

So That It Stops Being Too Late

Written by Malaika Kambon ID2036

Sunday, 23 October 2005 23:27 -

On 19 November 1970, approximately one month from now, 35 years ago; back when Angela Davis was perhaps deserving of such things, before she severed her case from that of Ruchell 'Cinque' Magee, so that the fate which has befallen him would not befall her as well, thus leaving him in a hole, more at the mercy of the beast; the late James Baldwin (2 August 1924 – 1 December 1987,) wrote her a letter; seen in its entirety at the end of this comment.

Those last two lines of 'An Open Letter To My Sister, Angela Davis, 19nov70,' though oft quoted & / or paraphrased, remain true and largely un-acted upon to this day:

If we know, then we must fight for your life as though it were our own—which it is—and render impassable with our bodies the corridor to the gas chamber.

For, if they take you in the morning, they will be coming for us that night.

It is too late for Sister-Ancestor Frances Newton, the first African-American woman legally executed in Texas since the Civil War era, the 349th person executed by the State of Texas since 1982, the 13th person put to death this year in Texas.

She was also the 110th person to be put to death in Texas since Rick Perry became Governor in 2001.

152 people were executed during the tenure of former Texas Governor George Bush.

Newton was the 38th person put to death this year in the USA and the 982nd overall since America resumed executions on January 17, 1977.

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It is too late for brother-Ancestor Shaka Sankofa, gassed in his cell twice with two different chemical agents on 5 May 2000, beaten, moved to a 'death watch' cell, & stripped of all of his property, including underwear, nearly two months prior to his 22 June 2000 murder-lynching. His blood is on the hands of the present maniac in the house of white, one g. w. bush, then only governor – now 2 time selected clothes-less emperor of the imperial u.s.

We need to start making sure that it stops being too late.

A million dollar ransom/bounty is on the head of our Comrade Sister Assata, (the godmother of the late hip-hop rap icon Tupac Shakur), giving the modern day assassins of us, we AFRIKANS whom they perceive as re-enslaved & as property, a carte blanche license to hunt & to kill.

bush claps his hands in glee as he prepares – again - to unleash/free his dogs, the main ones being skeeza condaleeza & carilles posada.

Millions of people have marched in Haiti against the nearly unreported (by the corporate talking heads media) war in Haiti. Millions more have died.

bush doesn't care. Think you that it is mere chance that 6 July 1946, the spawning date of george w. bush, coincides with the events of 6 July 2005 in Haiti? How do you think this 6 July 2005 date was celebrated?

See how.

Watch the MPEG movie of the UN Killings on 6 July 2005. Read also the SUMMARY OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL ON HAITI, 23 September, 2005; Washington, D.C. <http://www.peacenowar.net/Americas/News/Oct%2019%2005--Haiti.htm>

Pass the word: Forget not Haiti. She is fighting for herself. She is fighting for us. There will be no true Black August until she – & we – are free.

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Millions of people have marched against the well publicized (albeit not always truthfully) war in Iraq.

bush doesn't care. It is even speculated that he had them gassed.

Millions more just marched – again – to Washington, D.C.

bush didn't care about that either.

Millions have or will have died in a minute from Hurricane AMERIKKKLAN greed situated in the so-called Gulf States...

Guess what? Guess who again, doesn't care...?

But - why bush & his regime don't care is totally immaterial.

The reason this picture is out of focus, is the fact that it is not important what he thinks – it is important what we think. It isn't important whether or not he cares...

It is only important that we do.

With this in mind, we have in our hands the tools with which to act. The seeds have been planted. Harvest time is at hand.

So – brother Stan 'Tookie' Williams is slated to be murder-lynched in California, just 13 days prior to the ho, ho, ho date; so that the hoes, Arnold & bush can go celebrate the size (or lack

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thereof) of the only part of their existence that truly matters to them, in whatever manifestation that should take.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is still fighting valiantly for his life in Pennsylvania, a state whose 'legal system' is so roiling with corruption & greed that the only 'brotherly love' to be found within it comes from the sound of cackling & hands clapping from the graves of those who founded it – racist, white, slave owning, b****rds, happy to see that their fondest wishes have been dutifully carried out by their descendents.

Who else is in a hole somewhere in this land, slated to die? Hmmm. The answer to that would be everyone who is locked up anywhere, some sooner than others.

We all need to be in this war to win – not to play with ourselves.

The true people of Haiti know this, & are governing themselves accordingly, even as their illustrious Ancestors did. They haven't stopped fighting, not once in over 200 years. They fight on the ground in Haiti, they fight in the '10th districts' outside of Haiti, they fight to educate their children, build their lives, maintain their culture, be productive to their people, oppose monstrous injustices. They are Dred Wilme, Father Jean-Justes, the restaviks, the medical workers, the Aristides, the Yvon Neptunes, the lawyers, the So-Annes, the community. They fight for their human rights.

They are freedom fighters, they are the grassroots.

They won from 1791 – 1804 because they (literally) rendered impassable with their bodies, the corridor to the gas chamber.

They are doing so again.

'The Haitian people, without arms, allies or financial resources where so inspired by their Vodun

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gods and goddesses and the powers of their ancestors that, led by the warrior goddess, Ezili Danto, and after 300-years of slavery, they decided to "live free or die" - liberte ou lamo! and set themselves free in Haiti, defeating all the mighty European powers of that time - France, Spain and England in combat.

The Haitian people say: 'Si yo tire sou nou, yo pran. Si yo pa tire sou nou, yo pran.'

'If they shoot at us, they are doomed, and if they don't shoot at us, they are doomed; they cannot win.'

That was the chant of the people of Bel Air on Friday, March 4, as they took to the streets just a few days after the official Haitian police, in plain site of UN troops and the international media, killed, beat and tear-gassed unarmed demonstrators. <http://www.margueritelaurent.com/pressclips/doomed.html>

Haiti needs us to make the same commitment: to decide to live free – so that there will be Dred Wilmes, & George Jacksons, & Frances Newtons, & little babies, & countless others – living.

So that there will be as Malcolm X said, 'No more days like this.'

So that it stops being too late to stop the machine from stealing another life – especially without losing its life in return.

War without terms

Malaika Kambon

AFRIKAN RESISTANCE, AFRIKAN LIBERATION

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An Open Letter to My Sister, Angela Davis

By James Baldwin 19th of November 1970

Dear Sister:

One might have hoped that, by this hour, the very sight of chains on Black flesh, or the very sight of chains, would be so intolerable a sight for the American people, and so unbearable a memory, that they would themselves spontaneously rise up and strike off the manacles. But, no, they appear to glory in their chains; now, more than ever, they appear to measure their safety in chains and corpses. And so, Newsweek, civilized defender of the indefensible, attempts to drown you in a sea of crocodile tears ("it remained to be seen what sort of personal liberation she had achieved") and puts you on its cover, chained.

You look exceedingly alone—as alone, say, as the Jewish housewife in the boxcar headed for Dachau, or as any one of our ancestors, chained together in the name of Jesus, headed for a Christian land.

Well. Since we live in an age in which silence is not only criminal but suicidal, I have been making as much noise as I can, here in Europe, on radio and television—in fact, have just returned from a land, Germany, which was made notorious by a silent majority not so very long ago. I was asked to speak on the case of Miss Angela Davis, and did so. Very probably an exercise in futility, but one must let no opportunity slide.

I am something like twenty years older than you, of that generation, therefore, of which George Jackson ventures that "there are no healthy brothers—none at all." I am in no way equipped to dispute this speculation (not, anyway, without descending into what, at the moment, would be irrelevant subtleties) for I know too well what he means. My own state of health is certainly precarious enough. In considering you, and Huey, and George and (especially) Jonathan Jackson, I began to apprehend what you may have had in mind when you spoke of the uses to

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which we could put the experience of the slave. What has happened, it seems to me, and to put it far too simply, is that a whole new generation of people have assessed and absorbed their history, and, in that tremendous action, have freed themselves of it and will never be victims again. This may seem an odd, indefensibly impertinent and insensitive thing to say to a sister in prison, battling for her life—for all our lives. Yet, I dare to say, for I think that you will perhaps not misunderstand me, and I do not say it, after all, from the position of a spectator.

I am trying to suggest that you—for example—do not appear to be your father's daughter in the same way that I am my father's son. At bottom, my father's expectations and mine were the same, the expectations of his generation and mine were the same; and neither the immense difference in our ages nor the move from the South to the North could alter these expectations or make our lives more viable. For, in fact, to use the brutal parlance of that hour, the interior language of that despair, he was just a nigger—a nigger laborer preacher, and so was I. I jumped the track but that's of no more importance here, in itself, than the fact that some poor Spaniards become rich bull fighters, or that some poor Black boys become rich—boxers, for example. That's rarely, if ever, afforded the people more than a great emotional catharsis, though I don't mean to be condescending about that, either. But when Cassius Clay became Muhammed Ali and refused to put on that uniform (and sacrificed all that money!) a very different impact was made on the people and a very different kind of instruction had begun.

The American triumph—in which the American tragedy has always been implicit—was to make Black people despise themselves. When I was little I despised myself, I did not know any better. And this meant, albeit unconsciously, or against my will, or in great pain, that I also despised my father. And my mother. And my brothers. And my sisters. Black people were killing each other every Saturday night out on Lenox Avenue, when I was growing up; and no one explained to them, or to me, that it was intended that they should; that they were penned where they were, like animals, in order that they should consider themselves no better than animals. Everything supported this sense of reality, nothing denied it: and so one was ready, when it came time to go to work, to be treated as a slave. So one was ready, when human terrors came, to bow before a white God and beg Jesus for salvation—this same white God who was unable to raise a finger to do so little as to help you pay your rent, unable to be awakened in time to help you save your child!

There is always, of course, more to any picture than can speedily be perceived and in all of this—groaning and moaning, watching, calculating, clowning, surviving, and outwitting, some tremendous strength was nevertheless being forged, which is part of our legacy today. But that particular aspect of our journey now begins to be behind us. The secret is out: we are men!

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But the blunt, open articulation of this secret has frightened the nation to death. I wish I could say, "to life," but that is much to demand of a disparate collection of displaced people still cowering in their wagon trains and singing "Onward Christian Soldiers." The nation, if America is a nation, is not in the least prepared for this day. It is a day which the Americans never expected or desired to see, however piously they may declare their belief in progress and democracy. Those words, now, on American lips, have become a kind of universal obscenity: for this most unhappy people, strong believers in arithmetic, never expected to be confronted with the algebra of their history.

One way of gauging a nation's health, or of discerning what it really considers to be its interests—or to what extent it can be considered as a nation as distinguished from a coalition of special interests—is to examine those people it elects to represent or protect it. One glance at the American leaders (or figure-heads) conveys that America is on the edge of absolute chaos, and also

suggests the future to which American interests, if not the bulk of the American people, appear willing to consign the Blacks. (Indeed, one look at our past conveys that.) It is clear that for the bulk of our (nominal) countrymen, we are all expendable. And Messrs. Nixon, Agnew, Mitchell, and Hoover, to say nothing, of course, of the Kings" Row basket case, the winning Ronnie Reagan, will not hesitate for an instant to carry out what they insist is the will of the people.

But what, in America, is the will of the people? And who, for the above-named, are the people? The people, whoever they may be, know as much about the forces which have placed the above-named gentlemen in power as they do about the forces responsible for the slaughter in Vietnam. The will of the people, in America, has always been at the mercy of an ignorance not merely phenomenal, but sacred, and sacredly cultivated: the better to be used by a carnivorous economy which democratically slaughters and victimizes whites and Blacks alike. But most white Americans do not dare admit this (though they suspect it) and this fact contains mortal danger for the Blacks and tragedy for the nation.

Or, to put it another way, as long as white Americans take refuge in their whiteness—for so long as they are unable to walk out of this most monstrous of traps—they will allow millions of people to be slaughtered in their name, and will be manipulated into and surrender themselves to what they will think of—and justify—as a racial war. They will never, so long as their whiteness puts so sinister a distance between themselves and their own experience and the experience of others, feel themselves sufficiently human, sufficiently worthwhile, to become responsible for themselves, their leaders, their country, their children, or their fate. They will perish (as we once put it in our Black church) in their sins—that is, in their delusions. And this is happening,

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needless to say, already, all around us.

Only a handful of the millions of people in this vast place are aware that the fate intended for you, Sister Angela, and for George Jackson, and for the numberless prisoners in our concentration camps—for that is what they are—is a fate which is about to engulf them, too. White lives, for the forces which rule in this country, are no more sacred than Black ones, as many and many a student is discovering, as the white American corpses in Vietnam prove. If the American people are unable to contend with their elected leaders for the redemption of their own honor and the lives of their own children, we, the Blacks, the most rejected of the Western children, can expect very little help at their hands: which, after all, is nothing new. What the Americans do not realize is that a war between brothers, in the same cities, on the same soil, is not a racial war but a civil war. But the American delusion is not only that their brothers all are white but that the whites are all their brothers.

So be it. We cannot awaken this sleeper, and God knows we have tried. We must do what we can do, and fortify and save each other—we are not drowning in an apathetic self-contempt, we do feel ourselves sufficiently worthwhile to contend even with inexorable forces in order to change our fate and the fate of our children and the condition of the world! We know that a man is not a thing and is not to be placed at the mercy of things. We know that air and water belong to all mankind and not merely to industrialists. We know that a baby does not come into the world merely to be the instrument of someone else's profit. We know that democracy does not mean the coercion of all into a deadly—and, finally, wicked—mediocrity but the liberty for all to aspire to the best that is in him, or that has ever been.

We know that we, the Blacks, and not only we, the Blacks, have been, and are, the victims of a system whose only fuel is greed, whose only god is profit. We know that the fruits of this system have been ignorance, despair, and death, and we know that the system is doomed because the world can no longer afford it—if, indeed, it ever could have. And we know that, for the perpetuation of this system, we have all been mercilessly brutalized, and have been told nothing but lies, lies about ourselves and our kinsmen and our past, and about love, life, and death, so that both soul and body have been bound in hell.

The enormous revolution in Black consciousness which has occurred in your generation, my dear sister, means the beginning or the end of America. Some of us, white and Black, know how great a price has already been paid to bring into existence a new consciousness, a new people, an unprecedented nation. If we know, and do nothing, we are worse than the murderers hired in our name.

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If we know, then we must fight for your life as though it were our own—which it is—and render impassable with our bodies the corridor to the gas chamber. For, if they take you in the morning, they will be coming for us that night.

Therefore: peace.

BROTHER JAMES

An Open Letter to My Sister, Angela Davis

by James Baldwin

November 19, 1970

Taken from:

If They Come in the Morning: Voices of Resistance (1971)

Angela Y. Davis, Ruchell Magee, the Soledad Brothers, and Other Political Prisoners

Foreword by Julian Bond

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