His greatest displeasure with the white men that he refers to as “ white moderates” in the letter is their limited involvement which he terms as lukewarm.

According to King, the greatest stumbling block that black men had towards their quest for justice and freedom was the white men or the white moderates, who were more inclined to ensuring that the country remained orderly, as opposed to ensuring equitable justice. It should, however, be noted that while the KKK were more open with their ethnic preferences and racial segregation in practice, the white moderates were lukewarm, meaning that they did not take a definite stand in the issues that affected the black people.

Based on their conduct, Martin Luther King is forced to state that, “ Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection” (Hornsby 39). King further states that white moderates “ prefer a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: “ I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action” (Hornsby 40). It is this type of reasoning that in every sense overshadows the line of thought of Martin Luther King.

They were additionally marred by the concept of time as they would constantly advice black people to sit and wait for the opportune time to advocate for their rights. While it is easy to understand that the KKK people hated and acted against black people through their racial lines, it is not easy to understand why the white moderates would claim to support black people and still oppose the ways that they approached their quest for freedom.

According to King, “ shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will” (Hornsby 41). This means that it is better to outright state opposition for something or someone than to pretend to be with them yet you are far away from them.

While the statement made by Luther king comes across as radical and ethnic in nature, the main aim was to ensure that freedom to the people was accelerated. It is not that Martin Luther king was not aware of the evil deeds of the clansmen and was talking in oblivion of them, but this was actually a

statement that sought to state that the white men could have done better if they so desired to see the black people free.

The phrase as used by Martin Luther king can be termed as an awakening to the white people to do more and act fast. It was not meant to discredit them as a people on tribal lines, but to provoke them to see the need for accelerated freedom for the black people.

Hornsby, Alton. " Martin Luther King Jr. ' Letter from a Birmingham jail." The Journal of Negro History 71. 4(1986): 38-44. Print.