

"Queen Mother" Moore



(1898-1997)

Those who seek temporary security rather than basic liberty deserve neither...

My bones are tired. Not tired of struggling, but tired of oppression.

Our purpose in life is to leave a legacy for our children and our children's children. For this reason, we must correct history that at present denies our humanity and self-respect.

Queen Mother Moore

Initially inspired by Marcus Garvey's emphasis on African pride and culture, she waged battle on the Black Nationalist, Communist and Pan-Africanist fronts. In keeping with her credo, *"There was nothing left to do but struggle,"* her list of activities defies enumeration.

Impressed by the Communist Party's role as the vanguard in the defence of the Scottsboro Boys, she joined the party. However, she left when she realized that the party could or would not translate its ideas about black self-determination into action.

In 1955, she joined a small band of activists demanding reparations for slavery and its insidious legacy which has permeated black lives up to this day. During Black History Month 2002, on February 6, the Queen Mother Moore Reparations Resolution for Descendants of Enslaved Africans in New York City bill was submitted to the City Council.

Spanning an era from the heyday of Marcus Garvey to the second coming of Nelson Mandela, our Warrior Queen waged war on the hydra of black oppression whenever it raised an ugly head. It can definitely be said, in deference to Mandela, that the struggle was truly her life.

Queen Mother Moore's long career in service to African Americans provides an example of a consummate community organizer and activist. Born and raised in Louisiana, Moore became a member of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and a follower of Marcus Garvey in 1919. Through Garvey she was first exposed to African history. Moore and her family moved to Harlem along with the flood of southern migrants during the 1920s. Here she founded the Harriet Tubman Association to assist black women workers. Moore also used the Communist Party as a vehicle for achieving her aims. Impressed with its work on the Scottsboro case, she used the information and skills she acquired through the party to address the needs of the Harlem community by organizing rent strikes, fighting evictions, and taking other actions. Eventually, the racism she encountered in the party moved Moore to resign.

The major theme of Moore's career was developing a Pan-African consciousness. From Garvey through involvement with the National Council of Negro Women to Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity, Moore emphasized knowledge of and pride in African history and its African-American connections. She brought this to the fore in her campaign for reparations, begun in 1955, as she did in founding other institutions in the black community. Among these were the World Federation of African People and a tribute to her sister in the Eloise Moore College of African Studies in Mount Addis Ababa, New York. She was also one of the founders of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church of North and South America, of which she was an arch abbess. Moore received the title Queen Mother of the Ashanti people when in Ghana on one of her many trips to Africa.