

MLK Day Transcript

Maggie: Millions of people around the country turned yesterday's day off into a day on, remembering Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with a day of service.

With more than one 100,000 people, San Antonio, Texas hosted one of the largest marches for Dr. King. Others rallied in Louisiana, South Carolina and Arizona. Students in Boston used the weekend to kick off their year of service. Now Tom Hanson has more on the man who inspired a nation.

Tom: Hey, guys. I am here in Harlem, New York, one of key sites of the Civil Rights Movement. And yesterday was a pretty important national holiday – one of the reasons you guys had school off – all to recognize the life and work of this guy right here, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Now, Dr. King pushed for equal rights for all people. And now it is time to see how well you know Dr. King. It is pop quiz time!

Martin Luther King, Jr. became the leader of the Civil Rights Movement, but what was his profession? Was it:

- A. Teacher
- B. Minister
- C. Salesman
- D. Politician

You have got ten seconds!

Time is up! If you answered “B,” minister, you are right!

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: We will never again accept segregation because it is an evil system.

Tom: From the mid-1950s, as a young minister to his tragic death in 1968, Dr. King led a civil rights movement that changed our country forever. And yesterday, thousands gathered at memorial services around the country to honor his achievements and legacy.

Before the Civil Rights Movement, many southern U.S. states had Jim Crow laws, otherwise known as ‘separate but equal’ laws. This meant that African-Americans had to use separate bathrooms, drink from separate drinking fountains and ride in the back of buses to allow white people to ride up front. In many places, laws were even set up to keep African-Americans from voting.

Dr. King and thousands of civil rights activists fought to overturn these unfair laws, and the government and the Supreme Court finally listened. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 guaranteed the

end of separate-but-equal laws. And the Voting Rights Act of 1965 guaranteed African-Americans' right to vote in elections. These are the lasting accomplishments of Dr. King.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: I have 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.

Tom: But on April 4th, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee, Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed by James Earl Ray.

Shortly after his death, civil rights leaders and other groups started asking the government to proclaim a national holiday in Dr. King's name, and twenty years later, President Ronald Reagan made it official. While most U.S. states immediately recognized the holiday, a few states resisted. But today, his message of inspiration lives on.

Boy: Martin Luther King was an inspiration. He's the one who stopped all the segregation. And if it wasn't for him, things wouldn't have been the same today.

Girl: There is more work to be done because there is, like, small kinds of racism in certain places.

Boy: A hero is one who's selfless and helps others unconditionally, and that's what Martin Luther King did.

Tom: Tom Hanson, Channel One News.

Maggie: Did you volunteer for MLK Day? Well, tell us all about it over at Channelone.com or on our Twitter or Instagram feed.