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The Dreams of an American

“I have a dream...” Those four words are words every American knows. They are words spoken by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the March on Washington. Americans know the words, but do we know the dream? More importantly, are we going to let the work, hopes and dreams of an aspiring American go to waste?

“Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God’s children. It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment.” (King) Yes, Martin Luther was talking about the discrimination against blacks that was an extreme issue at the time the speech was given. He also uses the term “all of God’s children”. No matter what religion you are – Christian, atheist, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, etc.-you know he is referring to everybody in this speech, not just blacks. We can take his words and put them into context of one of today’s big issues-immigration.

“We cannot walk alone. And as we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot look back.” (King) How many immigrants that live in America are “walking alone” because of their status as undocumented? Very many. About 25% of people who work on farms are undocumented. If we establish places for the undocumented immigrants to become documented, our nation would become a better place. Perhaps reform could include a strongly enforced penalty on employers who hire undocumented workers, which would encourage employers to help immigrants become documented.

“I say to you today, my friends, though, even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream, I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” (King) Not only did Martin Luther King, Jr. want blacks to be treated the same as whites, he wanted everybody to be treated equally, including immigrants. With a country that was founded upon immigration, why do some people look at immigrants as bad, dirty, illegal? Aren’t all of our ancestors immigrants? We must take this into consideration and treat the immigrants with care and compassion before we put any thoughts into action to create a better immigration system.

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” (King) All of our families originate from a country that is now foreign to us. If that is so, why do we think other races and ethnicities are below us? No one is a full-blooded American. Such a thing does not exist. If we are no different than them, why do we think of ourselves as the dominant race? Thoughts like these must be pushed aside when discussing immigration. We can no longer think of ourselves as better than the rest of the world just because we have freedom and a democracy based government. Don’t we want to share that freedom with others? Don’t we want people who live in less fortunate countries and dream of better hopes for their children be able to fulfill that dream? An easier way to come to America as a citizen is so there are less undocumented people moving in. Thoughts of arrogance and dominance must be pushed aside and not tolerated when trying to establish immigration reform and equality for the immigrants.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream of human equality in America. Many people will say they are inspired or motivated by the words and actions of this man, but then turn around and say things that oppose what his words stand for. The I Have a Dream speech could help us create a better immigration system and it could potentially help us create a better nation. I suggest we do not let the hopes and dreams of a well-known, well-spoken American be forgotten. We all have dreams and we all have hopes of those dreams being fulfilled someday. Present generations and those to come should, in my opinion, work to let the dreams of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. become a reality. It is a task that will not be easy, but with hard work and determination, it is a task that can be accomplished.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. dreamed of a day where our country will live up to its status of free nation. Our country will not be 100% free until we can help the immigrants become documented and help them become productive citizens of this great nation. Let Dr. King’s speech be a guideline for the country again; this time on immigration reform.