

Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Blackonomics: What is Constitutional Patriotism?

By James Clingman
NNPA News Wire Columnist

Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "...we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir." He went on to say, "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed."

It is said that we should carefully choose the words we use, because we may have to eat them one day. That is the case with words written by this nation's founders. The only problem is, even though several have brought attention to those

of throwing off the tyranny of King George. In reference to the Declaration, Walker stated, "Do you understand your own language? Compare your own language ... extracted from your Declaration of Independence, with your cruelties and murders inflicted by your cruel and unmerciful fathers and yourselves on our fathers and on us — men who have never given your fathers or you the least provocation!"

Walker continued, particularly referring to the abuses of the King and the right and obligation of the colonies to throw off such government. "Hear your language further ... I ask you candidly, [were] your sufferings under Great Britain one hundredth part as cruel and tyrannical as you have rendered ours under you?"

July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony."

The words written and spoken by the founders of these United States were important, and I trust sincere, but sometimes in order to have accountability for the words people say, especially politicians' words, they must be recanted and rewritten by those to whom those words apply. That is why the One Million Conscious Black Voters and Contributors will insist on verbal and written support of its political planks by any political candidate seeking our votes.

When put together just right way, words can have serious, consequential effects on people. When Thomas Jefferson used words that attacked slavery in his draft of the Declaration of Independence he initiated the most intense debate among the delegates gathered at Philadelphia in the spring and early summer of 1776. Jefferson's passage on slavery was the most important section removed from the final document. It was replaced with a more ambiguous passage about King George's incitement of "domestic insurrections among us."

Later, Frederick Douglass cited the words of the Declaration and Constitution in his famous speech in 1852, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" Douglass said the Fourth of July was a day of celebration for White Americans but a day of mourning for slaves and former slaves like him, because they were reminded of the unfulfilled promise of equal liberty for all in the Declaration of Independence. "This Fourth [of]

“This Fourth [of] July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn

words, little or nothing has been done to change or enforce their intent when it comes to Black people. The words to which I refer are found in the documents written by a cadre of men held in highest esteem who supposedly had the best intentions for "all" other men in this country.

David Walker's Appeal, in 1829, turned the words of the Declaration of Independence back on those who celebrated the victory

The Skanner News would like to thank the following sponsors for their support of the 2017 Martin Luther King, Jr. Special Edition

- Aramark/Geocometti
- CARE Oregon
- City of Portland
- D. A. Davision Companies
- Energy Trust
- Enterprise Holding
- Family Care
- Home Forward
- Kaiser Permanente
- Macy's
- METRO
- Multnomah County
- Oregon Episcopal School
- OHSU
- Oregon Lottery
- Pacific Power & Light
- Port of Portland
- Portland Community College
- Turner Construction
- U.S. Forest Service Region 6
- UBER
- University of Oregon
- Vancouver Avenue Baptist church
- Volunteers of America
- Wells Fargo
- Self Enhancement, Inc.



**CONGRATULATIONS
TO ALL
SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENTS**

ARAMARK/GIACOMETTI

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”

– Martin Luther King, Jr.



At Home Forward, we are committed to answering Dr. King's urgent question. We support participation of minority-owned, women-owned and emerging small businesses on Home Forward projects. Contact us to learn more about what we are doing for others and how you can get involved.

For more information, contact:

Berit Stevenson
Procurement and Contracts Manager
503.802.8541
Berit.Stevenson@homeforward.org

homeforward.org


homeforward
hope. access. potential.