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In the *Trail They Blazed* exhibit, African Americans activists fought for equal rights for minority groups, in particular African Americans. The fight for equal rights was not easy, as they needed protests in the streets to be heard. Often, this came with a lot of violence from the police and the government. This is like what is happening today in the United States. In this essay I will talk about the current issues happening in the United States, how the laws affect me and others, and if I were to fight this today, what my slogan would be.

In today's generation, some groups of individuals are being targeted based on their race, similar to what African Americans experienced in the old times. Because of this, many people have gone into the streets to protest the inhumane violence against them, like what the African Americans faced when they protested. Groups of activists have also gone into the streets to educate individuals, in particular Hispanic/Latino people, on ways to keep themselves safe and the importance of voting, just like the groups of CORE and the NAACP, who stepped up to educate individuals on the importance of voting in the 1960s. This issue occurring today affects me because my mom is Hispanic. Although she is a citizen, I often get scared that she will be targeted based on her skin color, even though she tells me not to worry. This is how this current issue is affecting me personally.

If I were given the task of bringing everyone together to make a change, I would do this by putting up posters in businesses and churches where local people go. I would also ask my family members to help me make posts on social media to get the word out, and I would ask my friends to spread the word to their friends and family. I would also partner with local groups who are also working to make the same types of changes. I would make sure that at the meeting everyone understands their rights and how they could make the change. I would make sure that I have people who speak different languages to translate the information. This would be similar to what the activist groups did in the South to educate individuals about their voters' rights. If I needed to come up with a slogan to unite everyone together, I would use the following:

"There could never be too many flavors in the melting pot."

Often my mom reminds me about how important the melting pot is to the United States, and I feel like this fits perfectly.

For me, I would define freedom as everyone being able to go anywhere and feel safe. In today's generation I feel like people are less free than they were in the 1960s because the law enforcement officials can be a lot tougher and meaner than in the 1960s. They target people of color, and if they protest, they are often met with violence from the law

enforcement officers. Although we have freedom of speech in the United States, when people use this freedom to protest, they are sometimes put in jail or worse. I also feel like freedom is worse today because Hispanic/Latino people are scared to even come out of their houses today compared to the 1960s. Although people were scared in the 1960s, it is not as much as people are today; even kids are more scared to go to school today compared to the 1960s.

I personally have not had any experience of being maltreated. However, I and my parents are both part of a minority group, and they often talk about how they both have been discriminated against at different times based on their skin color. My mom told me one time how when she was my age, she was told not to speak Spanish because Americans only spoke English in the United States. Sometimes, even today, she gets made fun of because of her accent. I feel like the best way to advocate for a change is to protest in a peaceful way. It is also important to speak with people who make the laws and tell them how the current laws are affecting different groups negatively.

In the 1960s, African Americans fought for equal rights. Today, another group is fighting for their rights. I hope they can make a positive change too.