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Capstone Address: "Multicultural Unity, Education and Struggle: Some Essential Principles and Practices," Dr. Maulana Karenga

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LEAD Original Programming

“Multicultural Unity, Education and Struggle: Some Essential Principles and Practices”, with Featured Speaker Dr. Maulana Karenga (2016)

START – 00:00:00

[Music]

[Music, Howling]

>> Bienvenidos and welcome to the next installment of Lead Media Programming from Studio 54, campus of California State University, San Bernardino, the digital media platform for inspired educators, leaders, and community activists and advocates, taking our message directly to the people, to the gente. Thank you for sharing our common interests in the analysis, discussion, critique, dissemination, and commitment to the educational issues that impact Latinos. I'm your host, Dr. Enrique Murillo, Jr., and this episode is a syndicated replay from season seven of LEAD Summit 2016. The theme that year was Black Brown Indigenous Unity, which was our special effort to address the particular aspects that we believe will help create a positive future. This capstone address was entitled, Multicultural Unity Education and Struggle some Essential Principles and Practices, and featured Dr. Maulana Karenga. In addition to serving as a veteran professor in Africana studies at Cal State, Long Beach, where I first engaged with Maulana, Dr. Karenga is most known as the creator of the pan-African cultural holiday, Kwanzaa. Continue and enjoy the full value and complexity of this episode. We extend our appreciation to all our LEAD sponsors and partners, planners, volunteers and speakers and panelists, production team, affiliates and town hall chapters, and commend them all for lifting their voice and uplifting the plight of Latinos in education. Thank you, gracias, [foreign language].

>> I'd like to share how honored I am because this is our capstone presentation. What does that capstone mean? It's the very last stone you put on when you're building something, it's that last piece. And so, this is why we invite -- invited Dr. Karenga to talk to us, what does it really mean, what does Black and Brown indigenous unity really mean? He's going to -- he's going to share some words with us. For me, it's also a full circle because as a young undergraduate, I was a student in his classroom. [Inaudible] It was at Cal State. So I'd like now to turn this over to Dr. Angela Clark-Louque. Angela is Professor and the Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Technology here at Cal State, San Bernardino. So, Angela, all yours.

[Applause]

>> I am here to introduce to you Dr. Karenga. Dr. Maulana Karenga is Professor and Chair of Africana studies at California State University, Long Beach. He holds two PhDs, one in political science and the other in social ethics, with a focus in classical African ethics of ancient Egypt. An activist scholar of national and international recognition. Dr. Karenga has played a major role in Black intellectual and political culture since the '60s, especially in Black studies, and the Black Power, Black Arts, Million Man March, Day of Absence, and other social movements. He is also the Executive Director of the African American Cultural Center (Us), the Kawaida Institute of Pan-African Studies, and Chair of the National Association of Kawaida Organizations. Moreover, he is the creator of the pan-African cultural holiday, Kwanzaa, and the Nguzo Saba and the author of kawaida philosophy out of which both were conceived and developed. He is also author of numerous scholarly articles and books, including Kwanzaa, A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture, Introduction to Black Studies, Odu Ifa, The Ethical Teachings, Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics, and Kawaida and Questions of Life and Struggle. He is also subject of a new book by Molefi Asante titled Maulana Karenga: An Intellectual Portrait. Currently, he is writing a book on the social and ethical philosophy of Malcolm X titled, The Liberation Ethics of Malcolm X: Critical Consciousness, Moral Grounding and Transformative Struggle. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Karenga.

[Applause]

[Foreign Language]

>> I'd like to dedicate this lecture to a friend of mine who recently passed and rose in radiance, and now sits in the sacred circle of the ancestors, Ratibu Jacocks and his wife Amina Carter Jacocks --

[Applause]

-- for all they've done, all the good they've done in the world. On behalf of my house, Tiamoyo, my wife, my companion, and all things good and beautiful, we say welcome, we -- among us. You will always find your family in a peaceful place. And we wish for you, blessings without number and all good things without end. And we bring you greetings of solidarity and continued struggle to create the good world we all want and deserve to live in. The topic I would like to speak on today and in contribution to this beautiful project that Dr. Enrique Murillo has put together and his colleagues, I would like to give him a warm thanks for this.

[Applause]

Dr. Murillo said that I -- we had known each other at Long Beach. And it's just beautiful to see students that you know, flower and blossom and come into the fullness of themselves and build the bridges we need to create the good country. Our mayor said something about -- asante, asante sana -- our mayor said something about a more

perfect union. Actually, that is a little self-congratulatory, you can't have a more perfect one until you have a perfect one.

[Laughter, Applause]

And I've known him a long time too and I appreciate him. In addition to Dr. Enrique Murillo, I'd like to say muchisimas gracias to my colleague at Long Beach who involved me in this, and also who has been building as you've heard him. And when he spoke just now in the project of, you know, like putting these ethnic studies classes as mandatory for quality education. And we'll talk about it, and that's Dr. Armando Vasquez-Ramos

[Applause]

The topic as you see for my -- did we turn those things on? The topic as you see for my lecture today is multicultural unity, education and struggle, some essential principles and practices, is about the Black and Brown unity and also indigenous unity. Multiculturalism is discussed in a lot of ways, but before we discuss it, we have to talk about the context in which we find ourselves.

[Foreign Language]

I want to talk just a minute, just two minutes, about the world we live in, [foreign language], the world we live in. And it was referred to earlier, but I want you to see how, in fact, we live in a world and in a time in which there's so much mean-spiritedness, which has political madness, in which there is increasing and continuous police violence, in which there is wild cause for mass deportation, for mass incarceration, for dividing families, and for blaming other people for faults of the country. And it's in that context that we're struggling to create free space in which all of us can live the good and reaffirming life we all want and deserve. And sometimes, we get so mushy about where we live, we forget actually the problems that we have to clear free space. And one of the things that we have to do is understand that we struggle in a context of continuing oppression. I know we don't like to say that, we like to talk about it around it, but I want us to talk about things because unless you know the context in which you operate, you cannot actually correct it. And again, build a good society, the just society, the beautiful society we all want and deserve to live in. So let's look at this fundamental proposition, the world we live in requires a radical change to improve human conditions and human relations. The success of our struggle for ethnic studies depends upon us changing human conditions and human relations. It's not a struggle in the abstract, education is not simply a process that happens on this campus. This campus is the brain of society, one of the brain cells of society, but it reflects society. Tell me who's in control here, I'll tell you who's in control in the country. Rescue me if I'm wrong. Tell me the prevailing ideas on this country -- pardon me -- in this country, I tell you the prevailing idea on the campus unless the people are self-conscious about creating a more just and beautiful context in which people. We're struggling around the country about security for students, all around the country. Struggles in Ferguson, in Missouri, right? And all the

places that you can think of, in New York, in Boston, in Baltimore, in Los Angeles, struggling so that young people can walk the streets, just walk the streets, insecurity, to go home and come back without their parents fearing for their lives. How do you discuss ethnic studies or even study outside of a discussion of that? So let's just be clear that we're not just talking about changing ethnic studies in an isolated context, but changing it in a context of oppression in a larger society. Race, class, and gender oppression are continuing problems. And unless we solve them at the same time and confront them at the same time, our success at best will be partial and temporary. The next principle is, we ourselves must build a good world we all want and deserve to live in. We are our own liberators. As I was saying to a group upstairs, the dominant society is our oppressor but we -- pardon me -- the dominant society is responsible for our oppression but we're responsible for our liberation. If we say that society does not recognize us, does not engage us in the way we want, that still leaves the responsibility on us to in fact struggle to change it. And so we ourselves must build a good world we all want and deserve to live in. And we start with the fact that we are oppressed, and the fact that we are natural allies if we recognize that. So that Black and -- I'm sorry, I should have start - - Native American, African, Latino, and Asian has to build an alliance to do this. And it can't be --

[Applause]

-- it cannot simply be an alliance of voice, it must be an alliance of principle and constant practice. It's easy to talk and to make a position but the question is, how much time will you give to it? How much effort will you give to it? And so we ourselves must do this. And the reason I went back and did Native American is because, a lot of times, Native Americans are left out of the conversation altogether. And what has been underemphasized needs to be overemphasized to bring any kind of balance. Rescue me if I'm wrong.

[Applause]

The third point I want to make is that any serious social change must in fact involve principles and practices of multiculturalism and what -- in the most ethical, effective, and expansive ways possible. Now a lot of times when people talk about multiculturalism, they talk about food, fashion, and festival.

>> [Unison] Oh yeah.

>> Right? Dress in clothes for a day, eat some burritos, and soul food, do you understand? Little chow mein, just throw it in to make it nice, some fried bread, do you understand? And have some ceremony and you got it. It's a little bit more than that, okay? Even when you talk about ethnic studies, it's not simply about the way we cook, it must be three basic things, these are our overarching ends. Culture grounding, academic excellence, and social responsibility. Cultural grounding means, we defiantly declare and correctly declare that each of our cultures is worthy of the most careful study, that there's no culture richer than our own, no culture deeper in spiritual and

ethical grounding and insight, and no culture more than our own able comprehensively to provide us with the foundation and framework necessary to direct our lives toward good and expansive ends. We have to take that position, otherwise we're not teaching anything. If our culture doesn't measure up to the best of what it means to be human, then what are we teaching it for? We must value our culture, that's at the heart of ethnic studies. And I'll talk about that in a minute, about what culture is. Academic excellence, we must teach our scholars to be more than fact gatherers. Let's teach them to think critically about the world we want and deserve to live in. As Doboy said, if we teach them just to make money, all we've done is made money makers. We must teach them to be self-conscious, socially responsible, able in fact to imagine a whole way, a whole new way of being human, a whole new way of relating to each other, a whole new way of imagining what it means to live in a world of peace rather than constant war. Teach them to be socially responsible. You know we came into being black studies and ethnic studies came into being in contestation in an argument that we wanted a relevant education. What is a relevant education? One of course that deals with the truth, not with a self-congratulatory narrative the European called curriculum. We were just learning about the Europeans everywhere we went. We could went and read music, we talked about White people. We went in sociology, we talking about White people. Everywhere we went, we talked as if nobody was in the world but White people. Rescue me if I'm wrong. So we said, close this down, you understand? We need to talk. You know what I mean? I mean, I think it's important for you to see that. So we were born in struggle and we were struggling to have a relevant education, one that was truthful but especially one that was useful to improving the condition of human life and building a future worthy of the name human. And you know what, when we did all that, they said, you are all bringing politics into education. Then they discovered they were teaching vulgarly individualistic people that didn't care anything about themselves. And then they came up with something called service learning. That's our whole point of reveling in education. We said -- and Nathan Hale [assumed spelling] said take the community -- take the campus to the community, bring the community to the campus in a mutually beneficial way. Now when they do it, it's service learning, when we do it, it was political.

[Laughter]

I just want you to see the history of these things. But it's good to struggle. A lot of times, people are afraid of struggle. A lot of times, the way I talk, I'm so tense about but I love - - I love debate, do you understand? And I love intellectual exchange, and I believe struggle is good for everybody. And the [inaudible] said that it's not anything wrong with conflict, it's how we conduct ourselves in it. Whether we do it in a principled way or whether we do it in an unprincipled way. And we must not let our oppressor be our teacher, we must do it in a principled way.

[Applause]

I better go on. So we talked about multiculturalism, right? I want to work -- I could give a working definition of multiculturalism. It is thought and practice rooted in profound respect for diverse ways of being human in the world especially in terms of different

cultures, right? We believe that the defining feature of a people or a nation is its culture. That for a people to be itself and free itself, it must be self-conscious, self-determining, and rooted in its own culture. That's just the reality. Otherwise, we are poor examples of ourselves and cockroaches of others. The principles of multiculturalism, okay? Even though it's appreciation of our diversity, diversity principles, and the first and most important because without this we can't even start to talk. And that is mutual respect of each people and culture as a unique and equally valid and valuable way of being human in the world. Do you understand? First notice I said mutual respect. Don't ask me to respect your history and you don't respect mine. I'm not going to sit here and let you talk about how glorious you are, you invented everything including the air and I should be happy to breathe. I'm not going to let you just sit there and say that to me, right? What you want me to respect of you, you've got to respect me or it doesn't work. And we start first above all with respect for each people and culture. Listen to this, as a unique and equally valid and valuable way of being human in the world. This is my way of being human. I'm an African, I don't know how else to be human. So why would they ask me to erase that? Why would you ask me not to say Black, not to say African? What else am I going to say? Confused?

[Laughter]

We have to say who we are. We are Native American. We are African. We are Latino, Latina. We are Asian. And everybody know, we're European, because we grew up learning that. Rescue me if I'm wrong, right? So the reality is that we must see each culture as unique now but it's equally valid and valuable ways of being human in the world. Second, mutual respect for each people's right and responsibility to speak its own special culture truth, and to make its own unique contribution to reconceiving and reconstructing society and the world. Each of us, each of our cultures has a unique and special cultural truth to speak. And each of us has, in our best capacity, the ability to make a unique contribution to how this world is reconceived and reconstructed. We have to reconceive America. America was flawed in its founding. We can't keep lying, and we can't keep quiet. One of the good things about Obama's exit is that we don't have to, you know, not raise these questions because we're afraid we'll sound like the Right people who were criticizing him for racist reasons. You know, for a long time, we didn't want to say nothing because, you know what we don't want to sound like them other people, you understand? But we can't keep talking post-racial. What we got to do is talk post-racism when it happens. See, you can say post-racial but the question is, is it post-racism? And of course, it's neither. But it's clear that it's not post-racist. When even the president is assaulted and slandered in the "hallowed" halls -- hallowed in quotation mark, "hallowed" halls of congress. Can you imagine that? So I just want you to see that we're talking about the need for people to reach inside their own culture and bring the best of what it means to be Native American, African, Latino, Asian, European, and human in the fullest sense, in the fullest sense, okay ? And then, mutual commitment to the constant search for common ground in the midst of our diversity. So we are diverse and we must reaffirm our diversity, but we must also constantly struggle to find and build on common ground. What unites us? We'll talk about that in a minute. And also, fourth, multiculturalism is mutual commitment to an ethics of sharing, shared

status, share knowledge, shared space, shared wealth, shared power, shared interest, and shared responsibility for building the good world we all want and deserve to live in. One of the most important things we can do today is think ethically. Every discipline must have an ethical dimension to it. And every question we raise today has an ethical dimension. Biomedical ethics, computer ethics, right? We can -- political ethics, right? Sustain -- environmental ethics. And African people have the oldest ethical tech. It's one of the reasons I went back to get a second doctorate in ethics, so that I could bring forth those tech not only to enrich and expand the discipline of Black studies or Africana studies but also to engage the major issues of our time. That's a very important thing for us to think and to reflect in ethical ways, because we cannot build a good world if we never talk about ethics. And one of the most important ethical things you do is learn to share. And I know that's difficult in America because sometimes we're taught vulgar individualism. Me and you against the world until I get tired of you then just me, you understand?

[Laughter]

We're taught, this is just mine, you try to get yours. I'm going to get mine even if I have to take it from you. So how do you share in a context like that? But the greatest goods are shared goods. Just think about it, the greater goods, I'm not talking about self-indulgence. You know, you can make yourself feel good, but hey, that's pathetically small. I'm talking about the greater good, right? The greater good, like friendship, shared good, family shared good, marriage shared good, brotherhood shared good, sisterhood shared good, freedom shared good, justice, a shared good. And if anyone gets more of it or only gets it and nobody else does, you know it is violated, it's not even the same thing. There's no real justice if just one people has it. Rescue me if I'm wrong. Education is a shared project. And when we just talk about one people and keep congratulating them and condemning everybody else in the world, how can that be good? It's when we share the process of learning, we each bring something to the table. Don't ask me to come naked in the knee to the table of education, I want to come fully clothed in my own culture, speaking my own special culture too, and making my own unique contribution to the conversation at hand. And I cannot do this if I don't know my culture, if I don't value my culture because I'm taught to disrespect it. Just same way I tell my student, I speak Ebonics, you might have known by now, right? That's a language, that means rule-governed speech. I didn't know I had a language. They kept attacking my -- actually, they couldn't do that with me but they did it with other people.

[Laughter]

Sorry. They did it with other people, they couldn't do it with me. But imagine somebody coming in school, have a different home language than the public language. That public language, okay, we need to learn it, I'm not against that, but I don't have to give up my own. I tell a student, if you didn't understand something I said, then ask me. But I'm not going to get in them, hello, I'm not going to do that.

[Laughter, Applause]

I'm not going to talk like --

[Laughter]

-- I'm not going to talk like somebody else when I'm -- this is me, hey. All right but another thing that bothered me, as you know now, I read four African language and four European -- I should have grown up speaking four African language. People in Africa, they -- and I'm an African by the way [laughter], okay. So people in Africa, they know at least three or four things. In Latin America, the same thing. In Asia, the same thing. Even in Europe. Only in America [laughter] can we brag about knowing one language and forcing everybody else to know it. You remember when they wanted to take down the signs [laughter] in Monterey Park? And it was like -- I was like, I went over there just to see the signs in Chinese.

[Laughter]

It doesn't bother me, even before -- I came out here first, I didn't know Spanish. Well, I came back because I knew it but when I saw it, I just thought, that was beautiful, so many different people. I should like it. When I was in the south, we didn't have a two people, Black people and White people. Then I had to read National Geographic to get a concept of the world, you know what I'm saying? And then when the Puerto Ricans came -- the Puerto Ricans came before I came out here in California, it was just good to see them. You know, they spoke just a little --I'm sorry, still in Spanish. So I said, well let's do -- let me get into Spanish. So I think it's very important for us to appreciate the shared nature of this project we're talking about. And that's why we have to get not only people who are ethnics but also progressive Whites and any other people who have different identities, to fight for what is good and righteous because it increases the quality of education. Our position is that quality education is by definition a multicultural education.

[Applause]

So this ethics of sharing is based on the principle of sharing, and we have to take it as a collective vocation, something we all embrace. And we have to make it a public philosophy, and we also want to make it different from what is called a procedural democracy. People talking about democracy, we live in a democracy, but it's really a procedural democracy. That is to say, it's based on rules. So like for example, if the police follow you and arrest you, even though you haven't done nothing, and then they try you, they give you a lawyer, they read your rights to you and they give you a speedy trial of your peers, if they can find her. Then they -- then they [laughter] -- they call that justice. Even if you're innocent and you were found guilty, they'll say justice was served. But guess what, justice would have been not being followed and profiled, right? And it's really not profiling, it's targeting. Profiling is the science where you think whether somebody is going to go a different way or not. But targeting is you look for them, and you pull them over, right? So that would have been justice, not that. No trial at all would

have been justice. So what is substantive justice? Giving me my due, not just in life but in the education, in the classroom. What is my due? My due is to be respected, and you cannot respect me if you don't respect my culture. And if my culture is not present, you don't respect it. You have to take that position. You can't just take me to lunch, what is that about?

[Laughter]

So yes, yes, yes, we have to share on these several basic lessons for an essence of sharing. The first one is shared status. This is a fundamental principle of human and social relations, and it means a mutual commitment to the dignity and right of the human person. Dennis Banks was saying that, one of the things that we do, we carry a message on this planet about life and it is that life is sacred. It seems simple but it's also complex. We must see life as sacred and must have everybody's life as sacred. And we say Black Lives Matter because people haven't learned that yet. They seem to not realize that, hey, you can't claim you respect human life and then destroy it systematically and systemically and blame it on the victim. And the same way with Native Americans and with Latinos and with Asians, right? And also in a real serious sense, poor Whites. This is a country of wealth, right? Although we have 49 million people in poverty. How do we do that, have such a rich context? We have money to make war but not to make scholars, not for education, but for elimination of periodic and continuing enemies. We have to have shared status, no inferior or superior people. Everybody has equal dignity. And in our culture, in our ancient Egyptian texts in the *Husia*, the sacred text of ancient Egypt, says we are images of divine, that in fact we are bearers of something called dignity, *shepesu* is the word. *Shepesu* means dignity, means the inherent worthiness characterized by three basic things. One, it is transcendent, that is beyond all social, biological attribute, beyond race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ableness, anything. The most important thing is that inherently, you are worthy just by being born, right? You're worthy. And so, no one. Second thing is that it's equal in everybody. It's not only transcendent of all social, biological attributes, it's equal in everybody. And third, it's inalienable, no one can take it away from you. That's an important concept. Look how important that is to the concept of morality and human rights. And yet, without African studies, we don't know that, we don't even discuss that, we just discuss Europe and its conversation with itself. There are a lot of sacred texts in the world, we should know more -- *Popol Vuh* or the Mayans, we can read -- that's a beautiful text, we got to read it, I can't find it. When I grew up, I got tired of reading Europe's literature, but I didn't know we had one in Africa, right? So I started with Asian literature, I just needed a relief, you know what I mean?

[Laughter]

Yeah, so I -- you know, I read Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, so I got grounded there. But I longed for a conversation with our own history, with our own culture. And so I made that one of the fundamental tenets of my philosophy, *Kawaida*, that we must dialogue constantly with African culture, asking the questions and seeking from it, answers to the fundamental issue facing humankind. What does it mean to be a

man or a woman? What does it mean to be human? How do we establish rightful relationship with the environment? How do we treat the stranger, the immigrant, the refugee? How do we treat the poor? That I can find in my own culture, but I had to study to do it on my own. Everybody should know these things, then we have a rich dialogue. You bring what you have from Native America, I bring what I have from Africa, you bring what you have from Latin America, from Latino or Latina culture. And you bring from Asia what you have. And you bring -- I know you already got here, Europe, so we'll -- let's bring Europe off in the conversation and let's have a five-way conversation then.

[Applause]

I'm out of time, so I'm going to just have to go on and do the -- next is shared knowledge. Knowledge must be established as a human right necessary for human development, human flourishing. The ancient Egyptians, our ancestors in Africa, you know, Africa is in -- Egypt is in Africa, in spite of Liz Taylor and Richard Burton movies.

[Laughter]

The word for a human being, one of the words for a human being in ancient Egypt is rekhyt, wise and knowing beings. They said that education is for life. Without education, your life is diminished. So we need education for life. We do education when -- to get knowledge of the world, second, knowledge of ourselves in the world. Third, knowledge of how to function effectively in the world. And four, knowledge to direct our lives toward good and expansive ends. Next, we have to have shared space, and we have to have equitable sharing of this space. We have to share the country. We got to stop scapegoating immigrants. Muslims have a right --

[Applause]

-- Muslims have a right to arrive and come. Latinos have a right to come. Africans have a right. Asians have a right. Anybody has a right to come. How is it -- and that's one of the things I tell my Latino friend, Latino friends, Latina, Latino, Latina.

[Inaudible]

So anyhow, look, look, we have to make immigration more than a Latino, yeah? No one is treated worse than the Haitians, but we have no conversation about the Haitian. So I tell them, we have to work together on these, that widens the conversation and it widens the support. People have to see their interest in the issue being discussed. It's a human issue, but if you leave me out of it then it becomes your issue not mine. I have to be involved like you have to be involved. We have to share the country, but we have to share the neighborhood. Our neighborhoods are transitioning and people getting afraid because guess what, nobody told them who was coming. We used to -- [laughter] this is real, you know. I'm just telling you. And I, you know, I used to tell him, see, I'm -- I said - I told Antonio, I said, Antonio -- when Antonio first ran, you know, we were right in there supporting him. And I said, Antonio, all I want from you at first is that you put

together a Black-Brown taskforce that anticipates issues and is able to effectively intervene to strengthen our relationship rather than diminish it. Oh yes, I am, but he never did, okay? So that's what that person was asking, if you could speak to your life earlier, it wasn't way back to childhood.

[Laughter]

So I just think that it's important. We used to have like welcome wagons. Suppose when the Latinos came, leaders were strong enough to have anticipated that and to have someone to welcome them, someone who spoke Spanish, someone who knew their language and the culture that could make them feel welcome, and then we feel because we are welcoming them in, we're part of this. We're not just one day waking up and, hey. You know, we know what's happening, do you understand? People -- okay I don't have time, but I would like to come back and discuss that, that's a mean issue.

[Applause]

And we have -- we have a time for -- we need environment, we need a shared environment. Corporations don't have the right to the environment, but they'll take it if we don't struggle. To heal and repair the world in the process of healing and repairing ourselves. Real quick, shared wealth. Now this is not communism, right? This is a principle of equitable distribution of wealth, it's based on the understanding that a right of a life and dignity includes a right to a decent life. Don't tell me you honor -- you honor people and you respect their dignity if you deny them the capacity to live a decent life, to take care of themselves, to feed themselves, clothe themselves, shelter them, send their children to school, have healthcare and even recreation because that's what recreation means, recreate ourselves. We need time for that, okay? We need that. And I'm saying like, you know, equitable doesn't mean equal. If you got a million dollars, I don't have to have a million dollars. But if you got \$50 billion and I'm unemployed, we got to talk.

[Applause, Laughter]

The next thing we need is shared power. People have a right to control their destiny in daily life, they have the right to control the space they occupy, and they have a right to share in governance in meaningful ways. Like shared interests, common ground interests in our diversity, the rights and dignity of the human person, the well-being and flourishing of family and community, the environmental integrity, and the reciprocal solidarity of humanity and its cooperation for common good. And finally, shared responsibility that is active commitment and the collective responsibility for building the community and society and world we want and deserve to live in. And this is our conclusion. This is our duty, to know our past and honor it, to engage our present and improve it, and to imagine a whole new future and to forge it in the most ethical, effective, and expansive way. This is the message from the ancestors, from every culture that wanted the best for its people and told them to continue to move on. This is it, continue the struggle, keep the faith, hold the line, love and respect our people and

each other, seek and speak truth, do and demand justice, be constantly concerned with the well-being of the world and all in it. And rebuild the movement that pre-figures that makes possible the good society and world we all want and deserve to live in and pass on to future generations. Remember, juntos venceremos. Together, we will win. Pamoja tutashinda. Pamoja tutashinda. That's Swahili, asante.

[Applause, Cheering]

[Applause]

>> Thank you so much, Dr. Karenga for those powerful words, very meaningful, we appreciate that. We're going to take time to just get a few questions one or two questions, if you have any questions for Dr. Karenga from the audience. Okay, she's got a microphone.

>> Hi, I grew up in a Texas border town and I remember in high school, after school, sometimes, several times a month, we would get very excited because there was going to be a fight. The fight was between the Browns and the Blacks. And many years later, I understood what we were doing sort of instinctively and without thinking. We had been programmed to go after each other, to fight for scraps. You know, we, as young humans, we didn't understand that we had been set up by an oppressor to go after each other for what were mere, you know, just scraps off the table. I'm very fearful of this current moment because there's a demagogue who's talking about building an iron curtain between Mexico and this country, who's provoking and baiting people to go after vulnerable families and deport them.

>> Yes.

>> And it's a wedge issue that I'm very fearful of because I think they're -- we have to have discussions between our communities. Because if we don't, those fights that I, in my little microcosm lived, could become very widespread because people don't understand what's behind it. And I'm wondering, you brought up the issue of immigration and I'm very honored to be here today in your company because I grew up hearing your name, el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz is one of my heroes. And I know what we have learned mutually, our cultures, our struggles, that's just what I wanted to post.

>> Appreciate what you said if I understand correctly. Just to reaffirm that immigration is an important issue because of the humanitarian aspect of it, because of the justice aspect of it, and because it's being kicked around like a football to win elections, to make white people insecure and to reaffirm some White people's concept that they should rule, and that this is somehow their country. See, one of the things -- and I was rushing, I wanted to say this is that another thing about multicultural education is it challenged the notion that this is a White -- this country is a White finished product instead of an unfinished ongoing multicultural project. If it's --

[Applause]

-- if it's a White finished product, then people say we're disturbing it. In fact, Arthur Schlesinger wrote in the '70s, early '80s -- in the '80s. He wrote a book, the Federal Express printed, said that me and Molefi and -- Dr. Molefi Asante, myself and other like me that was arguing for -- like us that were arguing for multiculturalism were disrupting and dividing America. The point was dividing America. I said, man, don't blame history on me. George Washington -- George Washington and Thomas Jefferson had a chance to unite the world, decided instead to enslave much of it, to commit genocide against the Native Americans. And as they moved further West, running into the Mexicans to dispossess them, to brutally exploit the labor of the Asians, the Chinese at first. So don't blame history on me, I have always had -- our people have always had an inclusive agenda, not an exclusive or narrow one. It is the White agenda that has been narrow and exclusive and racist. And what we have to do is, like I was saying earlier, is ask what is our common ground? If you really believe that immigration is a serious issue, ask what common grounds would Black people have with it? What would Asians have with it? What would Native America -- that's a Native American immigration issue, right? The Mohawks are divided in Canada and in the U.S. The Yaqui are divided in Mexico and this country. Hey, there's a lot of people that could be involved in this discussion. Yes, these people were wronged, they're mad and wow. You know, look, a national registry for Muslims, right? What kind of conversation is that? Okay, mass deportation, division of families, who could be sane and ethical and believe in that? Right? But the question is how do we approach that, how do we resist that? Do we resist it united or do we resist it divide? I say let's do it together. Again, juntos venceremos. That's what we said in the '60s, that's what we say now.

[Applause]

>> Thank you. Do we have another question?

>> Right here.

>> Oh, okay.

>> The mic's -- okay, we have one question back here, yes.

>> Yes.

>> It's not really a question, Dr. Karenga, just wanted to give you heartfelt thank you for all your wisdom that you shared today. I applaud you, again, everyone.

>> Thank you.

>> My name is Dr. Barbara Flores and I am the current president of the California Latino School Boards Association.

>> Okay.

>> This is my colleague.

>> My name is Jesus Holguin, I am a school board member in Moreno Valley Unified School District, the immediate past president of the California School Boards Association.

>> Good.

>> Also, treasurer.

>> Very good.

>> Give them a hand.

[Applause]

>> Also, treasurer of the California Latino School Boards Association. And I'm glad you said that united we stand.

>> Yes.

>> We want to invite you to be one of the keynote speakers at our unity conference in September 8th through 11th in Del Mar, where Latino, Black, Asian, and Native American school board members come together as well as White European.

>> I look forward to it, talk to Tiamoyo, she is over there.

>> All right.

>> Give her your card, I'll be glad to do that. Thank you for the invitation.

>> Our school board members need to hear your wisdom, so thank you.

>> Thank you, you're much too kind.

[Applause]

>> Let's do one -- we could do one more.

>> You want to do one more?

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you so much for your presentation.

>> Thank you.

>> My name is Patricia Luna, I'm the president of Bi-National Parent Leadership Institute. I'm a parent, I'm a volunteer and I'm very engaged with my community and with our students. And I like to say that when you talk about deportation, that is the topic that really touched my heart, because we have various cases in our community where our parents have been separated from their family.

>> Yes.

>> And then we see the little ones growing without a father because the fathers is in TJ. And the mother is here traveling every weekend with the kids to TJ. And I'm happy that you mentioned and you bring these topics to the table because everybody has to know that. I know everybody knows that we're here to work. But you know what, sometimes it seems like everything is going against the immigration -- the immigrants. But one thing that I can say is that, it doesn't kill us, it make us stronger.

>> Yes.

>> Because I went through the same situation, and I was about to be deported. And because of my immigration status, I couldn't get the job that I -- that allowed me to take care -- good care of my family. But you know what? That obligated me to be a creator, that obligated me to create my own business, a small business, a family business, that allowed me to watch my -- over my kids and allow me to engage with the community. So if the government think that this is going to bring us back to the -- our country, they're very wrong because we're here and we're staying. But we also -- we're getting empowered, and we want to empower others to do the same as we did. If they don't allow us to work legally, well then, we create our own business and our business around the community. Please look for it because we want to be the same as the others in this country, we want to have the same rights. I know maybe we violated the law, but we're here anyway. I'm here 20 years ago, my two kids are in university. And you know how precious to me to say -- hearing you to say we better be united because that's why we're here, we want to be united. Thank you so much.

>> Thank you so much.

[Applause]

>> I really want to stress that it is a rare person in meetings like this that does not believe we should be united. But the question is, why aren't we, and how do we remember the conversation we had today and use it as part of a program to unite? Let's take for example, the deportation issue, is there anybody else in the country being deported? Is anybody else's family being divided? We need a collective voice about this, right? And we need an activity. We have to work together, and we have to struggle together. Struggle unites people, binds them, you have to sacrifice to struggle. But struggle is a good thing. We say in Kawaida philosophy, struggle is one of the most

characteristic aspect of the human personality. We struggle to come into being, that's called birth. We struggle to make the most out of being, that's called life. And we struggle not to go out of being, that's called the quest for immortality. So we must struggle. Capitalism wants cheap labor, they want your labor but not your presence, imagine that. You don't have the right of presence, they deny you the right of presence, although they exploit your labor. They like cheap labor, they like vulnerable labor. And we have to create a society where that's not real, that doesn't work, and we can resist it effectively. And that means challenging your leaders to meet with the Black community and sometimes maybe you have to go around the leaders and create some other kind of organization, right? You can call me by the way, you know what I'm saying?

[Laughter, Applause]

You have to create a new way of relating because what is going on is not being effective. So I want to just close out, I know it's time and thanks for -- to, I mean Dr. Murillo, for giving me extra time to talk to you all, because I know I went a little longer. It's hard for me to do 20 minutes, you know that.

[Laughter]

So I thank you and I say in my language --

[Foreign Language]

Which means thanks, many thanks. And compared to the many times we say thanks, the grains -- the number of grains on the seashore -- the number of grains of sand on the seashore or field. So thanks very much for that. And again remember, juntos venceremos, pamoja tutashinda.

[Applause]

>> Dr. Karenga, we're going to ask you if you could step forward. Can you help me out here? If we can all stand up, we want to honor this gentleman. Dr. Karenga. For your commitment to education, to humanity. For making us more human. For making us more human. Your advocacy, activism, scholarship. For they embody the ideals that drawing from your legacy have strengthened our families, have strengthened our communities, our values, and our cultures. We would like to award you our lead education and advocacy medallion of honor.

[Applause]

>> Real quick

[Laughter]

I like to say that, again, I accept this in honor of Ratibu Jacocks and Amina Carter first, who always wanted me to come here and speak.

[Applause]

I accept it also in terms of my mother and father. You know, in African culture, as in -- I'm sure in your culture also, but in African culture, we're taught never to claim any success by ourselves, that all we are is a result of the goodness given to us by others. And so I thank my mother and father who brought me into being and set me on a righteous role of rising. I thank my brothers and sisters who nurtured me, continued to teach me, walked before me and opened paths for me. I thank my wife, my friend, my companion and all things good and beautiful, Tiamoyo. And I thank my organization, Us, for giving me the intellectual context and material support for becoming who I am. I thank my colleagues who intellectually challenged me. And finally, I thank my people who created this wonderful culture, this life-affirming, dignity-affirming life-enhancing beautiful culture.

END – 01:00:21