

Mandela addresses African, African-American summit

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Special NNPA
Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG — South African President Nelson Mandela welcomed the Rev. Leon Sullivan and more than 500 cheering delegates attending the fourth African-African American Summit July 20 with a challenge to remember the masses of poor and uneducated people who put them in power.



NELSON MANDELLA

"Once you are in power you start interacting with very powerful forces in society, who are able to make your own personal position comfortable, who give you all the things you have missed during your life, and it is therefore easy to forget your mandate," President Mandela said. "One of the tragic situations is for a freedom fighter to forget those who were with him when you were all alone."

Mandela was jailed for 27 years while his African National Congress (ANC) waged armed struggle, civil disobedience, and massive labor actions inside South Africa; as well as organized successful campaigns to discredit the white-minority government and its policy of apartheid in practically every major industrial allied country. He was chosen by an overwhelming majority in 1994 in South Africa's first one-person-one-vote election.

"This is the importance of the institution that the Rev. Sullivan is leading," Mandela said. "It brings together those men and women in the United States of America, who, in spite of their own freedom, decided that the world

is the battleground for their endeavors.

"That is the significance of the men and women who are here. They gave us support. They gave us their loyalty. They gave us their love. They went in and out of jail in their own country, demonstrating against the apartheid regime. And we have won, not only because of the sacrifices we ourselves made in our own country, but because of the support of the international community in general, and in particular, the people of the United States of America."

Sullivan called Mandela an "icon" in the world's freedom struggle and pledged to continue to support schools and training centers all over South Africa built by his Opportunities Industrialization Center. In addition, he promised that pressure from blacks in America would maintain U.S. government support for the new South Africa, and would raise awareness for more support for the rest of the continent south of the Sahara Desert.

"In many ways this is an historic hour," Sullivan told delegates in London, on their way to South Africa, and eventually to Harare, Zimbabwe where the principal summit activities were scheduled over four days. "I am not standing here alone. Marcus Garvey is here. W.E.B. DuBois is here. Kwame Nkrumah is here. Martin Luther King is here. Most of all God is here. God and Allah are here with us.



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

Valerie Ambrose (2nd from left) won NASA's name the Rover contest. C. DeLores Tucker (left), president of the National Political Congress of Black Women and her summer interns join Ambrose. Tucker had been looking for Ambrose since her identity was revealed.

NASA introduces essay winner to public

Special to Sentinel-Voice

The mysterious teenage African-American girl who two years ago won a world wide essay contest naming the historic Pathfinder Rover after a 19th century ex-slave abolitionist and women's suffrage supporter, suddenly turned up last week.

Valerie Maria Ambrose, now 15, is sprouting into a 5'8" - and growing - beauty who is interested in becoming a forensic scientist and likes reading mysteries.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) introduced Ambrose to her admirer C. DeLores Tucker, founder/chair of the National Political Congress of Black Women, Inc. (NPCBW). Tucker has been trying to find Ambrose since her identity was recently revealed.

"We were delighted you won that contest," Tucker told Ambrose.

Ambrose, of Haitian descent, is the eldest of six siblings — one sister, two half-brothers and two half-sisters. She is a 10th grader at the St. Augustine Elementary-Junior High School in Bridgeport, Conn. She said she became interested in Sojourner Truth when she was given an oration assignment.

"What struck me," she said, "was that she was so strong."

Ambrose's handwritten essay bested more than 3,000 worldwide entries.

She said, "The name of Pathfinder (robot)

should be Sojourner Truth. I chose Sojourner because she was a heroine to blacks, slaves and women. She acted on her strong feelings. It is only logical that (it) be named Sojourner Truth because she is on a journey to find truths about Mars."

That is precisely what Sojourner is doing. With an attached spectrometer, it is sniffing at Martian boulders and rocks to determine their mineral composition, volcanic and other origins.

For her efforts, Ambrose won an all-expense paid trip to Florida for the Pathfinder launch carrying the newly named Sojourner Truth to Mars.

The contest was co-sponsored by the Planetary Society and the National Science Teachers Association. The top 10 entries won awards. Anyone born after Jan. 1, 1976, was eligible to compete. Entries had to be received by March 1, 1995.

For Tucker, the naming was a delightful irony. She and the NPCBW had just completed a losing fight with a white women's group who insisted on excluding Sojourner Truth from a portrait monument of suffragettes in the Capitol Rotunda Building. The white women's group failed to appease Tucker by opting for a separate monument for Truth. Tucker said, "A separate statue of her will not do."

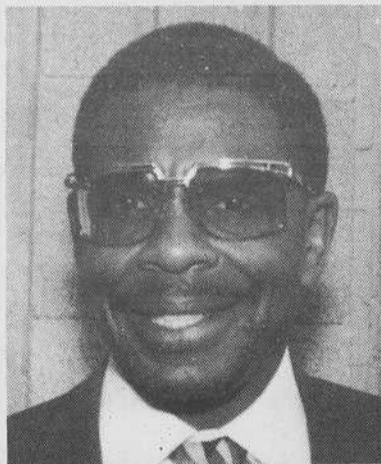
Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-Ga.) has presented a bill to include Truth in the present statue presently in the Capitol Rotunda.

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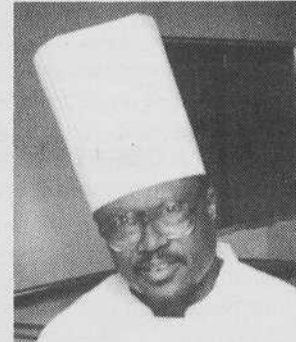
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