

4/15/68
NYT

KING CITED THREAT DAY BEFORE DEATH

Told 2,000 Supporters He Had Seen Promised Land

MEMPHIS, April 4 (AP)—"It really doesn't matter what happens now. I've been to the mountaintop."

The speaker was the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. His audience was a cheering crowd of some 2,000 supporters. It was last night.

Dr. King said last night that he was aware that threats had been made on his life. But he said he had seen the fulfillment of his goals of nonviolence, and did not worry about the future.

He said that his flight to Memphis from Atlanta Tuesday had been delayed because of a baggage search that airlines officials had said resulted from threats to him.

'Difficult Days Ahead'

"And there have been some threats around here," he said. "We've got some difficult days ahead, but it really doesn't matter now," Dr. King said. "Because I've been to the mountaintop."

And the Rev. Andrew W. Young, the executive vice president of Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said after the slaying that he had heard Dr. King make similar remarks only once before—at Demopolis, Ala., during his 1965 Selma march.

"I don't know whether it was premonition or not," Dr. Young said as he stood in the door of the emergency room where Dr. King had been taken after he was felled by the bullet.

Supreme Test Planned

The supreme test of the theory of non violence was to have come next Monday, when Dr. King planned to lead a massive march down the path where violence broke out last week.

That was the first time in Dr. King's long history of civil rights activity that one of his drives had erupted into violence.

He was clearly disturbed.

Mr. Young, testifying at a Federal Court hearing six hours before Dr. King was shot, was asked by United States District Judge Bailey Brown what effect violence in the upcoming

march would have on Dr. King.

"I would say that Dr. King would consider it a repudiation of his philosophy and his whole way of life," Mr. Young replied. "I don't know when I've seen him as discouraged and depressed."

"Let us stand with greater determination," Mr. Young said. "Let us move on in these days of challenge to make America what it ought to be."

DR. KING'S STATEMENT

I left Atlanta this morning, and as we got started on the plane—there were six of us—the pilot said over the public address system: 'We're sorry for the delay, but we have Dr. Martin Luther King on the plane. And to be sure of that all of the bags were checked. And to be sure that nothing would be wrong on the plane, we had to check out everything carefully. And we've had the plane protected and guarded all night.'

And then I got into Memphis. And some began to say the threats—or talk about the threats that were out. Or what would happen to me from some of our sick white brothers.

Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountain top. I won't mind.

Like anybody, I would like

to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will.

And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over, and I've seen the promised land.

I may not get there with

you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land.

So I'm happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.