

Celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. in 2023

Syracuse, NY, January 23rd, 2023 On Sunday, January 22nd, the 38th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. S.U. Celebration was attended by almost 2,000 people dining inside the huge Syracuse University Dome in Central NY. It was an evening of great celebration and reunion, especially for the Black community members and churches of Syracuse, ending a three year COVID hiatus. This year the attendees enjoyed a different twist to the event. Highlights of Dr. King's message of anti-militarism were shared through flyers and a banner in solidarity with the celebration.



Dinner attendees were delighted. Applause erupted, and some of the 200 tables of ten gave standing ovations, as a banner was carried through the cheering crowd reading *"The greatest purveyor of violence in the world is my own government."* Almost 2,000 flyers with quotes from Dr. King were given to people as they approached the Dome walking through snow to the event.

Flyers read, Celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

...I Cannot be Silent

Dr. King could not be silent and neither can we be silent about US wars and destruction around the world, most recently in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Ethiopia, Somalia, The Congo, and now Ukraine.

*Along with his defiance against racism and his support for the working class, Dr. King decried US imperial wars around the world. In 1967, exactly one year before his death, he gave his famous speech, "**Beyond Vietnam, A Time to Break Silence.**"*

He said, "I knew I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today – my own government."

He went on to say, "A true revolution of values will lay hand on the world order and say of war, "This way of handling differences is not just."....A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

And, "Every nation must now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best of individual societies. ...We can no longer afford to worship the god of hate or bow before the altar of retaliation."

No to Weaponized Drones! No Nuclear Weapons! Build Roads and Schools, not deadly weapons. Housing and Medical care for all! Create jobs not weapons; love not war.

Because the economy runs on war, Rev Martin Luther King Jr.'s identification of militarism as one of the triplets of evil in

our culture is often set aside to focus on racism and poverty. Lets not break the circle.

At the largest university campus entertainment structure in the United States last night, the ugly face of militarism was raised beside it's evil brethren, poverty and racism. Dr. King could no longer remain silent. Neither can we. Last night, there was joy in holding Dr. King's message in it's fullness among almost two thousand at Syracuse University Dome.

Thanks to members of the Syracuse Peace Council, Upstate Drone Action, Pax Christi, Ithaca Catholic Workers, Veterans for Peace Chapter 90, and Peace Action of NYS for for joining us.