

February 5, 2006

A TRIBUTE TO MY SISTAS IN THE STUGGLE

I sat with many others today for a tribute to the late Coretta Scott King, by the women of SCLC. The tribute took place at the Ebenezer Baptist Church here in Atlanta, Georgia.

I sat in awe as many of the great ladies of the Civil-Rights era stood and paid tribute to Mrs. King, they shared stories that made you laugh, made you think and made us all wish that we had shared some of those beautiful moments with her.

The women testified as to how they had wore many hats during the movement, they were wives, mothers, cooks, house cleaners, they attended church functions, and sat in on meetings at their homes to help strategically plan the next step in the fight for freedom.

The women were equal participants on all levels of the struggle, they maintained their dignity, stood in the face of danger, stayed positive, stayed in prayer and stayed at the sides of their husbands as equals.

These women were the unsung sheroes of the civil-rights movements, this position as unsung sheroes is nothing new, but this position of must change and we must start to recognize, appreciate and celebrate our sisters while they are still among us.

As a former member of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Black Panther Party, there were many sisters that put in an amazing amount of work, they were able to get in and out of places that many of the brothers dare not venture. Sisters were trench soldiers also, sisters were women who were panthers, and they faced the same violence and battles as the brothers. Yet, the sisters were so much more versatile than many of the brothers; some of the sisters had children, they placed the babies on their hips and continued the struggle.

Women are amazing, versatile and fearless when it comes to anything that they believe in. The sisters understood that the freedom they fought for was not just for them, but this freedom would be shared by many and for future generations to come.

It is in this same spirit that I ask each one of you to think about a sister that has been in the movement, think about her efforts, her accomplishments, her sacrifices, and her pain. Many of the sisters were the only ones in their families to be a part of the movement and many were not supported by their families and were often placed in a dilemma of choosing their family or the movement.

I ask that you celebrate your sister-comrades, that you make her name and her deeds a part of our living history. I ask that before you plan your next event, to plan a yearly gathering to honor the sisters.

The women of the Civil Rights Movement and the Sisters of the struggle are one in the same. Yet, we as women now face a void with the home going of Coretta Scott King, we now need to groom the sisters of the next generations, to stand on our shoulders and continue on in our names.

It is with pure love that I write this in honor of all the women of the struggle, the work that each one of you contributed was important and is still important to our roles as freedom fighters and as women.

I look forward to working with anyone that is willing to put together a yearly tribute to the sisters of the struggle. Understand that there is only one struggle, although we use different methods, the struggle is still about freedom, and therefore if there is to be a program, it should be in honor of all female freedom fighters of the Afrikan Diaspora, let us start here and continue around the world.

A Luta Continua,

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