

# *Reflections* FOR NONVIOLENT COMMUNITY



A BOOK OF READINGS  
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THE OAK RIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE ALLIANCE  
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FEBRUARY - MARCH 2023

## **Wednesday, February 1**

1902: LANGSTON HUGHES BORN

1960: GREENSBORO, NC WOOLWORTH'S COUNTER SIT-IN

The country is in deep trouble. We've forgotten that a rich life consists fundamentally of serving others, trying to leave the world a little better than you found it. We need the courage to question the powers that be, the courage to be impatient with evil and patient with people, the courage to fight for social justice. In many instances we will be stepping out on nothing, and just hoping to land on something. But that's the struggle. To live is to wrestle with despair, yet never allow despair to have the last word.

~ Cornel West

Thursday, February 2  
Bruce and Pat Baggarly

GROUNDHOG DAY

This is a matter of integrity and honesty, a matter of justice and love. They kept it on the high ground. That was a thing. But I did break though, brother. When I saw those brothers marching in like the ushers in Shiloh Baptist Church, and pick up that coffin and go and walk out, my daughter was there, couldn't take it, man. Been at this for over 50 years. And yet, I got to bounce back. And I will bounce back because we got a love that the world can't take away. The world white supremacy may make being black a crime, but we refuse to get in the gutter. We're going to go down swinging like Ella Fitzgerald, Muhammad Ali, in the name of love and justice. And we're doing it for Brother Wyatt. We're doing it for my daughter. We're doing it for the Asians. We're doing it for the whole world because that's the only hope of the world, and that kind of love is always tragic, comic, and cruciform. You got to get ready to get crucified with that kind of love, and you need to keep dishing it on generation after generation after generation.

~ Cornel West

## **Friday, February 3**

1965: SELMA, AL SCHOOLCHILDREN ARRESTED IN MASS PROTEST FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

## **Saturday, February 4**

1913: ROSA PARKS BORN

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.

~ Desmond Tutu

## **Sunday, February 5**

In a racist society it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.

~ Angela Y. Davis

## **Monday, February 6**

1945: BOB MARLEY BORN

I don't want your love and light if it doesn't come with solidarity and action. I have no interest in passive empathy.

~ Rachel Cargle

## **Tuesday, February 7**

We must join with the tens of millions all over the world who see in peace our most sacred responsibility.

~ Paul Robeson

## **Wednesday, February 8**

1968: ORANGEBURG, SC MASSACRE KILLS 3 AND INJURES 69 PROTESTERS

1978: LONGEST MARCH BEGINS, SAN FRANCISCO TO WASHINGTON, DC

I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.

~ Elie Wiesel

Thursday, February 9  
Madelyn Moyer

1944: ALICE WALKER BORN

1996: US REVEALS HUMAN RADIATION EXPERIMENTS ON 9,000 SUBJECTS

The Floyd family lifted up that spiritual, moral banner in the midst of a moment in which we got all these lies and crimes, be it the cop, The Pentagon or Wall Street or White House or even Congress itself. We know they don't represent the best of this country. It's just that the best of this country right now seems to be so powerless, but in the streets of our nation, we see this multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-gender, different sexual orientation, different religions, Jewish brothers and sisters holding up Rabbi Abraham Heschel, the Catholics holding up Dorothy Day, the Protestants holding up William Coffin and Lydia Maria Child, and the agnostics and the others holding up the Norman Thomases and others. That was my mixed wrestling with what I saw that day, my brother. And I think we've got hope in the form of motion, but we got to get ready for the backlash. We got to get ready for the neo-fascist clamp down because it's coming. It is coming.

~ Cornel West

## Friday, February 10

All the time I pray to Buddha / I keep on / killing mosquitoes  
~ Robert Hass

## Saturday , February 11

1967: A J MUSTE DIES | 1990: NELSON MANDELA RELEASED FROM 27 YEAR IMPRISONMENT

If you are not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing.

~ Malcom X

## Sunday, February 12

1909: NAACP FOUNDED

Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned – everywhere is war.

~ Bob Marley

## Monday, February 13

2010: PEACE PILGRIMAGE FROM OAK RIDGE TO UNITED NATIONS DEPARTS Y12 IN OAK RIDGE

I do not hesitate one second to state clearly and unmistakably: I belong to the American resistance movement which fights against American imperialism, just as the resistance movement fought against Hitler.

~ Paul Robeson

## Tuesday, February 14

1817: FREDERICK DOUGLASS BORN

All our silences in the face of racist assault are acts of complicity.  
~ Bell Hooks

## Wednesday, February 15

1920: SUSAN B ANTHONY BORN

Anti-racism is not an identity or a checklist; it's a practice.  
~ Andrea Ranae

Thursday, February 16  
Cynthia Banas

Now we are in it together, brother. And the beautiful thing about tears, Socrates never cries, but Jeremiah does, and so does Jesus. We cry because we care, we're concerned. It's not about political correctness, it's not about self-righteousness. We cry because we are not numb on the inside. We don't have a chilliness of soul and a coldness of mind and heart. We cry because we connect, but then we must have a vision that includes all of us. And we must have an analysis of power that's honest in terms of the greed, especially at the top, in terms of the hatred, running amok, in terms of the corruption, not just White House and Congress, it's in too many churches, too many mosques, too many synagogues, too many universities, too many civic associations, and then the greed in us. You and I talk about this all the time, right? The gangster in us, because we're wrestling with this day by day. And that's why we need each other, my brother.

~ Cornel West

## Friday, February 17

What if what I want from you is new, newly made  
A new sentence in response to all my questions.

~ Claudia Rankine

## Saturday, February 18

1931: TONI MORRISON BORN | 1934: AUDRE LORDE BORN

Of course, the aim of a constitutional democracy is to  
safeguard the rights of the minority and avoid the tyranny of the  
majority.

~ Cornel West

## Sunday, February 19

Arise from their graves and aspire / Where my Sun-flower  
wishes to go.

~ William Blake

## Monday, February 20

There's a part of every living thing that wants to become itself,  
the tadpole into the frog, the chrysalis into the butterfly, a damaged  
human being into a whole one. That is spirituality.

~ Ellen Bass

## Tuesday, February 21

1965: MALCOLM X ASSASSINATED

White feelings should never be held in higher regard than  
black lives.

~ Rachel Cargle

## Wednesday, February 22

You may never know what results come of your actions, but if  
you do nothing, there will be no results.

~ Mahatma Gandhi

Thursday, February 23  
Naed Smith

1868: W E B DUBOIS BORN

My dear Brother Sharpton, I love Brother Sharpton. We come out of the same black church tradition and so forth. And we fight all the time, and we come together and so forth, and he was powerful. But I always want to connect the police, power in police crimes, with the Wall Street power and the Wall Street crimes. We live in a culture where the people feel as if they can do and say anything and get away with it with no accountability, no answerability, no responsibility. We saw it on Wall Street in terms of all of that insider trading, market manipulation, and fraudulent activity and predatory lending. How many went to jail? Zero. Trump, say anything, do anything, think they can get away with it. Pentagon can drop drones on precious folk in Yemen, Pakistan, and others, and think they can get away with it. We have to have accountability. Our politicians can seemly tell us anything in front of our faces, and we know what's going on behind closed doors, with their tie to big money. Just be honest, that's what integrity is.

~ Cornel West

## Friday, February 24

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Saturday , February 25

1912: 20,000 WOMEN STRIKE FOR BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS

that old ginkgo tree,  
the longer I look at it  
the more I am it.

~ Edith Shiffert

## Sunday, February 26

I now understand that my welfare is only possible if I acknowledge my unity with all the people of the world without exception.

~ Leo Tolstoy

## Monday, February 27

1973: SECOND US SIEGE AT WOUNDED KNEE

It is possible to take our closest relationships and our best friends for granted. The heart cannot live without intimacy. We all need special people in our lives to whom we can show our souls. But relationships need to be nurtured, nourished, and celebrated. Friendships won't last without food. How do you feed your friendships?

~ Macrina Wiederkehr

## Tuesday, February 28

1958: CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT LAUNCHED IN ENGLAND

Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.

~Jonathan Swift

## Wednesday, March 1

The moving finger of God in human history points ever in the same direction. There must be community.

~ Howard Thurman

Thursday, March 2  
John and Carrie Schuchardt

An oligarchy of learning, where the educated govern the ignorant, or even an oligarchy of race, where the Saxon rules the African, might be endured; but this oligarchy of sex, which makes father, brothers, husband, sons, the oligarchs over the mother and sisters, the wife and daughters, of every household - which ordains all men sovereigns, all women subjects, carries dissension, discord, and rebellion into every home of the nation.

Webster, Worcester, and Bouvier all define a citizen to be a person in the United States, entitled to vote and hold office.

The only question left to be settled now is: Are women persons? And I hardly believe any of our opponents will have the hardihood to say they are not. Being persons, then, women are citizens; and no state has a right to make any law, or to enforce any old law, that shall abridge their privileges or immunities. Hence, every discrimination against women in the constitutions and laws of the several states is today null and void, precisely as is every one against Negroes.

~ Susan B. Anthony

## Friday, March 3

To make injustice the only measure of our attention is to praise the Devil.

~ Jack Gilbert

## Saturday, March 4

1917: JEANNETTE RANKIN FIRST WOMAN ELECTED TO US CONGRESS

Under the skin we are all related, and the common ground of blood, bone and meat makes us charter members of the same humble club, say what you will about superficial differences.

~ Rick de Marinis

## Sunday, March 5

1970: NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION TREATY ENTERS INTO FORCE

1991: LAST US CRUISE MISSILE REMOVED FROM GREENHAM COMMONS

We do not receive wisdom. We must discover it for ourselves after a journey through the wilderness, which no one else can make for us.

~Marcel Proust

## Monday, March 6

Our lives extend beyond our skins, in radical interdependence with the rest of the world.

~ Joanna Macy

## Tuesday, March 7

1965: SELMA TO MONTGOMERY CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH

The great pathfinders testify that the motive for the spiritual life is awakening desire rather than grim duty.

~ Sam Keen

## Wednesday, March 8

The struggle of today, is not altogether for today—it is for a vast future also.

~ Abraham Lincoln

Thursday, March 9  
Mary Beth Gamba

I could not retire and step aside when Rose Lee Ingram and her two boys were railroaded to jail for defending themselves. Could I turn a deaf ear to Rosalie McGee? Where was that Shangri-La in these United States where I could live and breathe in dignity? Where my people enjoyed the rights for which their sons and nephews died? In the North there were the Trenton Six demanding justice; in the Middle West was Cicero. In the South there stood Amy Mallard, the Martinsville Seven, and unnamed hundreds of unavenged deaths that cried out. There was no rest in Florida—there a cross was burning and a bomb killed Harriet Moore and her husband; and white justice sniffed out the life of Samuel Shepherd, threatened Lee Irvin.

No, this new uprising of Terror was not confined to the South. It spread throughout the country, goaded and inflamed by persons in high places who created hysteria every time they opened their mouths. In, New York, just a few miles from where I live, they stoned my people at Peekskill—and a governor of a great state defended them. Only last week a Yonkers policeman shot and killed Wyatt and James Blackhall in cold blood—and was held on a minor charge.

Where were the leaders of my nation—yes, my nation, for God knows my whole ambition is to see and make my nation the best in the world—where were these great leaders when these things happened? Why was my President silent when Harriet Moore died? And why did he not call on the Governor of Florida, a fellow Democrat, on his visits to Key West? What did General Eisenhower say or do about mob lynchers and legal lynchers of my people? General MacArthur rode through Georgia in triumph, like another general 85 years ago, but this general drew the applause of the Klan, the Moore dynamiters, the lynchers.

Where were these great leaders who talked so grandly about freedom and spent even more grandly to crush it—what were they doing about my people losing jobs in Detroit while profits were piling up?

~ Charlotta Bass

## Friday, March 10

1913: HARRIET TUBMAN DIES

It is much easier at all times to prevent an evil than to rectify mistakes.

~ George Washington

## Saturday, March 11

1899: ALBERT EINSTEIN BORN

summer butterfly — / I wait for the moment / & then let it go . . .

~ Teijo Nakamura

## Sunday, March 12

The high, contemplative, all-consuming vision, the sense of right and wrong, is alike in all. Its attributes are self-existence, eternity, intuitions, and command. It is the mind of the mind.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Monday, March 13

I stand here struggling for the rights of my people to be full citizens in this country. They are not—in Mississippi. They are not—in Montgomery. That is why I am here today. You want to shut up every colored person who wants to fight for the rights of his people!

~Paul Robeson

## Tuesday, March 14

This old heart  
looks all day long  
at the peonies

~ Chiyo-ni

## Wednesday, March 15

My motto,  
As I live and learn, Is:  
Dig And Be Dug  
In Return.

~ Langston Hughes

## Thursday, March 16 Diane and Peter Swords

1921: WAR RESISTERS INTERNATIONAL FOUNDED

2003: RACHEL CORRIE MURDERED IN GAZA STRIP

For 40 years I have been a working editor and publisher of the oldest Negro newspaper in the West. During those 40 years I stood on a watch tower, watching the tide of racial hatred and bigotry rising against my people and against all people who believe the Constitution is something more than a piece of yellowed paper to be shut off in a glass case in the archives, but a living document, a working instrument for freedom.

Yes, during those 40 years, the Eagle stirred her nest, led the struggles of my people, taught them to work with labor as the one group that could help break down racial differences and open the door for Negro people. I have stood watch over a home to protect a Negro family against the outrages of the Ku Klux Klan. And I have fought the brazen attempts to drive Negroes from their homes under restrictive covenants. I have challenged the great corporations which employ Negroes in their plants. I have stormed city councils and state legislatures and the halls of Congress demanding real representation for my people.

I have fought not only for my people. I have fought and will continue to fight unceasingly for the rights and privileges of all people who are oppressed and who are denied their just share of the world's goods their labor produces. I have walked and will continue to walk in picket lines for the right of all men and women, of all races, to organize for their own protection and advancement. I will continue to cry out against police brutality against any people, as I did in the infamous zoot suit riots in Los Angeles in 1944, when I went into dark alleys and rescued scared and badly beaten Negro and Mexican American boys, some of them children, from the clubs and knives of city police. Nor have I hesitated in the face of that most unAmerican Un-American Activities Committee—and I am willing to face it again. And so help me God, I shall continue to tell the truth as I know it and believe it as a progressive citizen and a good American.

~ Charlotta Bass

## Friday, March 17

Imagine all the people / Livin' life in peace  
You may say I'm a dreamer / But I'm not the only one  
I hope someday you'll join us / And the world will be as one  
~ John Lennon

## Saturday, March 18

It is not enough to be quietly non-racist, now is the time to be  
vocally anti-racist.  
~ Unknown

## Sunday, March 19

2003: US ATTACKS BAGHDAD, STARTS SECOND GULF WAR

firelight bright  
again, brighter still  
a bomber passing . . .  
~ Teijo Nakamura

## Monday, March 20

2004: TENS OF MILLIONS MARCH WORLDWIDE IN PROTEST OF US WAR IN IRAQ

When the Bomb became our God  
We loved it far too much,  
Worshipping no other gods before it.  
When the bomb became our god  
We lived in a constant state of war  
That we called peace.  
~ David Krieger

## Tuesday, March 21

1960: SHARPEVILLE MASSACRE KILLS 69 IN SOUTH AFRICA

The answer to injustice is not to silence the critic, but to end the  
injustice.  
~ Paul Robeson

## Wednesday, March 22

Spring! / Life is love! / Love is life only!  
Better to be human / Than God—and lonely.  
~ Langston Hughes

Thursday, March 23  
Virginia Wilkinson

Yes, we fought to end Hitlerism. But less than 7 years after the end of that war, I find men who lead my government paying out my money and your money to support the rebirth of Hitlerism in Germany to make it a willing partner in another war. We thought to destroy Hitlerism—but its germ took root right here. I look about me, at my own people—at all colored peoples all over the world. I see the men who lead my government supporting oppression of the colored peoples of the earth who today reach out for the independence this nation achieved in 1776.

Yes, it is my government that supports the segregation by violence practiced by a Malan in South Africa, sends guns to maintain a bloody French rule in Indo-China, gives money to help the Dutch repress Indonesia, props up Churchill's rule in the Middle East and over the colored peoples of Africa and Malaya. This week Churchill's general in Malaya terrorized a whole village for refusing to act as spies for the British, charging these Malayan and Chinese villagers who enjoyed no rights and no privileges—and I quote him literally—"for failing to shoulder the responsibility of citizenship." But neither the Malayan people—nor the African people who demonstrate on April 6—will take this terror lying down. They are fighting back.

Shall my people support a new war to create new oppressions? We want peace and we shall have freedom. We support the movement for freedom of all peoples everywhere—in Africa, in Asia, in the Middle East, and above all, here in our own country. And we will not be silenced by the rope, the gun, the lynch mob or the lynch judge. We will not be stopped by the reign of terror let loose against all who speak for peace and freedom and share of the world's goods, a reign of terror the like of which this nation has never seen.

~ Charlotta Bass

## **Friday, March 24**

1980: ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO ASSASSINATED IN EL SALVADOR

1999: US AND NATO BEGIN 78 DAY BOMBING OF SERBIA

The faces and the tactics of the leaders may change every four years, or one or two, but the people go on forever.

~ Paul Robeson

## **Saturday , March 25**

It is white people's responsibility to be less fragile; people of color don't need to twist themselves into knots trying to navigate us as painlessly as possible.

~ Robin D. Angelo

## **Sunday, March 26**

1979: CAMP DAVID PEACE ACCORDS SIGNED

Something is terribly wrong if the pain, sorrow and outrage of a people makes you more uncomfortable than murder itself.

~ Rupi Kaur

## **Monday, March 27**

Equal rights for others does not mean less rights for you. It's not pie.

~ Unknown

## **Tuesday, March 28**

1979: THREE MILE ISLAND (PA) NUCLEAR REACTOR FAILURE

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

## **Wednesday, March 29**

We have to recognise that there cannot be relationships unless there is commitment, unless there is loyalty, unless there is love, patience, persistence.

~ Cornel West

Thursday, March 30  
Aidan Smith

I shall tell you how I come to stand here. I am a Negro woman. My people came before the Mayflower. I am more concerned with what is happening to my people in my country than in pouring out money to rebuild a decadent Europe for a new war. We have lived through two wars and seen their promises turn to bitter ashes. Two Negroes were the first Americans to be decorated for bravery in France in World War I, that war that was fought to make the world safe for democracy. But when it ended, we discovered we were making Africa safe for exploitation by the very European powers whose freedom and soil we had defended. And that war was barely over when a Negro soldier, returning to his home in Georgia, was lynched almost before he could take off his uniform. That war was scarcely over before my people were stoned and shot and beaten in a dozen northern cities. The guns were hardly silenced before a reign of terror was unloosed against every minority that fought for a better life.

~ Charlotta Bass

### **Friday, March 31**

1927: CESAR CHAVEZ BORN

Grow high above my head.

~ Helen Johnson

