

Seattle Voices: Aaron Roberts

Item 8145

Speaker: Dustin Washington (local activist and event organizer)

Dustin Washington: I want to say tonight, that the issue of police murder, or racial profiling will take a long term movement. If we're going to bring any change, any real systemic change, around how the police treat Black people, and other people of color and the poor, then we're going to need people to be in this until we win.

[applause]

Dustin Washington: All too often, when a crisis occurs, we become reactionary, we want to get in the streets and yell and scream, but we're never to be found, when it's time for a long time--long term and, sometimes boring, work. Real social change does not come from loud and empty rhetoric. It does not come from oversized egos. It comes from ordinary people who are willing to work together for a common cause in the spirit of unity.

[applause]

Dustin Washington: Real social changes also calls for a plan. A comprehensive plan, not created from emotions, but created in a thoughtful and rational manner. But none of what I'm saying will mean anything, if we don't work together. Last Wednesday, at the march, we had people who took their personal time to organize the event. People invested their blood, sweat, and tears, simply because they love justice. And they love each of you. And it was not just people from this community. It was white people, Asians, Latinos, and Native Americans who helped us and we should respect that help from people, and 99% of people there did. We had some folks in the crowd drinking alcohol, cussing in front of children, disrespecting women, and disrespecting the organizers of the march. And not only was that disrespectful to the organizers, but also, it only takes one incident to discredit everything we're fighting for. So, if those of us who want justice can't respect and work together in unity, then we don't deserve justice. To be revolutionary, is more than changing the system. We also have to change ourselves. And as I have already said, we have to have more than anger. We have to have a plan. And tonight, we're going to present a plan to you that is good. A plan that hits the City where it hurts: in their pocketbooks. And I promise you, that if we support this plan, we will see some change about how police treat people in our City. Then Aaron Roberts death will not be in vain and the darkness of his death will open up the door for life and redemption for our future generations to come. We are at a great moment of possibility. We have a chance to bring forth a new dawn to the City and change how the police treat people. But we have to work together.

[applause]