

Happy Juneteenth! How Donald Trump Listened, Lincoln Liberated and Nixon Lost

President Biden signed the bill to make Juneteenth a national holiday, but Dr. Alveda King says it was President Trump who put Juneteenth “on the map.”

In the latest episode of my podcast, she explains, “When President Trump was still in office, he [began] to bring African-Americans to the White House to talk about things that were important to us. And at the top of our list was Juneteenth.”

According to King, President Trump listened to the Black leaders. He got the proverbial ball rolling, and Congress began to formulate the bill while he was still in office.

Juneteenth was first celebrated in 1865, two years after another Republican, President Abraham Lincoln, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Because there were no cell phones or even telephones, news travelled slowly, and black people in Texas didn’t realize they were free until June 19th, 1865.

Thank God slavery was ended, but sadly, the prejudices hung on in many parts of the country. When African-Americans began building generational wealth in Oklahoma, their “Black Wall Street” was burned. Segregation laws, referred to commonly as Jim Crow laws, were enacted across the South to limit the opportunities available to black Southerners.

Years ago, when I was visiting Atlanta, Dr. Alveda King showed me pictures of her dad, Reverend A.D. King, and her uncle, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., sitting at a lunch counter in Atlanta protesting by sitting at a lunch counter and eating where they weren’t allowed. “Blacks could not eat at the lunch counter,”

she says.

As an 11-year-old white kid from Iowa who hadn't known almost any black people, I remember being horrified when we moved across the country. When we stopped at gas stations to get a drink of water or soda, there would be three bathrooms: Men, Women and Colored. I had never seen that before.

I went to segregated schools for five years, and as our high school was integrated in 10th grade, I wrote editorials about racial understanding and cooperation for my high school newspaper. A couple of my friends and I also decided to integrate our service club, which was like a high school fraternity. We recruited a couple of black football players to join us. And then, when I was in 11th grade, Dr. Alveda King's uncle, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was assassinated.

Before he was assassinated though, he spent some time in jail, and according to Dr. Alveda King, her grandfather, Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., tried to reach Vice President Nixon and Senator John F. Kennedy. He said, "I've got a trunk full of votes, and I'm taking them to Washington, and I will give those votes to whoever gets my son out of jail."

"Now, interestingly, Nixon's advisors told him not to do anything about it," she says. "President Kennedy, who was Senator Kennedy at the time said, 'I can't do that.' And his brother says, 'You've got to help this guy... Get him out.' So, true enough, Granddaddy, a Republican shifted his vote to the man who got his son out of jail."

When Nixon refused to help King, many previously Republican African-Americans sided with Democrats, the party that was previously associated with slavery and segregation. Although many now infer that Republicans are racist, Dr. Alveda King says the opposite.

The conversation I had with Dr. Alveda King was compelling, so I invite you to listen to the recent Strang Report podcast and

see what you think. Please make sure to share it with your social media friends as well. {eoa}

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