

Written by Kathy

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Pictured are Ralph David Abernathy III) (wearing blue suit), the late Ralph David Abernathy Sr, and the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

By Marc R. Churchill, staff reporter, and Kathy Wray Coleman, editor-in-chief. Coleman is a former public school biology teacher and a seasoned Black political, legal and investigative reporter who trained as a reporter at the Call and Post Newspaper in Cleveland, Ohio for 17 years.

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THE BELOW ARTICLE INCLUDES ARCHIVES FROM OUR PREVIOUS ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW WITH RALPH DAVID ABERNATHY III

CLEVELAND, Ohio-As Jan 16, 2023 approaches, a national holiday in observance of the late iconic Civil Rights leader the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we pause to remember the struggles that Blacks in America continue to face as a whole on almost a daily basis, struggles across the continuum that remain in spite of some gains during the Civil Rights Movement of

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the 1950s and 1960s. Had Dr King not been assassinated, it would be his 94th birthday on Jan 15.

The late Ralph David Abernathy III (pictured), whose famed father, the Rev. Ralph David Abernathy Sr., marched along side of the Dr. King during the Civil Rights Movement and led the Southern Christian Leadership Conference after King was assassinated, visited Cleveland, Ohio on Nov. 4, 2012 to stomp for Barack Obama's reelection to the presidency and he interviewed one-on-one with clevelandurbannews.com and kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com

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"My father and Uncle Martin [King] were like twins, and they even dressed alike sometimes, and Uncle Martin died in his arms." said Abernathy III, an evangelist and motivational speaker who grew up in Montgomery, AL. and served a decade in the Georgia State Legislature, first as a state representative and thereafter as a state senator.

Abernathy III was among a host of famous Blacks that toured Cleveland during the weeks leading up to the Nov 6., 2012 presidential election to rally voters for the Barack Obama campaign in the still pivotal state of Ohio, Cleveland a Democratic stronghold and the largest city in the delegate rich 11th congressional district, also heavily Democratic.

He spoke at a rally at Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church after appearing as a guest on 'The Art McKoy University Show,' which airs weekly from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on W.E.R.E. AM radio.

Other prominent Blacks in Cleveland in support of Obama's 2012 reelection bid were John Legend, who is native of Springfield Ohio, Stevie Wonder, Yolanda Adams, Congressional Black Caucus members, California Attorney General Kamala Harris, who later became a U.S. senator and is now the vice president, actress Vivica Fox, and Valerie Jarrett, one of three senior advisers to Obama when he was president

The first Black president of the United States of America and the country's most popular Black Democrat, Obama completed his second term in the White House in 2016 and was succeeded by outgoing president Donald Trump, a Republican real estate mogul elected president in 2016 who lost the 2020 presidential election to President Joe Biden, who served as vice president under Obama.

Abernathy Sr died in 1990.

His son, Abernathy III, once imprisoned as a Georgia state senator for theft and forgery relative to his finances while in office died of cancer in 2016, just two days shy of his 57th birthday. He says that his imprisonment was government entrapment because he was so outspoken for Blacks and other disenfranchised people, and allegedly because he had a famous name.

The younger Abernathy believed that too often Blacks forget what other Blacks fought for, and died for, including the right to vote.

"Some people have forgotten what we have fought for all these years," he said.

Jailed at a protest in Montgomery at nine-years-old, Abernathy III was a fighter like his father. His older brother was named after his father too, but died three days after birth.

The fourth of five children, including his deceased brother, the articulate Abernathy III said that

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the reason he called King "Uncle Martin" is because the Abernathy and King families were just that close, and that his father and King were, "Civil Rights twins."

He was also nine years old when King was assassinated in 1968 on a hotel balcony in Tennessee, and when his father later assumed the leadership role of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Civil Rights organization that they founded together that was the thrust of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

He said that he often had trouble sleeping as a kid because their home in Montgomery had been bombed and he feared it would happen again.

"For years, I was afraid to go to sleep at night when I was a child because I feared that our house would get bombed," said Abernathy III.

The former Georgia state lawmaker said that while Black people have not been fully compensated for the unconstitutional and statutory wrongs that they have endured as a once enslaved people, times have changed somewhat for the Black community.

Barack Obama, he said during the Nov 4, 2012 one-on-one interview with Marc Churchill and Kathy Wray Coleman of clevelandurbannews.com and kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com is a part of that systemic change in action and is a change agent for the betterment of Black people in particular, and the American people in general. And he said that the struggle for equal justice and equal opportunity for Black people continues.

"In as much as things seem to change, they still remain the same. There is a transitional period of the Black community and a lack of true economic power," said Abernathy III clevelandurbannews.com and www.kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com the most read Black digital newspaper and Black blog in Ohio and in the Midwest.

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(216) 659-0473. Email: editor@clevelandurbannews.com. We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview

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