

Charlotte Women's March

January 20, 2018

Tying the Poor People's Campaign with Civil Disobedience and the Roles That Women are Having on Our Movement for a Moral Revival

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Good morning, Charlotte. No, no, no... let's respond so that Raleigh can hear us. Good Morning Charlotte. I want to thank all of the leaders and volunteers that put this successful march together. I also want to thank you for your fight against oppression, especially on us women.

As we reflect back on this past year let us think. How many of you remember the "Pants Suite Nation" from a year ago? Remember the first Women's March that was help nationally and abroad? Now let's look at the roles that we as women have filled during the past year and that we currently fill today, during this Human Rights' Movement.

- 1) One of the Co- Conveners of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival is a woman. Rev, Dr. Theoharis, from the Kairos Center, is a CO-Convener with our own Bishop Dr. William Barber II. Yes, the title is 2-fold. This campaign is about ending poverty and it is also about creating a Moral America. We must end poverty, systemic racism and other oppression especially against women, mass incarceration, and ecological devastation. Again Dr. Theoharis is one of the national leaders of this most historic movement.
- 2) Women are also having huge impacts on the the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival across the country. For example, if we stopped and focused our attention on the State of North Carolina, we see that all 3 Tri- Chairs are women, Ana Blackburn (Harnett County); Joyce Johnson (Wake County) and myself (Mecklenburg and surrounding counties). The nation is speaking on how North Carolina is leading the way.

Now as I give a little background on myself- My background as an activist began 32 years ago, as I led 500 plus participants through the streets of Ypsilanti, Michigan against Apartheid. At that time, I was in my 2nd year at Eastern Michigan University. I have been an advocate for transgender people, especially transgender women. I published my book in August 2012- "Climbing Life's Mountains: Overcoming Challenges of Bi-Racial Birth, Adoption, Gender Identity, and Depression. The purpose of the book was to let people know that they can climb their personal mountains as well. Last year, I was humbled by the request, from MoveOn.org, to Co-Host the "Resist Trump Tuesday" Rallies here in Charlotte. These rallies were held across the nation for every Tuesday of the Trump Admiration's first 100 days. I have been blessed to have been arrested 3 times during 2017. My first arrest was on February 15th as I did a sit-in against Wendy's for being a "Red Chain" restaurant in donating \$235,000 to Donald Trump and the Republicans' hateful agenda. I was also blessed on May 30th to have been arrested with Dr. Barber II, and 30 other protesters, as we participated in a sit-in to urge Raleigh to expand Medicaid and Medicare. And I was also recently arrested in Washington, Dc for disrupting Congress as I interrupted Oren Hatch during the Senate Hearings on the Deplorable Tax Scam Bill. And yes, an 87-year-old woman, who is with the Raging Grannies, was incarcerated overnight. The Capitol Police were trying to make an example out of Ruth.

Now as we return our focus to the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival we focus on the 4 evils that we will end! They are the sins of poverty, systemic racism and other oppression, the war economy, and ecological devastation. We are currently in Phase 2 of the campaign- the Educational Phase. Phase 1 began as Charlotte made history on August 9, 2017 by holding the first, of many, Mass Meetings. Dr. Barber and Dr. Theoharis and the national leadership team has held Mass Meetings throughout the country- cities like, yes Detroit, Birmingham, New York, Los Angeles and many other cities. Phase 3 begins the day after Mother's Day,

with our first day of 40 days of Direct Action and Civil Disobedience. This is just a kickoff for the movement which will take years!

When we speak about Civil Disobedience, which includes sit-ins, disruption of Congress, and other activities we are speaking of placing pressure on the law makers. We must not be afraid to make sacrifices for our future and the future of our children. Civil Disobedience has helped us reach milestones and the risks are too bad. For example, the results of my 3 arrests include, completion of a behavioral class, which was Absolute Advocacy, and completion of Community Service for 32 hours and 50 hours. Not too bad of a sacrifice for standing what it right!

Now in closing, I bring our attention to the following:

- 1) Please go online at poorpeoplescampaign.org and breachrepairers.org to stay abreast of the campaign. Also please complete the online Pledge Cards for the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival.
- 2) Please attend the HK on J which is scheduled for February 10th.

Women, we are strong! We shall win! Yes we will!

Thank you for fighting for me! Thank you for fighting for you! And yes, Thank you for fighting for a Moral America! I love you!