

::: Black Women in Political Action

Fannie Lou Hamer:

Born October 6, 1917, in Montgomery County, Mississippi, Fannie Lou Hamer was the granddaughter of a slave and the youngest of 20 children. Her parents were sharecroppers. Sharecropping, or "halving," as it is sometimes called, is a system of farming whereby workers are allowed to live on a plantation in return for working the land. When the crop is harvested, they split the profits in half with the plantation owner. Sometimes the owner pays for the seed and fertilizer, but usually the sharecropper pays those expenses out of his half. It's a hard way to make a living and sharecroppers are generally born poor, live poor, and die poor.

At age six, Fannie Lou began helping her parents in the cotton fields. By the time she was twelve, she was forced to drop out of school and work full time to help support her family. Once grown, she married another sharecropper named Perry "Pap" Hamer. On August 31, 1962, Mrs. Hamer decided she had had enough of sharecropping. Leaving her house in Ruleville, MS she and 17 others took a bus to the courthouse in Indianola, the county seat, to register to vote. On their return home, police stopped their bus.

They were told that their bus was the wrong color. Fannie Lou and the others were arrested and jailed. After being released from jail, the plantation owner paid the Hamers' a visit and told Fannie Lou that if she insisted on voting, she would have to get off his land - even though she had been there for eighteen years. She left the plantation that same day. Ten days later, night riders fired 16 bullets into the home of the family with whom she had gone to stay. Mrs. Hamer began working on welfare and voter registration programs for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

On June 3, 1963, Fannie Lou Hamer and other civil rights workers arrived in Winona, MS by bus. They were ordered off the bus and taken to Montgomery County Jail. The story continues "...Then three white men came into my room. One was a state highway policeman (he had the marking on his sleeve). They said they were going to make me wish I was dead. They made me lay down on my face and they ordered two Negro prisoners to beat me with a blackjack. That was unbearable. The first prisoner beat me until he was exhausted, then the second Negro began to beat me. I had polio when I was about six years old. I was limp. I was holding my hands behind me to protect my weak side. I began to work my feet. My dress pulled up and I tried to smooth it down. One of the policemen walked over and raised my dress as high as he could.

They beat me until my body was hard, 'til I couldn't bend my fingers or get up when they told me to. That's how I got this blood clot in my eye - the sight's nearly gone now. My kidney was injured from the blows they gave me on the back." Mrs. Hamer was left in the cell, bleeding and battered, listening to the screams of Ann Powder, a fellow civil rights worker, who was also undergoing a

severe beating in another cell. She overheard white policemen talking about throwing their bodies into the Big Black River where they would never be found. In 1964, presidential elections were being held. In an effort to focus greater national attention on voting discrimination, civil rights groups created the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). This new party sent a delegation, which included Fannie Lou Hamer, to Atlantic City, where the Democratic Party was holding its presidential convention. Its purpose was to challenge the all-white Mississippi delegation on the grounds that it didn't fairly represent all the people of Mississippi, since most black people hadn't been allowed to vote.

Fannie Lou Hamer spoke to the Credentials Committee of the convention about the injustices that allowed an all-white delegation to be seated from the state of Mississippi. Although her live testimony was pre-empted by a presidential press conference, the national networks aired her testimony, in its entirety, later in the evening. Now all of America heard of the struggle in Mississippi's delta.

A compromise was reached that gave voting and speaking rights to two delegates from the MFDP and seated the others as honored guests. The Democrats agreed that in the future no delegation would be seated from a state where anyone was illegally denied the vote. A year later, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act.

Callie House:

The recent deaths of Rosa Parks, Vivian Malone, and C. Delores Tucker should lead us to pause and reflect on the pivotal roles women have played, often without much fanfare, in the Civil Rights Movement. The pomp and circumstance surrounding Parks upon the announcement of her death confirm the iconic status she achieved. It also gives us an opportunity to herald the contributions of many African-American women who have not received their due. For every Rosa Parks, who is nearly universally known, there are dozens of African American women whose stories have been forgotten. Callie House is one such woman. But if Mary Frances Berry has her way, House's story will be much more widely known. Berry, the civil rights activist and professor at the University of Pennsylvania, has written an enlightening and uplifting book on House, *My Face Is Black Is True: Callie House and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations*, which details House's struggle to get reparations for ex-slaves.

House, born into slavery, was a crusader who led a movement to get the federal government to provide pensions for ex-slaves. She thought it was an abomination that ex-slaves, whose work was the backbone of the southern economy and made many businessmen wealthy, were destitute and left to fend for themselves when their bodies gave out and they could no longer work. For those who could still work, it wasn't unusual to see domestic workers who were in their 80s and 90s. Berry noted the plight of one woman, 101 years old, who was still a working domestic.

House's story is also a cautionary tale. Her work was undermined by the usual suspects in the Federal Government, your Congress, and the Department of Justice created the environment which ultimately led to her incarceration, and destruction of her movement. **SHE WAS ALSO HURT BY BLACK NEWSPAPERS AND LEADERS** who thought she and her supporters embodied something less than the "Talented Tenth" they were trying to promote to White America, to be accepted as equals. **THEY SOLD OUT HOUSE, AFTER ALL HER SACRIFICES**, to remain the "Favored Negroes" in the eyes of Whites in Power. Now the AAIU is insisting that all blacks stop selling out, and **Whites in Power, and everyone else on earth accepts all blacks as equals.**

It is utterly ridiculous to realize there are thousands of blacks around this country trying to impress whites in power, so they are real sambos, sell outs, race traitors, agent provocateurs, and paid informants. Now they should know when they sell us out they are hurting their children, grandchildren, and the entire black race. My dear brothas and sistas in this arena look deep into your souls to find the answer as to how you could sell your own people out, especially to a race of people who put your ancestors in chains on Goree Island, in the Middle Passage, and in Slavery, which caused severe psychological disabilities, inducing Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (PTSS).

Berry wrote the book "because everybody started talking about reparations" and all those interested in the reparations debate, regardless of their position on the issue, should read it. Supporters will likely learn more than they previously knew about the historical nature of the uphill battles facing blacks. Opponents will see that the reparations movement is not some scheme cooked up by the nationalist wing of the African-American community to shake down the government for money.

Berry believes that there are "other Callie House's out there" and, while the contributions of women like House have been lost in history, their work is still relevant to dealing with contemporary issues. Let's hope that the leaders of the current reparations movement learn the lessons of the past so as not to repeat those mistakes. That way, the legitimate arguments surrounding reparations are given a legitimate hearing in the court of public opinion. Then House can take her place in the annals of African-American history with all the others who gave their lives for the cause.

We Love and Honor our Sheroes!

So, we need all Blacks to Stop Selling Out!!

Family Love Brotha Pruitt!!!

PS The EE has a history of using sambos and smear tactics to stop and kill leaders and movements, which would benefit the Black Family. So, in networking {I have been informed that the

EE is starting a new round of recruiting sell outs, to try to downplay and destroy me, and the AAIU.
SO, DON'T BE FOOLED.

We can avoid confrontation and circulate the AAIU African-American Reparations/Sovereignty (AARS) plan, to bypass haters and sellouts, and educate blacks on alternatives to integration.
{ We should also prepare to engage the AAIU African-American Plebiscite Vote for Sovereignty on 10-4-21 on the bottom of the last section of this website }.

SO, PREPARE YOURSELVES FOR SOVEREIGNTY AND REPATRIATION