

## Remarks at the White House<sup>1</sup>

15 January 2013

James Hansen

Let us return for a moment to election night 2008. As I sat in our farm house in Pennsylvania, watching Barack Obama's victory speech, I turned my head aside so my wife would not see the tears in my eyes. I suspect that millions cried. It was a great day for America.

We had great hopes for our new President. It is appropriate, it is right, in a period honoring Martin Luther King, to recall the hopes and dreams of that evening, and the hopes and dreams that we...will... never - give up.

We have a dream – that our President will understand the intergenerational *in*justice of human-made climate change – that he will recognize our duty to be caretakers of creation, of the land, of the life on our planet – and that he will give these matters the priority that our young people deserve.

We have a dream – that our President will understand the commonality of solutions for energy security, national security and climate stability – and that he will exercise hands-on leadership, taking the matter to the public, avoiding backroom crippling deals with special interests.

We have a dream – that the President will stand as firm as Abraham Lincoln when he faced the great moral issue of slavery – and, like Franklin Roosevelt or Winston Churchill, he will speak with the public, enlisting their support and reassuring them.

It is not easy to find an Abraham Lincoln or a Winston Churchill. But we are here today looking to find that in you, Mr. President. And until you summon it within yourself, let me assure you that we will return, and our numbers will grow.

Mr. President, we will be here until the promise of a safe world for our children and grandchildren, and *your* children and grand children – is *not a dream*. We will be here until we are assured that the history books will rightfully record – that you *were* the person we were looking for - the person who turned these dreams...into reality.

---

<sup>1</sup> Interfaith Moral Action on Climate, Pray-in at NY Ave. Presbyterian Church and the White House ([www.interfaithactiononclimatechange.org](http://www.interfaithactiononclimatechange.org)) on Martin Luther King's birthday.

"We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now..." Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.