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SUBJECT: MEREDITH RALLY WITH ROY WILKENS, FLOYD MCKISSICK, CARMICHAEL
PLACE: MEMPHIS, TENN
DATE: 6/7/66

MLK: Mr. Chairman, and my brothers and sisters of the city of Memphis, and surrounding communities. First I want to say how happy I am to see each of you tonight and to be in the city of Memphis once more and to see your warm.....

do it in ten minutes, and I won't even raise my voice. First I'm here, and I think we're all here, in this auditorium tonight in this church because of our indebtedness/ to James Meredith for his courage, for his bravery, and for his unswerving dedication to the principles that we all hold dear. It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who said on one occasion, "See how the masses of men worry themselves into nameless graves, while here and there a great unselfish soul gets himself into immortality." James Meredith has forgotten himself ~~into~~ into immortality. And I think that the greatest tribute that we can pay him as he lies on his sickbed as a result of being shot yesterday, is to go out and work harder to remove the conditions from our society and from the state of Mississippi that made it possible for him to be shot. The second thing that I'd like to say to you tonight is that the ~~shooting~~ shooting of James Meredith in the state of Mississippi is indicative of the fact that we still have a long long way to go. Now it's true that we've left Egypt, but before we arrive safely in the promised land, there are still prodigious hilltops of opposition and gigantic mountains of injustice and resistance before us. And the plant of freedom has only grown a bud, and not yet a flower. We've made great strides toward freedom but we have not

YET MADE that stride into freedom, and so I come here tonight to plead with you to support the movement, to give it all of your energies, all of your resources and all of your dedication. Freedom is not some lavish dish that the white man will pass out on a silver platter while the Negro merely furnished the appetite. If we are going to be free we are going to have to suffer for that freedom, we are going to have to sacrifice for it, we will have to march the highways of this nation for it, and I am still convinced that there is nothing more powerful to dramatize an injustice than the tramp & tramp of marching feet. So we've gotta march . We've gotta march all the way to Jackson Mississippi, and I think everybody under the sound of my voice should make that witness in some way. There's something each of you can do. Maybe some just can't make the march but there's something else you can do, and I say to you that if we will do it we will be able to transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. Now I have a strange philosophy. A lot of people felt it's strange, but I still believe it, and I'm goin on in believin it. We have a power. It isn't gone. And it isn't bricks. Anybody throwin bricks against state troopers and national guardsmen and people with machine guns is not only violent, but they're foolish. This isn't our salvation.

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We have another weapon, and God grant that we will forever use it. I've seen it work. I've seen it transform dark ⁱⁿ⁻ definite situations. I remember when we were in Birmingham and I closed. Bull Carter was a terrible man, and he was always happy when some spectators who had not gone through the discipline of the movement and the non-violent aspect of it threw bricks, and engaged in acts of violence, he was always ~~happy~~ smiling, he was always happy because Bull Carter knew how to handle violence; he was an expert in that. He had maps of the heart of violence, but I remember when we would get together at the 16th Street Baptist Church, and by the thousands we would march out and Bull Carter would call out his police dogs and we would walk before the violence of the police dogs, just sayin ant nobody goin to turn me around. And then I remember he would say, turn on the fire hoses, and they did turn them on with all of their surging waters and we would still walk on through all' of that water, just singin wok up this mornin with my mind stayed on freedom. And then I watched him as he called the paddy wagons and said throw em in and we got in there and somehow we could sing come by here my lordy come by here I wanta be free my lordy I wanta be free! And then he would drive off and they would take us on down and they would pack us in jail like sardines in a can. And then we would join hands in that jail and begin

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to sing We shall overcome we are not afraid We are gonna
be free. And I remember that day when all the jails were
full. We had filled up the Bessemer jail, we had filled up
the Fairfield jail, we had filled up the city jail, we had
filled up the county jail, we had filled up the fairgrounds,
and we went downtown 5,000 strong marching all over Birmingham.
And Bull Carter said put em in jail....