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Civil Rights Movements in America Today, millions of Americans are familiar with “ I Have a Dream” speech by Martin Luther King that stimulated the country’s conscience and contributed in eliminating racial segregation in America. In essence, civil rights movements in the mid 19th century agitated for equal opportunities and privileges to all as provided in the constitution, but assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. contributed to 1968 being a unique year in world history. It is because his assassination remains a major blow to the black movements in America and parts of the world characterized by racial discrimination and segregation.

These movements not only struggled to receive formal recognition by the Kennedy administration through legislation, but also needed equal access to all benefits of the burgeoning American economy. Consequently, this essay intends to explain how assassination of Martin Luther king Jr. was a major blow to black movements in America and parts of the world characterized by racial discrimination and segregation. Evidences to support arguments in the essay are quoted from two primary sources namely Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from Birmingham Jail written in 1963 and Robert F. Kennedy’s Speech on the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr in 1968 at a convention in Indianapolis.

The black movements were at their prime in mid-19th Century, a time when racial discrimination and segregation was at its worse. During this period, Martin Luther King was the pioneer of the strategy and vision of a non-violent campaign by black movements against racism. His strategy argued that it was the moral responsibility of people to break unjust laws. As he notes, “ In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self-purification; and

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direct action. We have gone through all these steps in Birmingham. There can be no gain saying the fact that racial injustice engulfs this community. Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of brutality is widely known.” (The King Center 1). Consequently, black movements in America and across the world lost direction in pursuit of their goals and objectives in American society. Moreover, Assassination of Martin Luther King was a sad occurrence to white people alike. White people also participated in civil rights movements in the 1960s when they expanded their grievances to include equality of all in society. During the 1960s, many whites were also discriminated in accessing the benefits realized from the expanding American economy. As a result, the readily joined Martin Luther King Jr.’s strategy of the nonviolent campaign, and this is noticeable in John F. Kennedy’s speech in 1968 following assassination of MLK Jr. in Memphis, Tennessee. As he noted in his speech, “ We can move in that direction as a country, in greater polarization -- black people amongst blacks, and white amongst whites, filled with hatred toward one another. Or we can make an effort, as Martin Luther King did, to understand, and to comprehend, and replace that violence, that stain of bloodshed that has spread across our land, with an effort to understand, compassion, and love.” (American Rhetoric 1).

It is apparent both blacks and whites struggling for equality during this period were saddened by his assassination because Luther King created an inclusive civil rights movement in America.

In conclusion, the struggle for equality continues in America today, and this explains the fight against racial discrimination and segregation by civil rights movements in society. However, at the height of civil rights movements in <https://assignbuster.com/choose-a-topic-essay-samples/>

mid 19th century, assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. contributed to 1968 being a unique year in world history. The civil rights movements lost direction because Martin Luther king was the pioneer of the non-violent campaign against racism. Moreover, hostility between whites and black following his death led to the division between civil rights movements that intensified racial divisions among Americans.

Works Cited

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