

Martin luther king, jr. report (assessment)

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



Martin Luther King, Jr. was a human right activist who advocated for the rights of the Negroes in 1950s and 1960s. From a Birmingham jail, he wrote a letter in response to criticisms from his fellow clergymen. In the letter, he underscored several issues raised by his critics. He observed that the Whites had continually segregated and oppressed the Negroes despite the fact that, the latter had tried to emancipate themselves from the demeaning chains of racial prejudice and segregation that clouded the society.

As a human right activist and a Christian leader, Luther dedicated his life in championing for the rights of the Negroes coupled with creating a just society that upheld human dignity. Although he acted legally and morally in his quest for equality and liberation, Luther became weary of the incessant postponement of negotiations between the Whites and the Negroes.

Ultimately, Luther asserted that, since it was wrong to employ immoral means to achieve moral ends, it was equally wrong to employ moral means to preserve immoral ends of segregation and racial prejudices. Therefore, he decided to protest; an act that sent him to jail. His protests were in line with the first amendment to the United States constitution that gave the right to assembly and protest, because he held the demonstrations without a permit to protest.

In jail, Luther received a considerable deal of criticism from his fellow clergymen who argued that his demonstrations were unwise and untimely, for he did not allow ample time for commencement of negotiations. In response to their criticism, Luther said that he was in jail because of injustice

against the Negroes, both in Atlanta and Birmingham. He noted that injustice anywhere threatened delivery of justice everywhere.

Despite the fact that the Negro leaders sought constructive negotiations with the White leaders, the agreements did not last. The Negro's woes continued unabated, which prompted for direct action to create constructive tensions that favoured negotiation. Realizing that oppressors cannot bestow freedom voluntarily, Luther decided to use demonstrations as means of demanding and earning the long awaited freedom and justice, which the Whites had continually withheld.

In his quest for equality, Luther asserted that there were two laws, just and unjust laws, depending on the person enforcing them. While just laws were consistent with moral laws and upheld human dignity, unjust laws were not consistent with moral laws; they only degraded human dignity.

In this view, Luther termed all segregation statutes as immoral and unjust, for they debauched human dignity. Therefore, he argued that he had the moral responsibility to advocate for the compliance of the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 that outlawed segregation. Moreover, he advocated for the disobedience of segregation statutes because they were immoral.

Ultimately, Luther could not understand why his fellow clergymen turned against his efforts to emancipate the Negroes and uplift humanity.

Clergymen termed him an 'extremist' who 'was in a hurry to do things unwisely and untimely'. In response to this criticism, Luther argued that his

conscience could not allow him to sit and watch the continued Negroes' suffering.

Therefore, Luther exhorted his fellow clergymen to dedicate their lives in emancipation of the Negroes and creation of a just society that did not discriminate against people based on skin colour. He also urged the addressees of the letter to use moral means in a bid to achieve moral ends, and condemn preservation of immoral ends.