

And why was he our 'Shining Black Prince'?

Selected Quotes from Malcolm X



Message to the Grassroots - November, 1963

"America has a very serious problem. Not only does America have a very serious problem, but our people have a very serious problem. America's problem is us. The only reason she has a problem is she doesn't want us here."

"Look at the American Revolution in 1776. That revolution was for what? For land. Why did they want land? Independence. How was it carried out? Bloodshed. Number one, it was based on land, the basis of independence. And the only way they could get it was bloodshed."

"As long as the white man sent you to Korea, you bled. He sent you to Germany, you bled. He sent you to the South Pacific to fight the Japanese, you bled. You bleed for white people, but when it comes to seeing your own churches being bombed and little black girls murdered, you haven't got any blood. You bleed when the white man says bleed; you bite when the white man says bite; and you bark when the white man says bark...How are you going to be nonviolent in Mississippi, as violent as you were in Korea?"

"Of all our studies, history is best qualified to reward our research. And when you see that you've got problems, all you have to do is examine the historic methods used all over the world by others who have problems similar to yours. Once you see how they got theirs straight, then you know how you can get yours straight."

"Revolution is based on land. Land is the basis of all independence. Land is the basis of freedom, justice, and equality."

"Revolution is bloody, revolution is hostile, revolution knows no compromise, revolution overturns and destroys everything that gets in its way. And you, sitting around here like a

knot on the wall, saying, 'I'm going to love these people no matter how much they hate me. No, you need a revolution.'

"If you're afraid of black nationalism, you're afraid of revolution. And if you love revolution, you love black nationalism."

A Declaration of Independence - 3/12/63

"It is criminal to teach a man not to defend himself when he is the constant victim of brutal attacks."

The Ballot or the Bullet - 4/3/64

"No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or a flag-saluter, or a flag-waver — no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system.

And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare."

"The political philosophy of black nationalism means that the black man should control the politics and the politicians in his own community."

"The economic philosophy of black nationalism is pure and simple. It only means that we should control the economy of our community. Why should white people be running all the stores in our community? Why should white people be running the banks of our community? Why should the economy of our community be in the hands of the white man? Why? If a black man can't move his store into a white community, you tell me why a white man should move his store into a black community."

"If we see fit to form a black nationalist party, we'll form a black nationalist party. If it's necessary to form a black nationalist army, we'll form a black nationalist army. It'll be the ballot or the bullet. It'll be liberty or it'll be death."

"The white man is more afraid of separation than he is of integration. Segregation means that he puts you away from him, but not far enough for you to be out of his jurisdiction; separation means you're gone. And the white man will integrate faster than he'll let you separate."

To Mississippi Youth - 12/31/64

"One of the first things I think young people, especially nowadays, should learn is how to see for yourself and listen for yourself and think for yourself. Then you can come to an intelligent decision for yourself. If you form the habit of going by what you hear others say about someone, or going by what others think about someone, instead of searching that thing out for yourself and seeing for yourself, you will be walking west when you think you're going east, and you will be walking east when you

think you're going west."

"Many of us want to be nonviolent and we talk very loudly, you know, about being nonviolent. Here in Harlem, where there are probably more black people concentrated than any place in the world, some talk that nonviolent talk too. But we find that they aren't nonviolent with each other. You can go out to Harlem Hospital, where there are more black patients than any hospital in the world, and see them going in there all cut up and shot up and busted up where they got violent with each other."

"I don't go along with any kind of nonviolence unless everybody's going to be nonviolent. If they make the Ku Klux Klan nonviolent, I'll be nonviolent. If they make the White Citizens Council nonviolent, I'll be nonviolent. But as long as you've got somebody else not being nonviolent, I don't want anybody coming to me talking any nonviolent talk."

"You get freedom by letting your enemy know that you'll do anything to get your freedom; then you'll get it. It's the only way you'll get it."

"There's been a revolution, a Black revolution, going on in Africa. In Kenya, the Mau Mau were revolutionary; they were the ones who brought the word 'Uhuru' to the fore."

"The Black revolution is sweeping Asia, is sweeping Africa, is rearing its head in Latin America"

The Black Revolution - 4/8/64

"Any kind of racial explosion that takes place in this country today...is not a racial explosion that can be confined to the shores of America. It is a racial explosion that can ignite the racial powder keg that exists all over the planet that we call earth."

"We didn't want anybody telling us anything about Africa, much less calling us Africans. In hating Africa and in hating the Africans, we ended up hating ourselves, without even realizing it. Because you can't hate the roots of a tree, and not hate the tree. You can't hate your origin and not end up hating yourself. You can't hate Africa and not hate yourself."

2/14/65 - THE LAST MESSAGE

"I wouldn't call on anybody to be violent without a cause. But I think the Black man in this country...will be more justified when he stands up and starts to protect himself, no matter how many necks he has to break and heads he has to crack..."