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Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Essay

Sir Henry Taylor: The Bahamian Diamond in the Rough

There is one jewel in the world which is more precious than silver and more valuable than gold. The purity and impeccability of this jewel has long fascinated mankind. Top ‘jewelers’ worldwide have aptly named this phenomenon a ‘champion of equality’. A champion of equality refers to an individual who is willing to stand up for the belief that ‘all men are equal’ and is thus deserving of the basic human rights. Throughout the course of Bahamian history, there has been one individual bold enough to display this attitude. This is none other than the late Sir Henry Taylor.

The late Sir Henry Taylor was a Long Islander who later became a lawyer and the Governor General of The Bahamas. Due to his light skin color, Taylor did not suffer the stigma of being 'black'; nevertheless, his thirst for equality led him to found the first Bahamian political party. Taylor began the movement towards independence.

Taylor's story teaches many lessons applicable in anyone's life. Primarily, Taylor's story teaches that a champion of equality must always work without expecting reward. As founder of the PLP, Taylor bore many burdens. For instance, Henry Taylor led the first citizen delegation to London from The Bahamas, and he was instrumental in Pindling's election. Taylor accomplished numerous feats, yet did not seek laudation. He was humble. Moreover, Henry Taylor fought for a cause which did not directly affect him. Though a white Bahamian, Taylor sacrificed his privileges to fight for others.

In addition, Taylor's life teaches that one should fight for what they believe in despite the unpopularity of the view. His delegation of 1960 illustrates this clearly. In 1960, Taylor was accompanied by Dame Dr. Dorris Johnson for the purpose of delegating women rights in London. At that time, it was unusual for a male to stand up alongside a female to advocate for this law. Taylor was not a woman; however, he bravely stood on their behalf. As Martin Luther King once quoted, "our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter." Taylor was not silenced, he spoke out.

Taylor's legacy has greatly impacted my judgment as I act as an agent of change for my community. Through following his footsteps, I have seen the benefits of standing as a champion before challenges even if I am not recognized. For instance, last October, I had to stand before the US Department of State to represent The Bahamas as Youth Ambassador. Immediately, I was

worried of others opinions. Despite this, I was comforted remembering how Taylor was in similar situations, yet he maintained his determined demeanor. Thus, I boldly stood.

Bold. Humble. Determined. Courageous. Champion. These are only a few words with can describe the late Sir Henry Taylor. Being the pioneers of true democracy in our country, without Taylor there could be no PLP and, by extent, no independent Bahamas. Sir Henry Taylor arguably has been the most impactful leader who has ever marched on this Bahamaland.