JOHN LEWIS
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Recording opens with unidentified speaker introducing John Lewis. The introduction is already in progress, and the recording begins mid-sentence.

MODERATOR: . . .of this part of his life in his best-selling book, *Walking with the Wind*. I read a chapter of his book on amazon.com. Those of you who are familiar with that website know that it solicits reader reviews online. Most best-sellers get widely varying customer responses, ranging from one star to five stars. *A Man in Full* by Thomas [sic, means Tom] Wolfe certainly ran the full gamut. [*Chuckles from the audience*] But the response to *Walking with the Wind* is testimony to the power and the eloquence of John Lewis's message. Nineteen reader reviews were listed, which is a very high number. Every one was five stars. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you a modern man for all seasons, Congressman John Lewis. [*Audience applause*]

Mr. Lewis approaches the podium and shakes hands with the moderator, who leaves as Mr. Lewis takes the podium.

JOHN LEWIS: Let me thank the DeKalb Historic Society for inviting me to be here to talk about my book—my little book, *Walking with the Wind*. I'm so happy to be out of Washington. [*Audience laughter*] It's difficult to walk with the wind in Washington [*audience laughter*] these days.

I must tell you a little story that I tell in the book, *Walking with the Wind*. Some of you have heard this story many, many times. I didn't grow up in a big city like Atlanta or New York or Washington or Philadelphia or Birmingham or Savannah or Columbus or Snellville [*audience laughter*] or East Point or Palmetto or Decatur. I grew up about fifty miles from Montgomery near a little place called Troy in southeast Alabama. My father was a sharecropper, a tenant farmer. Back in 1944, when I was four years old—and I do remember when I was four—my father had saved $300, and with that $300 he bought 110 acres of land. That was a lot of land for $300. On this farm there was a lot of cotton, a lot of corn, and lots of peanuts. Now, if any of you come and visit any member of the Georgia Congressional delegation office, the first thing we will offer you, be they members of the House or the two members of the Senate, we will offer you some Georgia peanuts that the Georgia Peanut Commission makes available. I don't eat too many of those peanuts, but I don't want you to go out

there and tell the Georgia Peanut Commission I don't eat too many of those peanuts. [*Audience laughter*] They're going to offer you some peanuts, and I'd say, "Thank you, but no thank you." The next thing we will offer will be a Coca-Cola, because Atlanta is the home of Coca-Cola. But also on this farm in rural Alabama we raised a lot of hogs and a lot of cows and a lot of chickens. And it was my responsibility as a young boy to care for the chickens. And I fell in love with raising these chickens like no one else could raise chickens. You watch television, you read the newspapers—*The Atlanta Constitution*, some of you read *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal*—you check books out of all of the libraries, you go to Emory from time to time, to other colleges and attend speeches and lectures, some of you listen to NPR, National Public Radio. But you don't know anything about raising chickens. [*Audience laughter*]

Let me tell you. [*Recording skips*.] And we're going to visit a little town. Go visit Montgomery. Or visit Birmingham. I saw signs that said, "White Men," "Colored Men." "White Women," "Colored Women." "White Waiting," "Colored Waiting." As a young child I tasted the bitter fruits of segregation. I felt the stings of discrimination. I remember in 1950, when I was ten years old, going downtown to the little town of Troy to the public library, trying to get a library card, trying to check a book out. And I was told by the librarian that the library was for whites, not for coloreds. But I went back to [inaudible], back to Troy, Alabama, last July 5th. They had a book signing. And they gave me a library card, and I have it in my wallet. [*Scattered laughter and applause*] But it took me from 1950 to 1998 to get a library card from the [inaudible] library in Troy, Alabama. So we have made some changes. We've made some progress. We've come a distance.

In 1955 when I was 15 years old and in tenth grade, I first heard of Martin Luther King, Jr. I heard his voice on the radio. I listened to his words, and his words inspired me to find a way to get involved in the civil rights movement. In 1957 I finished high school. I wanted to attend a little school called Troy State College. It is now known as [Troy State University] [*Recording skips*] school transcripts sent there. I never heard a word from the school, so I wrote a letter to Martin Luther King, Jr., at the age of seventeen. Dr. King wrote me back and encouraged me to come to Montgomery to meet with him. He sent me a roundtrip Greyhound Bus ticket. In the meantime I had been accepted at a little school in Nashville, Tennessee; and I went off to school in Nashville. I was home for spring break in March 1958. On a Saturday morning my

father drove me to the Greyhound Bus station, and I boarded a bus and traveled the fifty miles from Troy to Montgomery to meet with Martin Luther King, Jr. And I will never forget that day. A young lawyer by the name of Fred Gray, who was the lawyer for Rosa Parks, Dr. King, and the Montgomery movement, ushered me into the First Baptist Church, pastored by Ralph Abernathy, located on River Street in downtown Montgomery. And I got up the steps of the church, entered the door of the office, and there Martin Luther King, Jr., stood up from behind a desk. And I was scared, nervous. What [*Recording skips*] this boy from rural Alabama could have said to Martin Luther King, Jr., who had emerged as my hero.

Dr. King said, "Are you John Lewis? Are you the boy from Troy?"

And I said, "Dr. King, I am John Robert Lewis." I gave my whole name. [*Scattered laughter*] I didn't want there to be any mistake that I was the right person. That was the beginning of a long and beautiful relationship.

I didn't pursue my interest in attending Troy State. I continued to study in the city of Nashville. In my studying there I started attending some mass meetings where Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke, where Thurgood Marshall, Roy Wilkins, Daisy Bates, and other civil rights leaders would come to speak from time to time. And a few days later I started attending some nonviolent workshops, where we studied the great religions of the world. We studied Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" with a group of students from Vanderbilt, from Peabody College, Tennessee State, Meharry Medical College, American Baptist Theological Seminary, and [inaudible]. We all came together, and we started studying Gandhi and what he attempted to do in South Africa and what he accomplished in India. And we studied what Martin Luther King, Jr., was trying to do in the American South.

And in the fall of 1959 an interracial group of students went downtown to Nashville to engage in what we called [inaudible] "sit-ins" at two of the large department stores just to establish the fact that these stores would refuse to serve an interracial group or refuse to serve people of color. And the sit-in nonviolent workshops continued until the spring of 1960. After the Greensboro sit-in of February 1, 1960, we started sitting in on a regular basis in Nashville. And we were sitting in in an orderly, peaceful, nonviolent fashion; and people would come out and put lighted cigarettes out in our hair or down our backs or pull us off the lunch-counter stools; and we would just sit there without striking back. And later, in February, to be exact—

the week of February 27th—a very progressive young white minister, who was a native of Mississippi, by the name of Will Campbell, whom some of you may know—writer, author, good friend—came to us and said, "It is my understanding that if you go down on this Saturday, the local authorities—businesspeople, police officials—will [inaudible] and beat you and in the end arrest you." And we made the decision that we had to go down. We couldn't allow the threat of violence, the threat of arrest [*Recording skips*].

So we needed to draw up what we called the "dos" and "don'ts" of the sit-in movement. In order to earn my way or work my way through school, I worked as a janitor in the administration building at the American Baptist Theological Seminary. We didn't have any supplies, we didn't have any papers. It was my responsibility to draw up the dos and don'ts, and I drew up the dos and don'ts of the sit-in movement. And they were very simple. It says something like, Do sit up straight. Don't talk out. Don't [inaudible—either "laugh" or "lash"] out. Don't strike back. Obey your leader. Remember the teachings of Jesus, Thoreau, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. We needed some paper. I didn't steal this ream of paper; I liberated a ream of paper [*audience laughter*] and made it available to the movement. And from that ream of paper we cut it in half and got a thousand copies, and we printed the dos and don'ts. And we went down on February 22nd; but we were beaten, and later we were all arrested, eighty-nine of us. And in Nashville, Tennessee, the local paper the next day printed the dos and don'ts. And the sit-in movement spread all across the South like wildfire. And from the sit-ins we started something called the Freedom Ride. And I tell in the book the story that [inaudible—could be "drove"?] the Freedom Ride, leaving Washington, D.C., only [inaudible] thirteen of us—seven whites and six blacks—to test the decision of the Supreme Court outlawing segregation of public transportation.

But I do remember the night of May 3, 1961, as the group and others who were going through a period of orientation and training went to downtown Washington to a Chinese restaurant. Now, I grew up in rural Alabama. I'd never had Chinese food before. There was no Chinese around; no Chinese restaurant. But that night we had a wonderful meal. And someone said, "You should eat well, because this may be like the last supper." Little did we know, as we traveled from Washington, through Virginia, through North Carolina, that the first violence occurred in the Greyhound bus station in the Rock Hill [inaudible]. We made it to Georgia without any problems between Atlanta and Birmingham. The Greyhound bus was burned outside the city of Anniston. The

people traveling on a Trailways bus was beaten in Birmingham. And the rides continued. A mob greeted us in Montgomery. And later we were arrested and jailed in the city jail of Jackson, Mississippi, the county jail in Heinz County, and later many of us were transferred to Parchman State Penitentiary [sic; Mississippi State Prison at Parchman].

But all across the South we discovered that in the eleven southern states of the Confederacy, from Virginia to Texas, it was almost impossible for people of color to be able to become participants in the democratic process. People could not register to vote. The state of Mississippi had a [inaudible] population of more than 450,000, and only about 16,000 blacks were registered to vote. One county in Alabama, Lowndes County, the county was more than 80 percent African-American. There was not a single registered African-American voter.

Martin Luther King, Jr., received the Nobel Peace Prize in December 1964 after President Johnson had been elected, after the signing of the Civil Rights Act in the summer of 1964. He [Dr. King] came back to the country, had a meeting at the White House with President Johnson, and said, "Mr. President, we need a strong voting rights act." And President Johnson said, "Dr. King, we don't have the votes in the Congress to get a voting rights act passed." The [inaudible] had created an organization called the Voter Education Project. The NAACP, the Urban League, and SNCC, CORE, and the SCLC, and others had engaged in all type of efforts to get people to register, but with very little success. So Dr. King came back to Atlanta, met with people at the SCLC, met with us—those of us at the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, better known as SNCC, and [inaudible]. And he was invited to come to Selma.

In Selma, Alabama in 1965, only 2.1 percent of blacks of voting age were registered to vote. We must keep in mind that before going to Selma, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee had organized something called the Mississippi Summer Project of more than a thousand students. Young people, black and white, lawyers, doctors, ministers, priests, rabbis, nuns, and others--came to Selma—came to Mississippi, rather—to work in a Freedom School to prepare people to pass the so-called "literacy test." And that summer night of June 21, 1964, three young men went out to investigate the burning of a black church—Andrew Goodman, Mickey Schwerner, and James Chaney, two whites and one black. They were arrested by the sheriff, taken to jail. That same Sunday night they were taken from jail by the sheriff and his

deputies and turned over to the Klan. They were beaten, shot, and killed. I knew these three young men. They didn't die in Viet Nam. They didn't die in the Middle East. They didn't die in Africa. They didn't die in Eastern Europe. They didn't die in Central or South America. They died in our own country for the right of all of our people to participate in a democratic process.

So on the heels—along with that that was happening in Mississippi and the South, Martin Luther King, Jr., made the decision to go to Selma, where SNCC had been involved since 1962. And I can remember it as clearly as yesterday. And I tell the story in a book. But it was [inaudible phrase] the people to the downtown courthouse in Selma, where you could only attempt to register [to vote] the first and third Mondays of each month, just to get the steps, just to take the so-called "literacy test." You had a sheriff there [inaudible--could be "with" or "who was"] a very big man and pretty mean. Most all of the black people were afraid of him. And I think a large segment of the population of the white community were afraid of this sheriff. His name was Jim Clark. He wore a gun on one side, a night stick on the other side. And he carried an electric cattle prod in his hand, and he didn't use it on cows. [Inaudible phrase] people to the courthouse on January the 18th, 1965. I walked up with a group of black men and women behind me, trying to get them inside the door to take them to take the so-called "literacy test."

And Sheriff Clark said to me, "John Lewis, you're an outside agitator. You're the lowest form of humanity."

I [inaudible] at that time I had all my hair, I was a few pounds lighter. I looked him straight in the eye, and I said, "Sheriff, I may be an agitator, but I'm not an outsider. I grew up only ninety miles from here, and we're going to stay here until these people are allowed to register to vote."

He said, "You're under arrest." And he arrested me, along with a few other people, and took me to jail.

A few days later Martin Luther King, Jr., and Reverend [Ralph David] Abernathy came to Selma; and we mobilized the city of Selma in such a fashion and the surrounding communities. More than three thousand people were arrested in less than a week. Lawyers, doctors, teachers, students—[inaudible] community just went to jail for the right to vote.

Then the night of February the 17th, 1965, in a little town called Marion, Alabama, in the heart of the Black Belt, in Perry County--the home county of Mrs. Martin Luther, King, Jr., the home county of Mrs. Ralph Abernathy, and the home county of the late Mrs. Andrew Young, Jean Young--a young man by the name of Jimmie Lee Jackson was involved in a march for the right to vote that evening. He was shot in the stomach by a state trooper. And a few days later he died in Good Samaritan Hospital in Selma. And because of what happened to him, we said we will march from Selma to Montgomery to dramatize to the nation and the world that people of color wanted to participate in democratic process.

We announced that the march would take place. Governor Wallace issued a statement that the march would not be allowed. On Saturday night, March 6th, Sheriff Clark requested that all white men over the age of twenty-one to come down to the Dallas County Courthouse and be deputized to become part of his posse to stop the march. On Sunday morning most of us attended the services at the Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church in downtown Selma. After the services we decided as a group to engage in a nonviolent workshop out on the basketball court playing field near the church near a housing project. And then we decided to line up in twos and walk in an orderly, peaceful fashion from Selma to Montgomery. It was to be a solemn walk [*Recording skips*.] [*Brief scene change as camera focuses on sign language interpreter*.] young people and [inaudible] young children. [*Camera goes back to John Lewis*.]

The SCLC and the SCLC people drafted me, because SNCC had opposed the original march, to lead the march on behalf of SNCC. I was wearing a light trench coat. I was wearing a backpack before it became fashionable to wear backpacks. And in this backpack I had two books, I had an apple, an orange, toothpaste, and toothbrush. I thought we were going to be arrested; we were going to go to jail. So I wanted to have something to read, something to eat, and, since I was going to be in close quarters with my friends and neighbors, I wanted to be able to brush my teeth.

We got to an edge of the bridge crossing the Alabama River, the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Hosea Williams said, "John, can you swim?" We saw a lot of a water there, the Alabama River.

I said, "No." And I said, "Hosea, can you swim?"

And he said, "No." And I think we made the decision then that there was too much water down there for us to jump.

And we continued to walk in an orderly fashion, and we came to the apex of the bridge. We saw a sea of gold, Alabama State Troopers. And behind the State Troopers we saw Sheriff Clark's posse and the sheriff's deputies. And we walked and came within hearing distance of the State Troopers. A man identified himself and said, "I'm Major John Cloud of the Alabama State Troopers. This is an unlawful march, and it will not be allowed to continue. I give you three minutes to disburse and return to your church." In less than a minute-and-a-half we saw these guys putting on their gas masks. Major John Cloud said, "Troopers advance!" And they came toward us, beating us with night sticks, trampling us with horses, releasing the tear gas. I was hit in the head by a night stick by a State Trooper and had a concussion on the bridge that Sunday. That Sunday became known as Bloody Sunday.

And to this day I don't know how I made it back from across that bridge to the streets of downtown Selma back to the church. But I do remember being back at the church. By this time the church was full to capacity, with hundreds of people on the outside. Someone asked me did I want to say anything to the crowd, and I stood up and said, "I don't understand it, how President Johnson can send troops to Viet Nam and cannot send troops to Selma to protect people whose only desire is to register and to vote." Two days later Martin Luther King, Jr., came back to Selma, led more than a thousand religious leaders—priests, ministers [*Skip in recording*] point where we were beaten and turned back.

On March 15 Lyndon Johnson, who said it was impossible to get a Voting Rights Act—President Johnson spoke to a joint session of the Congress and gave what I would consider one of the most meaningful speeches any American president has made in modern times, the whole question of civil rights or voting rights. That night President Johnson spoke, he started his speech off that night by saying, "I speak tonight for the dignity of man and for the destiny of democracy." He went on to say, "At times history and fate meet in a single place in man's unending search for freedom. So it was more than a century ago at Concord and Lexington and at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama." And in that speech, over and over again, as President Johnson presented the Voting Rights Act to the Congress, we said again, "We shall overcome." It was said [inaudible] Dr. King in the family home in Selma, as we listened and watched President Johnson. And tears came down his [Dr. King's] face. And he said, "We'll make it from Selma to Montgomery, and the Voting Rights Act will be passed."

And he was right. The Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. It was signed into law on August 6, 1965. Because of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, because of the involvement of hundreds and thousands and millions of our citizens, black and white, we have witnessed what I like to call a nonviolent revolution in America.

We are in the process of laying down the burden of race. This book [inaudible], *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*. It's not just my story. It is a story of people—black, white, young, old--people of faith, people of hope, people of courage, who had the ability and the capacity to put their bodies on the line during a very difficult period in the history of our country. In the beginning of the book I tell a story about when I was growing up. I grew up in an area where most of the homes were shotgun [Architectural style in which houses are built one room wide, with each room positioned behind the first] homes. Now here in DeKalb County, in downtown Decatur, most of you [inaudible] shotgun houses. A shotgun house is a house where you can fire a gun through the front door and the bullet come out the back door. Or you throw a brick through the front door, and that brick will come out the back door. One Saturday afternoon a group of my sisters and brothers and first cousins, about twelve or fifteen of us, was out in the yard playing, the yard of an aunt. Her name was Seneva, Aunt Seneva. And she lived in a shotgun house. Her yard didn't have a green lawn; it was dirt. And every weekend, like we did, she would take sticks and tie some limbs together and sweep this yard clean. We were out playing in her yard. And an unbelievable storm came up. She had us all to go inside. The wind starts blowing. The rain starts falling on the old tin-roof house. The lightning starts flashing. The thunder starts rolling. And we all [inaudible] inside of this old shotgun house. My aunt was terrified. She started crying. And we all start crying, because we thought this old house was going to blow away. She suggested that we should hold hands, and we held hands. We did as we were told. And one corner of the house appeared to be lifting from its foundation. We would walk to that corner; we would walk to that side, trying to hold down this house with our little bodies. But another corner of this house appeared to be lifting; we would walk to that corner, walk to that side, trying to hold down this house with our little bodies. We were walking with the wind.

So during the past few years in America, in the American South, many of us, black and white, young and old, have been walking through Selma, to Montgomery, to

Birmingham, to Nashville, to Atlanta, to Washington, trying to hold the American house together. This book is all about never, ever leaving the house. Everyone must walk with the wind. Everyone must hold hands. The lightning may flash, the thunder may roll, the wind may blow, and the rain may beat on this old house we call America. But we must never, ever leave the house. This is our house. This is our home.

I said a reason [inaudible] that I wanted to talk about this book, just maybe, just maybe our forefathers and our foremothers all came to this country in different ships, but we're all in the same boat now. As a nation and as a people we must create one family, one house, one America. I say to all of you if someone had told me when I was preaching to those chickens in the '40s, in the '50s, if someone had told me when I was marching with Martin Luther King, Jr., getting arrested, getting beaten, going to jail for a time, that one day I would be standing here in DeKalb County, here in Decatur, as a member of Congress, as an author, I would say, "You're crazy." "You're out of your mind." "You don't know what you're talking about." So I say to all of us, and especially the young people, don't give up. Don't give in. Don't give out. Don't become bitter and hostile. Believe in the possibilities. Believe that we can build a Beloved Community, a true interracial democracy in America. So keep the faith. And keep your eyes on the prize. Thank you very much. [*Applause*]

[*Tape skips to question-and-answer session. An audience member is asking a question, the first part of which has been cut off*.]

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How many times were you arrested and jailed, and do you know of any elected Federal official, present or past, who has a comparable criminal record to yourself? [*General laughter*]

JOHN LEWIS: Between 1960 and 1966 I was arrested and jailed forty times. And I got arrested once since I've been in Congress at the South African Embassy, like so many other people did. And I don't know of anyone else; but, you know, I haven't made a—you don't go around checking on people's arrest records. [*Audience laughter*] Especially your colleagues. [*Audience laughter*] [*Acknowledging question from the audience*] Yes, sir.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: [First words inaudible] the world in terms of other countries and their perspective of America with respect to our civil rights record and the fact of what we've been able to achieve for yourself and others like yourself, do they perceive

us as being truly a country of having some freedoms and democracy, or are they of the opinion that we may be hypocritical in that regard?

JOHN LEWIS: In the '30s, the '40s, even before then, and especially during--when you had many countries gaining independence in Africa, and during the Cold War, I think that some of the countries in Eastern Europe were very critical of us. But at the same time, I think that people around the world have been deeply inspired by the progress that we've made in recent years. And we've come a distance. We've made a lot of progress. We still have a great distance to go before we lay down the burden of race. But I think there's a tremendous amount of interest. You travel to almost any part of the world, whether it's in Eastern Europe or in Central or South America, in Africa, or Asia, you have a great deal of interest in the whole question of race, the history of the civil rights movement; and I think people in America are taking a great deal of interest in the history of the movement and the progress that was made. I think we have something to offer the rest of the world. [*Acknowledging question from the audience*] Yes, sir.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Of all the things on the agenda now before us to create one house, what do you consider the most important place that we must concentrate our efforts?

JOHN LEWIS: [*Recording skips.*] before us right now the changes that we've made, but there's still too many people left out and left behind. You know, the country's doing well. The great majority of Americans are working and very hopeful, very optimistic about the future. That's why you want us to get whatever's going on on that other body on the other side of the Capitol, they want us to get that behind us so we can get back to the agenda. But when you travel to certain parts of America, you go out to the Southwest, and you see how people are still trapped. In many of our rural communities in the South or large urban centers there are people trapped. You go to Appalachia and see how many low-income whites that are left behind. You go and visit Native American reservations.

So we've got to bring together not just the whole question of race but the whole question of class. And we have 40 million of our citizens without any form of health insurance. That shouldn't be allowed to stand. I think that we've got to work on health, education, [inaudible], but also bring other people up, close the economic gap. It's still too wide. Let's go to this side.

[*Audience member asks inaudible question, off-camera. Sounds something like, "Where are we headed now?"*]

JOHN LEWIS: Well, if Martin Luther King, Jr., had lived, I think as a nation and as a people we'd be much farther down the road towards the building of a Beloved Community. [Inaudible] Martin Luther King, Jr., had emerged as, I think, a moral leader of America. And more than any other person maybe, just maybe, than any other American of the twentieth century, he had the power to bring more people together to do good—black, white, rich, poor, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish. I think he would have been a leader for peace, for nonviolence. He would have been out front on some of the big issues. I think we would have ended the war in Viet Nam much earlier. Maybe we would have lost fewer lives. We would have—maybe would be still divided when so many of our resources are being squandered.

But I think with the death and assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy, I think something died in America: that sense of hope, that sense of optimism, that sense of faith. And I think both men, these two young men, had a vision for a new America, for a better America. And the important thing that we must recapture is the vision. I think a lot of people just drop out, just drop out and never returned after the assassination of both Dr. King and Robert Kennedy. We got to get people to stay engaged and stay involved. [*Acknowledges another question. Recording skips, obliterating question. John Lewis answers.*]

Back in 1991 I opposed the Gulf War. I don't like war. I don't think anyone likes war. And I think somehow we cannot use war and conflict as a tool of our foreign policy. You know what I'd like to see us do in Congress is I'd like to see us have a Department of Peace. [*Audience applause*] I think we should start teaching love and nonviolence at a very early age, not just in America but around the world. [Inaudible] to evolve at a much higher level, much higher state of development, that the way of love, the way of nonviolence, is a much better way. In daycare centers, Head Start programs, pre-K and kindergarten, elementary school and middle school and high school. We should start teaching the way of love, the way of nonviolence. I read Senator Rockefeller said on one of the morning programs this morning that the media had kept this whole thing going, that it's like a drama. We want to see what [inaudible]. And the American people said we've had enough. We're tired of it. We're sick of it. We don't want to hear any more. We don't want to see any more. So we

really should get back to the agenda and deal with the problems of the people here at home and people around the world. Dr. King was—put it this way, he said we're majoring in minors, and we've bogged down in what he called "the paralysis of analysis," some way he put it. [*Acknowledges another question; recording skips, and John Lewis answers the question that apparently deals with the Voting Rights Act.*]

JOHN LEWIS, *possibly starting mid-sentence*: . . . the Fifteenth Amendment. And we're not going to go back. We're not going to lose that right. I know there's been a great deal over the Internet that we--that the act—that some provision of the act will expire in 2007. But we won't go back. I don't think we should bring it up in this Congress [*Audience laughter*] with the mindset [inaudible]. [Inaudible comment.] But it will be around. And there are members—people in the administration and members of Congress--it would—I don't think we have anything to fear in America as we move toward a truly interracial democracy. I know you probably say, "Well, look what happened in the 1800s." We live in a different world, and it is impossible for us to go back. I like to be very hopeful and very, very optimistic about the future. I believe deeply that in America, in this nation, we're going to build the Beloved Community. We're going to building a truly interracial democracy. We're going to build one house, but we must hold hands. And we must walk together and let the spirit of history be our guide. [*Acknowledges another question; Moderator intercedes and directs John Lewis to Liana Levetan, saying that there's time for one more question.*]

LIANA LEVETAN: This is not a question. I just want to tell you, Congressman Lewis, how thrilled we are to have you share your insight here today in the City of Decatur. I have read your book. I was there when Governor [Zell] Miller had the first open house when the book came out. And as one who is American by choice, I recognize all the things that you have said to be true. But I really, truly feel that you have had a tremendous impact and continue to have an impact, talking about unifying the country and also unifying the county. I think DeKalb County's realization is that we cannot keep on talking about north and south DeKalb. We've got to talk about a total county that believes that everyone is entitled to what is right for all of us.

[*Recording skips, ending Liana Levetan's remarks, and showing John Lewis at the podium.*]

JOHN LEWIS: [Inaudible few words] *Walking with the Wind* was made this past week on Monday—I believe the American Library Association listed the book as the

best adult nonfiction book of 1998. [*Audience applause*] [*Recording skips*.] And if any of you are in Washington anytime and for any reason—on business, pleasure, just happen to be there, children coming up—I saw a large group of students from one of the high schools in DeKalb County just two weeks ago, part of a—what's that program called?

VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: CloseUp

JOHN LEWIS: CloseUp program. But if you're going to be there, come by my office. Just don't come and visit, sit there and [inaudible] delegation. Come and visit my office. And I will [inaudible] offering you some peanuts and Coca-Cola. [*Audience laughter*] I will take you on a tour of the Capitol and a tour of my office. We have a lot of historic photographs [inaudible] and a little video about five minutes long. But I'll take you on a tour of the Capitol itself. And if you bring up any children under twelve, I can take them on the House floor with me and give them my voting card and let them vote for me. [*Audience laughter*]

[*Recording skips to audio-video of Mr. Lewis signing books and giving hugs to people at what appears to be the Decatur Library*.]

END OF RECORDING