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“Words are potent weapons for all causes, good or bad.”

Manly Hall*

Words have power! They are tools that can be used for both good and evil.

What determines the impact of words? The user’s intent and purpose are the determining factors on how their words impact a person or situation.

Words are used for good when their purpose and intent are to uplift; uplift a person’s self-respect, respect for their heritage, and/or respect for their community.

For we know that when a people’s history dies – the people die.

On the other hand, words are used for evil purposes when the intent is to gain mental, economic, political as well as physical control over the other person. In order to gain this type of control, you must first destroy the person’s respect for him/herself. One of the recognized ways of accomplishing this is by distorting and/or denying a person’s history. Additional control is achieved when a people allow themselves to be defined by others and respond to it; thus accepting and acknowledging the terms. For example, being called “black” as opposed to “African,” or “red skin” instead of “Native American.”

In this issue of *ISLAS* an article entitled --Current Details, Dangers, and Challenges in the Race Debate in Cuba (page 11) addressed this topic.

“According to our traditional way of referring to things, my bag has more personality than I do; it is a black bag, I am... a black. That naturally accepted colonial pattern turned an adjective into a noun, and began to differentiate black Cubans using zoological terms. References to animals are made according to their color and characteristics, as with horses, for example: the bay, the grey, the pinto, the paint, the black.”

Thus, commences the use of “words” with and for evil intent.

“We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people.”**

Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

*Manly Hall is a Canadian-born, spiritual scholar who in 1928 self-published what many consider the most thorough, learned, and variegated codex to the esoteric wisdom and mysteries of antiquity: *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* – completed before he had turned 28 years of age.

**Martin Luther King, Jr. was a prominent figure in the Civil Rights movement in the United States