

***Today in Black History -February 6 ***

1810 - The Argentine national hero from Buenos Aires, Argentina, Antonio Ruiz (El Negro Falucho) joins the ancestors, fighting for his country.

1820 - The first organized emigration back to Africa begins when 86 free African Americans leave New York Harbor aboard the Mayflower of Liberia. They are bound for the British colony of Sierra Leone, which welcomes free African Americans as well as fugitive slaves.

1867 - The Anglo-American merchant George Peabody founds the \$ 2million Peabody Education Fund. It is the first philanthropy established in the wake of the Civil War to promote free public education in 12 Civil War devastated southern states for whites and African Americans. The Peabody Fund will provide funding for construction, endowments, scholarships, teacher and industrial education for newly freed slaves.

1898 - Haywood Hall is born in South Omaha, Nebraska. After relocating to Minneapolis, Minnesota with his family, he will join the U.S. Army. He will serve with the 370th Infantry in France during World War I. Returning to Chicago, Illinois after the war; he will be active as a Black Nationalist, becoming a member of the African Blood Brotherhood and the Communist Party of the USA. In 1925, he will adopt the pseudonym, Harry Haywood. He will be a leading proponent of Black Nationalism, self-determination, and the idea that American Blacks are a colonized people who should organize themselves into a nation. From 1926 to 1930, he will study in the Soviet Union, where he will meet several anti-colonial revolutionaries, including Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh. On his return to the U.S. in 1931, he will be chosen to lead the Communist Party's Negro Department, and in 1934 will be elected a member of its politburo. The Spanish Civil War will take him to Spain in 1937, where he will fight in a volunteer Communist brigade against General Francisco Franco's fascist regime. During World War II, his belief in black self-determination and territorial autonomy will put him at odds with Communist Party policy, which had gravitated away from support for a Black nation in the American south. His agitation on "The Negro Question" led to his expulsion from the Party in 1959. He will remain in Chicago, supporting Black Nationalist movements such as the Nation of Islam. He will publish "Negro Liberation" (1948), a detailed analysis of the national character of Black oppression, particularly in the South. In his later years he will write his memoirs, "Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist" (1978). Harry Haywood's greatest contribution will be his central role in developing theoretical understanding of the Black nation in the United States. He will join the ancestors in January, 1985.

1898 - Melvin B. Tolson, author and educator, is born in Moberly, Missouri. Educated at Fisk, Lincoln, and Columbia Universities, his first volume of poetry, "Rendezvous with America," will be published in 1944. He will be best known for "Libretto for the Republic of Liberia," published in 1953.

1931 - The Harlem Experimental Theatre Group performs its first play at St. Philips Parish House. The group's advisory board includes famed actress Rose McClendon, author Jesse Fauset, and Grace Nail.

1933 - Walter E. Fauntroy is born in Washington, DC. He will become a civil rights leader and minister. He will later become the non-voting delegate to the United States Congress for the District of Columbia from 1971 to 1991.

1945 - Robert Nesta Marley is born in St. Ann, Jamaica to Captain Norval and Cedella Marley. He will become a successful singer along with his group, The Wailers. Bob Marley and The Wailers were among the earliest to sing Reggae, a blend of Jamaican dance music and American Rhythm & Blues with a heavy dose of Rastafarianism, the Jamaican religion that blends Christian and African teachings. He will join the ancestors in 1981 at the age of 36, succumbing to cancer. As a result of his accomplishments, he will be awarded Jamaica's

Order Of Merit, the nation's third highest honor, (April, 1981) in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the country's culture. He will be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1991.

1950 - Natalie Cole is born to Nat "King" and Maria Cole. She will follow in her famous father's footsteps and become a recording star. She will become a Grammy Award-winning singer and Best New Artist in 1975.

1961 - The "jail-in" movement starts in Rock Hill, South Carolina, when arrested students demand to be jailed rather than pay fines.

1993 - Arthur Ashe, tennis champion, joins the ancestors at the age of 49. He succumbs from complications of AIDS, contracted from a transfusion during an earlier heart surgery.