

THE JOY OF BIRTH AND THE PAIN OF DELIVERY:
MALCOLM X AND THE REBIRTH OF BLACK RADICALISM IN THE 1990's

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SISTERS AND BROTHERS
COMRADES AND FRIENDS

If this talk had been given a month ago it would have been a different talk and you would have been a different audience. **Los Angeles** has happened to all of us. We moved from a hypothetical to the real thing, we got an answer to our central question -- how long will our people take the pain and suffering before breaking out in rebellion?

I consider it a great opportunity to address a meeting at this moment, to speak at a time when many more of us are awake and asking questions, seeking the road forward toward rebuilding a powerful movement of Black liberation that can go through 'til the job is done. But let me also say that once the oppressed and exploited masses have broken out of the prison of silence, we have to take our intellectual task of political analysis and the forging of strategy and tactics very seriously. There are no quick and

process in the early **1990's**, and we have yet to find out the nature of the new Debate that is emerging. Will it be a continuation of the 1960's, or will it be something new. The same debate is over rap (is it new?) and other aspects of the life forms being created by the new generation of youth. Will the youth learn from Malcolm and grasp the lessons of the last three Debates? Will whites in the USA respect the Debates and incorporate them into the mainstream of political discourse? Will everyone learn from Malcolm?

One thing is certain. Malcolm has been reborn in the minds of the Black youth and that's a fact. We "**dis**" them at the risk of our own peril.

Just compare the **1965** rebellion and the **1992** one currently getting started. In **1965** there were **34** killed, this year there have been **58** so far. In **1965** there were **4,000** arrested, in **1992** there were over **20,000** arrested. In **1965**, almost all **of** those active in the rebellion were Black, and in **1992** over half were Latino and white. I don't care what the news anchors were saying

if you looked at the pictures and maintained a critical frame of mind you had to recognize that something new and very important was involved in this rebellion.

It is only by grasping what is new in this situation that we can stand on the shoulders of Malcolm's thought and see farther and go farther. We have to dare to do it by being bold and courageous. The responsibility for our revolution is ours. Fanon put it clearly, each general has a mission it can fulfill it or betray it. Most people want to talk a rough game but are not clear and committed enough to act rough. It seems clear that the middle class (and this includes college students) are the leaders when it comes to reform, but the job of initiating a more basic struggle falls to the working class, especially those who are fighting for their very survival. But, brothers and sisters, when they get it on we have a historical responsibility to understand and join in by extending the action and taking it to a higher level because only in that way can we ever have any hope of winning. This is an all hands on deck situation, that means you, YOU, everyone of us in

this auditorium.

I speak as a social scientist, a materialist, a Black militant grounded in the working class philosophy of historical and dialectical materialism. This means that I join with others to make a materialist analysis of the world in which we live so that political action can be developed that can change the world the way it is, not the way it used to be or the way that I imagine it to be. This is critical, so when you listen to anybody always ask if they portray the world the way it is.

There has been an economic revolution, and every society in the world will have to be reorganized on this new basis. We have been living in the era of industrial society, electro-mechanical technology, whether the society has been capitalist or socialist or colonial. This is over and we are getting a full revolutionary transformation because of computers, robotics, and the new technologies of biology and chemistry. The demand for labor has been transformed and the work that Black people have done has been eliminated. Just as the mechanical cotton picker and chemical

insecticides forced Blacks out of the cotton patch, so **the** computer and the robot is throwing us out of the factory.

The Black liberation debate was over how to fight our way into the existing society and redefine power. That society and therefore that struggle is now obsolete. Today the debate has to be over social revolution, the fundamental reorganization of the society. This is a historical necessity, and it will be done by the right wing fascists or by us, it'll be one or the other.

Furthermore this is a condition for all of us and therefore there can be no serious consideration of Black liberation without the context social revolution for everybody. Malcolm saw this clearly in the last year of his life, can you get to it no some 27 years later.

I speak as an optimist, as one who was here in the 1960's and I'll proud to be here in the 1990's. Finally, my message to you the youth of this period is to embrace the dialectic of our tradition, STUDY AND STRUGGLE, the twin aspects of Black studies, "Academic Excellence and Social Responsibility." Have you read the

autobiography of Malcolm X? Do it, do it again if necessary. Have you read the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels? Do it, and if necessary do it again. I've even got a couple of books with me that I would put on that list that you can get after this forum.

This is a wonderful time, a time when we are fighting back, a time when the bent over uncle tom ass kissin' opportunist stepin' fetchit role is being cast aside and once again we are being introduced to Cinque, Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, Ida B Wells, John Brown, George Jackson, Malcolm X and those millions of Black Panthers who have always been there waiting, but who hopefully will have to wait not much longer.

This is our time, this is your time, that is if you have the heart to fight as Malcolm X wanted you to, BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY!

NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!

NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE! (REPEAT UNTIL THEY PICK IT UP)

NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!