

CALIFORNIA



April 4, 2024: California Poor People's Campaign Public Participatory Readings of Dr. Martin Luther Jr.'s April 4, 1967, speech, "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence"

On April 4, 1967, exactly one year before his tragic assassination, in his prophetic speech, "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence," Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. declared: "I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values.... we must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival has picked up Dr. King's unfinished work weaving the interlocking injustices of systemic racism, systemic poverty, environmental devastation, militarism and the war economy and a distorted moral narrative of Christian nationalism that blames poor people for their own poverty and claims there's "not enough", into one "moral fusion" campaign.

This year's participatory readings of "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence" are helping to build momentum for the **Third Reconstruction Agenda to Heal the Nation: End Poverty and Low Wages From the Bottom Up**. Drawing on the transformational history of the First Reconstruction following the Civil War and the Second Reconstruction of the civil rights struggles of the 20th century, the Third Reconstruction is a revival of our constitutional commitment to establish justice, provide for the general welfare, end decades of austerity, and recognize that policies that center the 140 million poor and low-income people in the country are also good economic policies that can heal and transform the nation.

Did you know that between 2018-2020, 18.7 million Californians were poor or low-income, accounting for 47.6% of the state's population? In 2023, the federal government spent \$1.1 trillion on war and weapons, law enforcement, mass incarceration, deportations, and detention. In 2021, 7.5 million children received the expanded Child Tax Credit and 1.8 million low-wage workers got the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit. Since these pandemic programs have expired, poverty has been on the rise — proving that poverty is a policy choice.

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The Poor People's Campaign:
A National Call for Moral Revival
www.poorpeoplescampaign.org

California Poor People's Campaign
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