

Dear David,

10/19/91

Slow reader that I am, I've gotten only to page 95 in your "Malcolm X" book. It is a good and worthwhile job that I think will be of continuing use and value after its shelf life ends. I hope the publisher makes an effort to get attention to it in such publications as library journals one of which I think has this name.

I think Carson's essay is fine and I'm glad that he indicates that he and King were beginning to draw together. ^{out}With access to this material I had reached that conclusion in about 1969. I now do not recall why. What happened once when I articulated this may be of interest to you including as a reflection of how some black militants felt about Malcolm ^I some years after he was killed.

When my ^{Frame-}Parent-^{Up} appeared ^I got some kind of an award from a woman's group in New York City. Flo Kennedy, a leader in it, made the award. In speaking I said, among other things, like that "Malcolm and King were drawing together before Malcolm was killed, and then said that like King, Malcolm was not killed until his capacity for leadership had increased and that he had changed some of his policies, as King also had, that had the effect of widening his appeal to blacks.

When I said that one of the important changes Malcolm made was in his attitude toward women, that it had been sexist, which tended to discourage and alienate women, and that with the change he had broadened his base of appeal, Flo interrupted me indignantly to say that Malcolm had never been sexist. I did not argue with her but I do recall that it amused me.

If you do not know her, Flo is a very militant black lawyer. She had an apartment on 39th Street just east of Fifth Avenue, as I remember. She among other things is the executor of Billie Holiday's estate. and can she be shocking, which I think she intends when she is.

In the late 1960s she and I shared a platform in Central Park at a meeting arranged by a small group interested in the JFK assassination. I followed her and that was not easy for a number of reasons, including that she had much to say. The only thing I remember of what she said is that it was probably the most profane speaking I'd ever heard. Including to now. and in college and in the army.

I still do not understand that an exceptionally intelligent and militant black woman could not see that there was a time when Malcolm was sexist. I then wondered why.

If you know nothing of her she was counsel in one of the early abortion cases. Quite a gal! (For my generation this is not sexist!)

I hope you have good luck with the book. It deserves it!

Best,

Harold