

Former NOI spokesman pushing youth march

By Naya Arinde
Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK — Black nationalist Khallid Muhammad is urging New Yorkers to prepare for a gathering of up to three million young people and their elders in September.

In an exclusive interview with the *Daily Challenge*, New York's only black daily newspaper, the former National Spokesman and Supreme Captain for the Nation of Islam announced that he will act as convener and executive director of the Million Youth March slated to take place on Saturday, Sept. 5 at Malcolm X Blvd and Central Park. The theme of the march is "Black Power Into the Year 2000: Keepin' It Real, Saving Our Youth, Securing Our Future."

Muhammad assured the *Daily Challenge* that over the next nine months, New York will witness a galvanizing of grassroots, professional, political, Christian, youth-oriented and Black nationalist forces into one movement to form strategies for proactive social, economic, political and

cultural development for the Black community.

Throughout the last decade, Muhammad has continued to engage the Hip Hop generation throughout his international lecture series and the regular interviews in music/lifestyle journals such as *The Source*, *Vibe*, *XXL*, and England's *Alarm Magazine*. The *Source* recently stated that it is becoming more frequent to hear, Malcolm X, Farrakhan, and Khallid on rap albums.

The former head of Harlem's Mosque Number Seven noted that he appeared on several forums with slain rapper/activist Tupac Amaru Shakur, and that during his Sunday lectures at the mosque Sista Souljah would often be in attendance.

Besides appearing in hip-hop videos, Muhammad has been featured on Tupac's "The Don Kiluminati," and Public Enemy's "Fight the Power" and "It Takes A Nation of Millions (To Hold Us Back)" albums and Spike Lee's "Do The Right Thing," movie. Proudly, Muhammad quotes The Fugees Lauryn Hill's



KHALLID MUHAMMAD

reference to him, "Indeed like Khallid Muhammad come controversial, kickin' it with no rehearsal."

He listed several issues that will be addressed at September's rally, including: police brutality, the prison industrial complex, repatriations back to Africa and dual citizenships, financial aid to Black students and the "attack" on Black enrollment in the universities of America and the instituting of more Black studies and African-centered curriculum on the high school and university levels.

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"We will also be focusing on America's great number of political prisoners; the building of Black economy, establishing a Black brain bank and think tanks among our youth and throughout the Black community; the transfer of professional and technological skill to Africa, which will help to fight unemployment among our youth; Black male/female relationships; CIA/USA drug cartels in the ghettos of America; proper education for independence and liberation for the 21st century; the building of an African united

front and; a focus on the U.S. government state support programs to criminalize Black youth and negative media images - such as the so-called East coast / West coast conflict," Muhammad said.

The activist continued that the Million Youth March is a "natural progression after the hugely successful men and woman marches of Washington and Philadelphia.

Last month, on Feb. 21, marked the 33rd anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X in Harlem's Audubon Ballroom.

In commemoration, the New Afrikan Liberation Front (NALF) called for a day in "Defense of Malcolm X's revolutionary legacy to the Black nation, Black youth and in support of political prisoners and prisoners of war."

The day was used to launch the New York kick off of the Million Youth March, with a march and rally at Harlem's Adam Clayton Powell State Building at 1 p.m. The Malcolm X Commemoration Committee, the December 12th Movement and the Malcolm X

Grassroots Organization called on the tri-state community to participate in the march and rally to the Audubon Ballroom. The day's events culminated with a program at Harlem's Oberia Dempsey School at 7:30 P.M.

"On the 33rd anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X his spirit lives on in Black youth," says Eric Ford, who is part of the New York organizing committee for the Million Youth March.

Ford continued, "A million youth will put forward an agenda which demands that young Black leaders and organizations commit themselves to community development and nation building, reparations, the release of political prisoners of war, and the plebiscite on the question of national liberation. "We must own and control the production and distribution of our cultural intellectual and economic properties. We must put an end to police brutality, police murder of Black and Latino youth and the CIA sponsored drug-dealing in our communities."

Lewis returns to civil rights hotbed, recalls march

Special to Sentinel-Voice
SELMA, Ala. —

Considered an "outside rabble-rouser" in this small Alabama town during the civil rights struggles of the 1960s, John Lewis on Sunday, was given the key to the city of Selma.

Lewis, a U.S. representative from Georgia, returned for the 33rd anniversary of the aborted Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march in which he and 600 others were beaten by police while trying to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

To commemorate the day, Brown Chapel AME Church dedicated a national historic landmark. The church was used by Martin Luther King Jr. as a starting point for the "Bloody Sunday" march and a later march that illuminated the racial strife present in the South of the 1960s.

During services, Lewis gave an emotional sermon in which he recalled his memories of a segregated Alabama in 1965, when he was an 18-year-old leader in the Student

Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

"I've been arrested and jailed here more times than I can remember," he said. "I was beaten here and now I stand here today as a U.S. congressman."

Later, nine-term Mayor Joe Smitherman — one of those who opposed Lewis' presence in Selma in 1965 — continued a decades-long mission to

prove he, his city, the state and the South have changed.

"Back then, I called him an outside rabble-rouser," Smitherman said at a ceremony at the bridge. "Today, I call him one of the most courageous people I ever met."

Two weeks after "Bloody Sunday," President Lyndon Johnson federalized the Alabama National Guard to protect the marchers in their

second, successful attempt to reach Montgomery. The high-profile marches were key in leading to congressional passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

"The beatings were a tragedy, a real tragedy," said Rep. Earl Hilliard, D-Ala. "But that was then, this is now. We still have a lot of work to do, a lot of things to reconcile, a lot of ways we can improve lives."



JOHN LEWIS

Malcom X

(Continued from Page 3)

becoming the leading voice for black nationalism in America after leaving prison in 1953. He stayed briefly at the Dale Street house before embarking on his new career.

Ultimately he moved beyond the politics of separatism and embraced a more inclusive vision like the one advocated by King. Many believe that was why he was killed in 1965 at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem.

In the ensuing 33 years, no one had asked the city to designate the house on Dale Street as a landmark.

"To come before the Landmark Commission you have to have a petition signed by 10 residents," said Jacque Goddard, spokeswoman for Mayor Thomas Menino. "No one ever in the history of the city has done that."

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