

Mixed Messages

Listening to that Luther Man's speech on my old Ford's staticky radio:

"I am happy
freedom in the history
millions of Negro slaves
...flames of withering
long night of their captivity."

"Negro still is not free.
Negro is still sadly crippled
Negro lives on a lonely island
Negro is still languished
...a shameful condition."

"In a sense we've come
magnificent words...promise...
black men as well as white men,
guaranteed...rights of life, liberty
America...insufficient."

"Refuse to believe
Refuse to believe
Demand...freedom...justice."

"We have also come
tranquilizing drug of gradualism
...make real the promises

Now is the time
Now is the time."

"For all of God's children. It would be fatal
freedom and equality...a beginning.
Rude awakening...business as usual.
Neither rest nor tranquility
whirlwinds of revolt"

"...my people
guilty of wrongful deeds
bitterness and hatred.
Struggle..dignity and discipline.
Physical violence
physical force."

"A distrust of all white people
have come to realize
bound to our freedom."

"We cannot walk alone.
We cannot turn back."

"We can never be satisfied
We can never be satisfied
We are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied."

*Click. Dust fills the cab from the long dirt road
home as the gravel keeps time against my rusty
truck bed.*

M. Letsch

Broadside

0413109 V32N04
Goshen College, Goshen IN

