

Text 19

We are not here at this Rally because we have already gained freedom. No! We are gathered here rallying for the freedom which we have long been promised, but have as yet not received. This Rally is for that perfect freedom which up until now this government has not granted us. There would be no need to protest to the government if we were already free. Freedom is essential to life itself. Freedom is essential to the development of the human being. If we don't have freedom we can never expect justice and equality. Only after we have freedom do justice and equality become a reality. Today we are gathered at this Rally to hear from our leaders who have been acting as our spokesmen, and representing us to the white man downtown. We want to know how our leaders really think, how they talk, how they feel...and most important of all, we want them to know how we feel.

Again I repeat, we are not gathered here today because we are Muslims or Christians, Protestants or Catholics, Baptists or Methodists, Democrats or Republicans, Masons or Elks...but because as a collective mass of black people we have been colonized, enslaved, lynched, exploited, deceived and abused...

Adapted from Malcom X's Harlem speech at the Harlem Freedom Rally (1960)

Text 20

No single society has resolved the serious issue of violence and crime. For human and religious reasons, the capital punishment has been abolished in many countries. The most frequent solutions nations have adopted is simply jailing the delinquents for months or years. And for more serious crimes, they are sentenced to life. Unfortunately, this does not resolve the problem. First of all, prisons are very expensive. Secondly the living conditions in prisons are very precarious. Some prisoners sometimes die there, while more and more there are gang conflicts inside prisons. As a result, the life of prisoners after jail is worse than before. It is true that authorities or nations are concerned about their citizens' well-being and security, and they are willing to set justice and protect them from bandits of all kind. But we believe that it is also necessary to find other methods that not only protect the whole society, but also permit a great number of delinquents to change as quickly as possible and become normal citizens.

Text 21

Murder city

One day last week in Detroit, a lawyer in a Hall of Justice courtroom inexplicably drew a gun and pointed it at the judge and a witness. The judge was not carrying the 38-caliber pistol that he usually packs, but three policemen in the courtroom drew their guns and kill the lawyer. A few minutes later, in a luggage shop in downtown Detroit, the owner and his clerk were discovered neatly tied and executed, apparently in a robbery. A little after that, a prominent black psychiatrist was found dead in the trunk of his car. And still later that evening, police in the suburb of Roseville came across the bodies of young lovers in a car, victims of a murder suicide. Since January, 1, there have been 187 homicides in Detroit, 27 percent ahead of the rate last year in the city that normally revels in records. Last year Detroit (pop. 1.5 million) had 601 homicides, or one for every 2.500 people. By contrast, Chicago, with twice as many people, had 711 murders; while London (pop.7.4 million) had only 113. Why is Detroit such a center for bloodshed? Police Commissioner John Nichols believes that the widespread possession of handguns and impunity are basic causes. He estimates that there are some 500,000 handguns around, or one for every three citizens of Detroit.

Adapted from *Time Magazine* April 16, 1973
