

Coalition of United Progressives
CharMeck



We truly appreciate everyone's involvement.
This War on Oppression will only be won as one
mass movement.

- Spotlight - by DonnaMarie Woodson
 - Editorial - by Tarik Kiley
 - Announcements
 - Happenings Gallery!

Our Mission Statement

The continual unification of as many organizations as possible starting at the local level and branching out to both the state of North Carolina and then the entire nation.

Spotlight

“Keep On Pushing!” 🦊

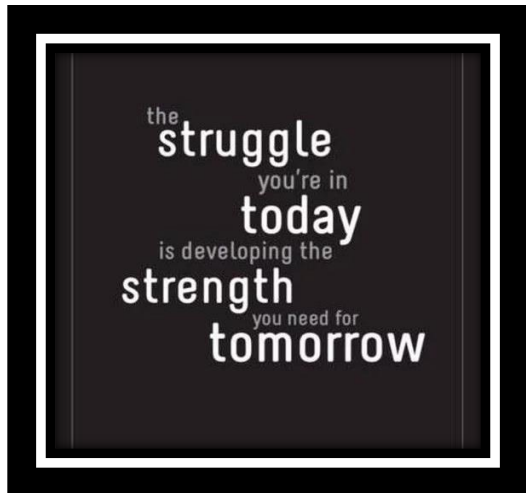
Curtis Lee Mayfield

American singer-songwriter



(June 3, 1942 – December 26, 1999)

By DonnaMarie Woodson



Life has a way of slapping us in the face just when we think we've got it licked. When those moments arise, I always look for quotes, videos, songs whatever it takes to inspire and motivate me to thrive, push through the hills and achieve my personal goals.

Seems now with each passing day we're forced to awaken to some new

horror perpetuated by this Administration so, each day I seek a source of respite from the onslaught of our day to day political reality.

Music has the capacity to take us to places and spaces of joy, sadness, indelible memories of moments past but, it can also inspire and motivate us to make the necessary changes in our lives and our world.



So, as a way to motivate, inspire, and direct positive energies, I'd like to share a classic Curtis Mayfield composition from the 60's civil rights era to remind us that when times get tough and you feel like quitting always remember to "Keep on Pushing".

Click to play



Curtis Mayfield was one of the most influential musicians behind soul and politically conscious African-American music. He first achieved success and recognition with [The Impressions](#) during the [civil rights movement](#) of the late 1950s and 1960s, and later worked as a solo artist.



Born in Chicago, Illinois, Mayfield started his musical career in a gospel choir. Moving to the North Side, he met [Jerry Butler](#) in 1956 at the age of 14, and joined the vocal group The Impressions. As a songwriter, Mayfield became noted as one of the first musicians to bring more prevalent themes of social awareness into soul music.

In 1965, he wrote "[People Get Ready](#)" for the Impressions, which displayed his more politically charged songwriting. Ranked at no. 24 on [Rolling Stone](#)'s list of the [500 Greatest Songs of All Time](#), the song received numerous other awards, and was included in the [Rock and Roll Hall of Fame](#) 500 Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll, as well as being inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1998.



The Impressions reached the height of their popularity in the mid-to-late-'60s with a string of Mayfield compositions that included "[Keep On Pushing](#)," "[People Get Ready](#)", "[It's All Right](#)" (Top 10), the up-tempo "Talking about My Baby"(Top 20) and "Woman's Got Soul".

The single "Keep on Pushing" became the group's sixth Top 40 single, and a Top 10 Pop smash, peaking at number ten. It went to number one for two weeks on the [Cash Box](#) R&B chart.

Decades later, the song was used as the theme to the 2004 Democratic National Convention keynote address by then-[Illinois State Senator Barack Obama](#), who endorsed U.S. Senator John Kerry for President. It was even featured in the 1995 film [Dead Presidents](#).



Mayfield was paralyzed from the neck down after lighting equipment fell on him during a live performance at Wingate Field in Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York, on August 13, 1990. Despite this, he continued his career as a recording artist,

releasing his final album [New World Order](#) in 1996.

Mayfield won a [Grammy Legend Award](#) in 1994 and a [Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award](#) in 1995, and was a double inductee into the [Rock and Roll Hall of Fame](#), as a member of the Impressions in 1991, and again in 1999 as a solo artist. He was also a two-time [Grammy Hall of Fame](#) inductee. He died from complications of [type 2 diabetes](#) in 1999 at the age of 57.

Works cited

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curtis_Mayfield

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keep_On_Pushing_\(song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keep_On_Pushing_(song))

Editorial

True Reparations

By

Tarik Kiley

June 26, 2019



I remember studying the slave trade and the discrimination against freed African-Americans which primarily occurred in the American south. I always imagined how painful it must have been for African slaves to endure what they endured. The horrors of the

Middle Passage, having your family split apart to work on different plantations, the lack of good nutrition and the destruction of cultures, such as the replacing of African names with European surnames.

It must have been doubly as hard, post-Civil War. The reduction to status as share croppers, the rise of Jim Crow, the KKK and white nationalist terrorism, and the systematic attempt to identify black men as inherently, criminal.

I think we need to face facts that America has been hard on African-Americans. Even today, we are still treated as second class citizens even though we have been born in this country for hundreds of years.

Now the USA seems to be willing to face the pain it caused for



hundreds of years. Now, there is a debate on reparations for African-American descendants of slaves.

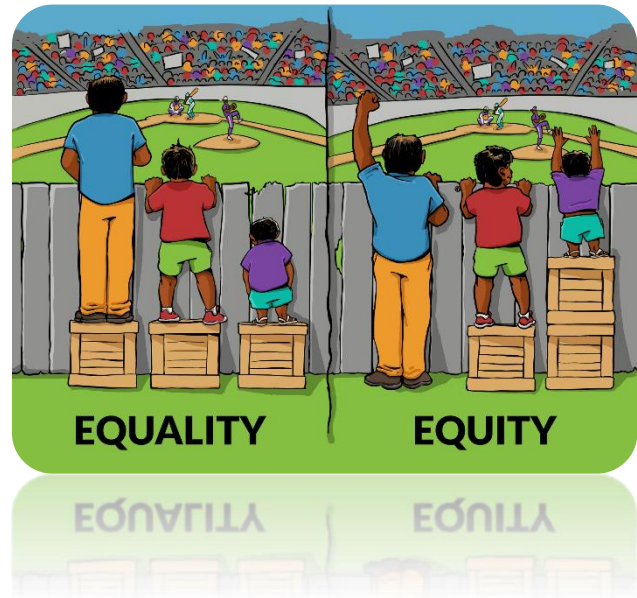
It seems as if the USA has tried for

so long to get African Americans to forget the past. The idea is that the current descendants of White slave owners had nothing to do with the enslavement of African Americans. But, yet these Whites still benefit from the privileges of wealth and profit of the aforementioned slave trade. This is not to say that all Whites are living in luxury. Whites have socioeconomic classes just as other ethnicities do. There are poor Whites.

But, in particularly the United States policies towards African-Americans, not to deny the allies of Black people, have systematically impoverished and caused damage to African-Americans and African-American communities. Hopefully, reparations will be able to reverse or atone for some of this damage, if not all of it. Reparations could symbolize a giant apology and a real attempt of the USA to be a better country in the future for all people.

What should reparations look like?

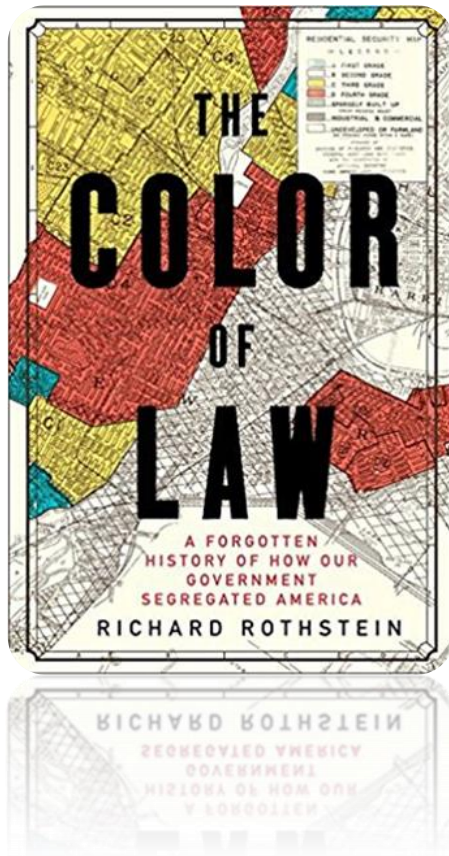
I think reparations don't only come in the form of a check. It comes in the form of positive policies of the United States government towards African-Americans. It started with the Emancipation Proclamation and grew into the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and was embedded in law through such cases as Brown vs. the Board of Education. Since, America's conduct is based in the rule of law and policies, African-Americans need laws and policies which continue to reverse damage and increase happiness and equity.



What are some of the policies which should be implemented?

In no particular order, we must end residential segregation, properly fund all k-12 schools, provide a better path to college, stop criminalizing African-American men, end police brutality and stop mass incarceration and promote African-American business ownership and economic development.

The practice of residential segregation must end. It is completely unfair to expect African-Americans to stay in ghettos and to live in a reservation style setting. No way should people be faced with concentrations of poverty and be forced to deal with the despair and crime which manifests itself out of the desperation, lack of



social mobility and lack of means faced by poor, urban African-Americans. Keeping African-Americans in ghettos simply serves to cage people and to frustrate people.

Also, when ghettos prevail, the majority culture can get away with underfunding and neglecting students at certain schools. In previous years, people spoke of the achievement gap, but the achievement gap was really lowered expectations placed on African-American students placed in concentrated schools.

Also, African-American neighborhoods, particularly those concentrated in the inner cities, were labeled as “bad” by the predominant culture of Whites and avoided like the plague because of perceptions of inherent criminality. This coupled with the painting of African-American males as “criminal”, led to not only underfunded schools, but also to a serious lack of economic development.

First, many African-Americans due to poverty did not possess the means to develop their own communities economically. This not only is true, but it is also true that the majority culture sought to stop African-American economic emancipation through sharecropping, in the past, job discrimination and an overall neglect of economic development in African-American neighborhoods.



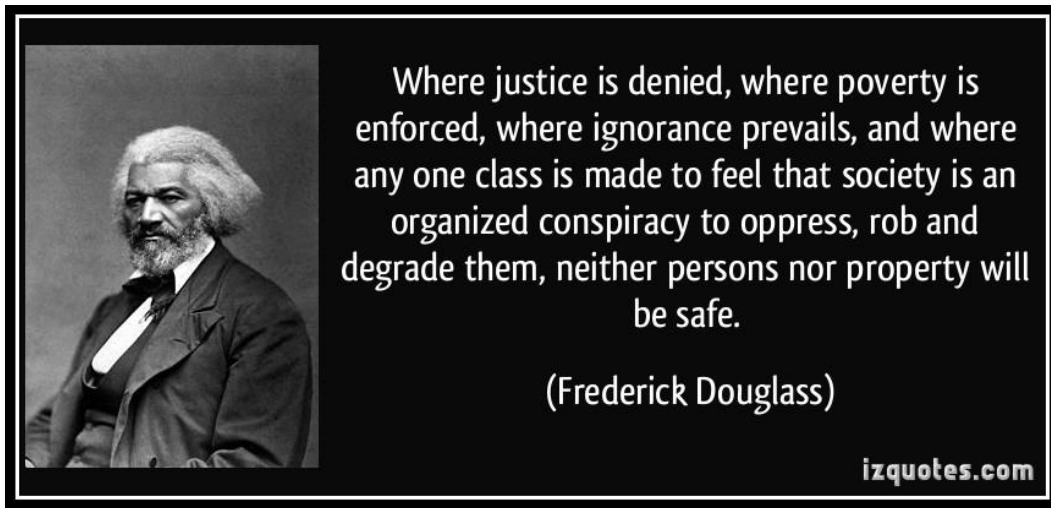
The lack of opportunity, in African-American neighborhoods, and the lack of social mobility, particularly for poor African-American men, in addition to the rise of the illicit drug trade, in the 1980's and 1990's also led to mass incarceration. With draconian laws, such as California's three strikes law, many African-American men filled up the jail cells. This led to additional stigma and increased despair.

This became particularly apparent with the persistent problem of police brutality. Since, white nationalism and its proponents had infiltrated the police departments of many American cities, and since their ideology also included criminalizing African-American men, more and more African-American men, were stigmatized and left without proper economic opportunity.

I'm saying all this to say that these conditions can be reversed with proper law and policy. If it was the law in the south that African-Americans had to sit on the back of the bus, then another law can

be implemented which holds police officers accountable for committing crimes based on their white nationalist views.

Ultimately, laws will be enacted when the people support said laws. Only when people are willing to examine their own privilege and have compassion for others, will reparations in the form of opportunity, law and policy be enacted.



Works Cited

https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/the-reparations-debate

<https://www.cnn.com/politics/live-news/reparations-june-2019/index.html>

Announcements



N. Mecklenburg Progressives Dinner

Monday, July 8th at 6:30 PM

Famous Toastery

12715 Conner Dr.

Huntersville, NC

(just off Gilead, across the parking lot from Earthfare)

Speakers Briana Brough and Amy Cox

Co-founders of Flip NC

Democratic Women of Mecklenburg County

July Membership Meeting

Wednesday, July 10th 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Stancil Center

801 E. 4th St, Charlotte, NC 28204

N. Meck Democrats Monthly Meeting

Thursday, July 11th at 7:00 PM

Magnolia Woods

12125 Statesville Rd

Huntersville, NC 28078

Announcements



"Dem Friends"

Thursday, July 11th at Noon

Asian Buffet & Grill

11032 East Independence Blvd

Matthews, NC 28105

704-246-6962

(Every 2nd Thursday of the month)

Bearden Music Series

Saturday, July 13th at 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Romare Bearden Park

Charlotte, NC

Tickets: uptowncharlottepark.com



Please submit your group events to donnamarie93@gmail.com by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the Announcements.

Announcements



Young Democrats of Mecklenburg County

Get to know some of the Candidates District 3

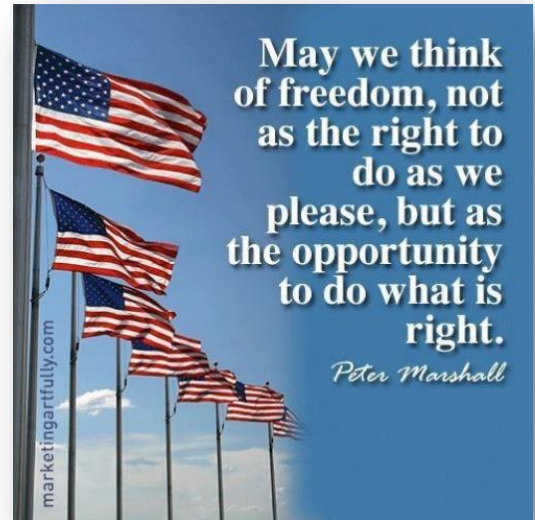
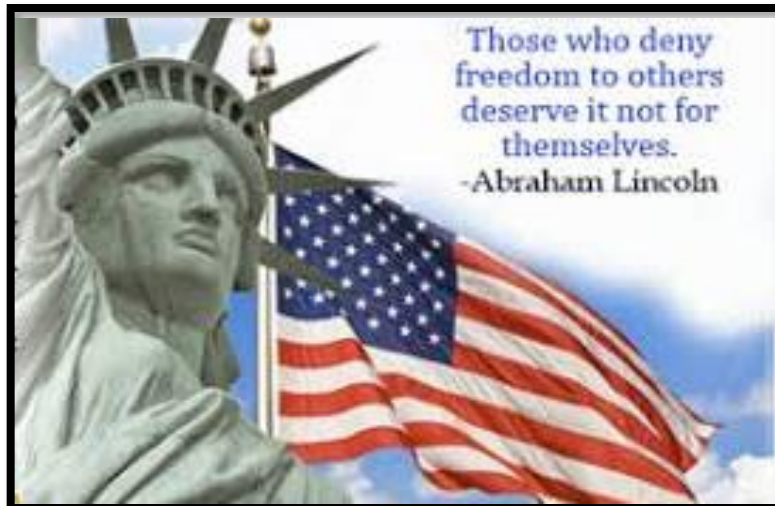
Wednesday, July 17th, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Clutch, Kitchen and Pour

601 S. Cedar St.

Charlotte, NC 28202

Happenings Gallery!



The Executive Corner:

Executive Director - Jade X. Jackson

Rev Rodney Sadler, Joel Segal, DonnaMarie Woodson

Coalition of United Progressives-CharMeck Chronicle

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Contributor: Tarik Kiley