

Thurgood Marshall

Mr. President, I have the honor to present to you as a candidate for an honorary degree Thurgood Marshall — advocate and “Chief Counsel for Equality.” The cause of civil liberties to which he early dedicated himself gained a spokesman of genuine intellectual stature and forensic talent. During the course of his career he has defended clients on three continents, argued twenty-five cases before the Supreme Court — twenty-three of which were found in his favor — and since 1950 has served the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as Director-Counsel of their Legal Defense and Education Fund. As a constitutional lawyer he uses the full force of the law and the Constitution to further the aspirations of those he represents, and his efforts protect and enhance the basic civil liberties of us all. None of his many successful legal battles has excited as much attention as that of *Brown vs. Topeka*. For on May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court reversed itself after fifty-eight years and ruled that segregation in public education was no longer in accord with the Constitution. The intense drama of his life and the influence of his leadership are reflected in that decision, and it is no surprise to learn that he is respected and admired by his professional colleagues, by those whom he has defended, and by freedom-loving people throughout the world.

We meet and honor him today for his past accomplishments and our expectations of what he will yet do in his tireless endeavors to defend and interpret the Constitution. Therefore, on behalf of the Faculty of Kalamazoo College, I recommend that upon him be conferred the honorary degree, Doctor of Laws.