

Remember Martin Luther King Jr

Written by Robert ID1100
Sunday, 03 April 2005 05:45 -

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Thirty seven years ago rap and hip-hop did not exist. The music charts were full of Rock & Roll, folk and R&B music. Motown produced some of the greatest music ever, and is one of the best known record companies of that era. There was no 50 Cent no Death Row Records. But it was a very important time for America; a time for social change. There were no Chuck D's and Public Enemy, no KRS-1, no NWA, no Tupac's to point out the social failures in rap tracks; but that era had it's very important and loved 'leaders'.

We need to remember these leaders and the struggles they encountered and the sacrifices not only themselves gave but their families and all who struggled at that time so we could have the freedoms we enjoy today. Without these fore runners blazing their path of freedom we may not be afforded the opportunity to have a hip-hop culture as open and free as we are today.

Senseless violence has been around since Cain and Abel, but it is those who made a difference we need to remember and pray for; and never forget what they gave us.

In Memphis 37 years ago Monday, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. He was murdered out of fear and hatred. Dr. King, a man who preached non-violence, himself was taken by senseless violence. Senseless violence just not against him but against an entire race.

The leaders of the civil rights movement were still in shock from Bro. Min. Malcom X's assassination in February of 1965 and the assassination of Dr. King only made point that America was not ready to except the changes that were taking place. Changes that were by then unstoppable.

In 1966, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in

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Oakland, Calif.. The Panthers, Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and many other groups were tired of waiting for change while Dr. King tried to take the 'high' road. His road would lead him thru hate filled America. He did not agree with the now famous slogan 'Black Power' nor did he agree with the 'war' raging in Vietnam.

The FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover hated Dr. King and was set on a path to destroy the civil rights leader. Hatred for Dr. King and his movement grew across America as many thought they were losing their 'grip' on the country and were dead set against any change in its ways.

On April 4, 1968, Dr. King's life was ended by an assassin's bullet while he was on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. Later James Earl Ray would be arrested and convicted for the murder of Dr. King.

Although Dr. King had won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1964; he left this world because of a violent cowardly attack.

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character", Dr. King had said in a speech.

Although we have come along way as a nation, we can only pray that someday that 'dream' will be 100% in the thoughts of all those who live in this country.

So tomorrow remember Dr. King in thought and prayer and "thank" him silently in your heart for all he did for the struggle.

*"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my

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four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.”

“I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. This is our hope. This is the faith with which I return to the South. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.”

“This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring." And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania! Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado! Let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California! But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia! Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! Let freedom ring from every hill and every molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.”

“When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

*(Delivered on the steps at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. on August 28, 1963.
Source: Martin Luther King, Jr: The Peaceful Warrior, Pocket Books, NY 1968)