

# UHURU!

FREEDOM  
September 9 1996



**I am only one person.**

**What can I do?**

Rosa Parks was just one person.

She said one word. She said it on December 1, 1955.

One person said one word.

She said it on a bus.

She said it to the bus driver on the Cleveland Street bus in Montgomery.

The bus driver said, "Stand up, Nigger Woman, and give up your seat to that white man!"

Rosa Parks, one woman, said one word.

The word was, "NO!"

One woman said one word

and a nation blushed!

One woman said one word and a world talked!

One woman said one word and the Supreme Court acted!

One woman said one word and the buses were desegregated!

*I am only one person.*

What can only one person do?

One woman said one word and 17,000 people walked.

--Maya Angelou

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Movements arise out of necessity, not out of a kind of intellectual grasping, but out of necessity, out of a felt, perceived necessity that people feel within themselves. It is the nature of an oppressed people to want to resist that oppression, to resist that repression, to resist that suppression. As long as there is oppression there has to be resistance.

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--Mumia Abu-Jamal,  
U.S. political prisoner

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## FROM THE SEPTEMBER 29th MOVEMENT:

One reaction to The September 29th Movement's campaign to rename Carrie Chapman Catt Hall during Spring Semester '96 was not unexpected, but it indicated the powerlessness that permeates society today. Many people - most? - no longer believe in themselves, or their own capacity to bring about change. Consequently, they saw our determination to have Catt Hall renamed as a quixotic adventure doomed to fail. Inevitably, someone would approach a Movement member and say, "You don't *really* believe they're going to change the name, do you?"

Well, yes, we do.

First of all, Movement members don't have time and energy to waste on exercises in futility. We also understand that change does not depend on the few in the administration hierarchy, it depends on The September 29th Movement and the ISU community, after they have been informed and educated about the issues involved. The Movement believes an informed community will develop into a politically conscious and aware community. As our position becomes known to more members of the ISU community, we feel confident that positive change will follow.

Change begins in one's spirit. Spirit in turn affects one's mind and feelings, and causes one to take action. If the spirit's not willing, the flesh is less than weak, it's dormant. Conversely, if the spirit infuses one - anyone - with the certainty of change, then behavior to bring about change will result.

A major historical event illustrates this point and The September 29th Movement holds it up as a shining paradigm of what is possible. It is the example of Montgomery, Alabama, in the year 1955.

Segregation - apartheid, U.S.-style - dominated the lives of African-Americans then, enforced both by law and custom. Defiance, real or imagined, could - and frequently did - result in death.

On December 1, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to obey a law that said she must surrender her seat on a bus to a white person upon demand. Today, it's difficult to remember she was simply an anonymous black woman then whose spirit refused to accept the unacceptable. She was *you* and *me* then, not a civil rights legend, an icon to be revered. It's reasonable to say she probably had no idea of the far-ranging consequences of her action. Mrs. Parks simply did the right thing, even in the face of violating the law.

At that time, almost no one - black, brown, red or white - believed that segregation would end in the foreseeable future. It's important to realize that in 1955 - a mere 40 years ago - slavery or segregation had been the *only* relationship between white and black Americans since the first African unwillingly stepped ashore in 1619. No one seriously believed the defiant Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) would defeat the city of Montgomery, a bastion of racism, and gain black people the simple right to ride in dignity on buses anywhere they pleased. The MIA sprang into existence to support Mrs. Parks, headed by a young and unknown Baptist preacher named Martin Luther King Jr.

Although no one else believed, the MIA believed. More than 90 percent of black Montgomeryites stayed off the buses, day after day after day. (It wasn't 100 percent because there are always going to be some, you know?) Of course, we all know the outcome. Resistance to the odious Jim Crow laws enforcing segregation grew and the laws fell throughout the South, forcing the U.S. government to finally obey its Constitution.

So when members of The September 29th Movement are told

that Iowa State University (ISU) won't rename Carrie Chapman Catt Hall, when we're told that the abysmal state of the Cultural Studies programs at ISU won't change, when we're told that retention rates and other conditions won't change for minorities at ISU, we smile.

So when members of The September 29th Movement are told that Iowa State University (ISU) won't rename Carrie Chapman Catt Hall, when we're told that the abysmal state of the Cultural Studies programs at ISU won't change, when we're told that retention rates and other conditions won't change for minorities at ISU, we smile.

We smile and remember Montgomery. Like them, we know we can change things.

*We will change things.*

Milton McGriff

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The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.

--Steven Biko

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## POSITION PAPER

For The September 29th  
Movement  
by  
Milton McGriff

During Spring Semester '96, as The September 29th Movement began its drive to rename Carrie Chapman Catt Hall, we heard many students, faculty and staff members ask questions and express opinions about why the Movement was doing what it was doing.

A newspaper columnist accused us of having self-serving motives and said the Movement's goals would pit African-Americans against white women. Other critics pointed to Catt's achievements and said the Movement

was holding a woman to a different standard than past racist leaders such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, both of whom have myriad streets, schools and even cities named after them. Catt was not a bad person, simply a product of her time, when racism was acceptable (!) to people (presumably white Americans of her day), some said. Still others said all leaders are flawed, and so on.

We hope this paper will clarify the position of The September 29th Movement and explain our motives. We hope open-minded observers of the conflict over the name of Catt Hall will come away from these pages with clarity, understanding and possibly even support for our position. Staunch supporters of keeping Catt's name on the building will probably not be swayed.

Catt Hall *will* be renamed in the very near future. The only question unanswered is the date.

\*

Catt Hall was dedicated on Oct. 6, 1995. During the year preceding the dedication, one voice on the Women's Week Committee planning the dedication ceremonies raised a crucial question - and for the Movement, a relationship-defining one: SHOULD IOWA STATE STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF BE CONSULTED ABOUT CATT'S VIEWS BEFORE GOING AHEAD WITH THE DEDICATION?

For Celia Naylor-Ojurongbe, the lone voice who raised the question, the answer was a resounding and unqualified "yes." Naylor-Ojurongbe, the director of the Sloss House Women's Center, felt strongly that naming the building after Catt would send a negative message that ISU didn't intend.

During her successful campaign to get the 19th Amendment passed, Catt made many racist, xenophobic and classist remarks as part of a "Southern strategy" that was discussed at length in the August 1996 issue of UHURU!. (Nineteen years after the amendment's passage, she made degrading remarks

about immigrants that indicated she hadn't changed all that much, that her xenophobia was alive and well.) Naming the hall after Catt would be offensive to many students, faculty and staff, Naylor-Ojurongbe told the organizers, even if \$5 million had been raised in Catt's name.

The organizers didn't listen. To put it bluntly, raising \$5 million in Catt's name had a higher priority than the feelings of the ISU community. This decision to forego discussion was made at a time when the ISU administration trumpeted loudly to anyone who would listen that they encouraged and supported racial diversity at the university.

The September 29th Movement says the ISU administration erred in two ways. The first mistake was arrogance. They arrogantly ignored reasonable requests - not demands - for public forums to discuss the wisdom, or lack thereof, of renaming Old Botany after Catt. Only in the Spring Semester 1996 did the administration get around to sponsoring public discussions, *after* the birth of The September 29th Movement and the resulting agitation. It should be noted that President Martin Jischke failed to make an appearance at any of the forums. Apparently the issue was not - and is not - important enough to warrant his attention.

The second mistake was hypocrisy, and it preceded the first. While stating the university's intention to promote and increase racial diversity, the administration deliberately chose to honor a woman who, despite her considerable accomplishments, demeaned virtually anyone who wasn't a white U.S. citizen.

The September 29th Movement firmly believes the administration's arrogance and hypocrisy must be checked immediately, or both ugly traits will continue to raise their ugly heads in the future.

In a letter to the September 29th Movement, Dr. Martin Jischke stated:

... [M]y view remains firm that the building should continue to bear Carrie Chapman Catt's name. As an Iowan, an important national historical figure, and an alumnae of Iowa State University, it is appropriate for the building to bear her name. In doing so, we are not endorsing every view she held. Nor are we ignoring the regrettable words she uttered during the women's suffrage movement.

#### OUR RESPONSE TO DR. JISCHKE:

As far as we know, Dr. Jischke has refused to recommend a name change for Catt Hall based solely on the reasons stated above.

The September 29th Movement has never denied that Catt is an important historical figure, nor have we minimized her contributions. For us, this is a non-issue. We *have* stated - correctly - that her considerable work on behalf of the 19th Amendment was beneficial only to disenfranchised white women. Disenfranchised women of color waited nearly an additional half century for the right to vote, the 19th Amendment notwithstanding.

Catt did not help all women to vote. She did not help American Indians, who were reeling from the genocidal onslaught of the U.S.' "Manifest Destiny" - a euphemistic phrase suspiciously similar in sentiment to Nazi Germany's "Final Solution." She did not help African-Americans, who risked being lynched for going to the polls, especially in the South. She did not help Latinos and immigrants, who were degraded (and still are) by those in Catt's social strata.

As far as Catt being an Iowan, we must ask: so what? There are Iowans of all colors who don't feel she should be honored. Is she the only Iowan woman ISU could find?

Further, is Dr. Jischke telling us this is the only female alumnae who can be so honored? Why not the first American Indian woman to graduate

from ISU? Why not a progressive white woman? Why not the first Latina? Why not the first African-American woman? Why not *all* women who have graduated from ISU?

Dr. Jischke's words may say they are not endorsing Catt's views, but the administration's behavior says otherwise. The administration knew of Catt's racist, xenophobic and classist views when they dedicated the building in her name. When they *deliberately* chose not to gauge the opinion of their constituency - students, faculty and staff - this was tantamount to an endorsement of Catt and a curt dismissal of the feelings of the ISU community.

As far as not "ignoring her regrettable words" goes, Dr. Jischke and the administration tried to do exactly that during Spring Semester 96. But The September 29th Movement wouldn't let them.

#### CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT WAS "A PRODUCT OF HER TIME"

"Give the woman a break," some people say. "White supremacy and racism was a way of life in the United States then." When The September 29th Movement marched to Catt Hall last March 6, the ISU spokesman told a Channel 8 reporter that racism was more acceptable in Catt's time, not realizing his own racism was showing.

"The leaders of the [women's suffrage] movement had to make some difficult choices and they did indeed employ some strategies that would be considered racist by today's standards," said ISU spokesman John Anderson. "But that was in yesterday and that was not today."

Because Anderson was undoubtedly speaking for white privilege, he seemed to say that Catt's abominable strategies were not racist by yesterday's standards. Well, if you're talking about acceptable to the Ku Klux Klan, her strategies were probably not considered racist. If you extend his logic, Adolph Hitler's genocidal practices

were fascist by today's standards, "but that was in yesterday and not today." Make no mistake, white Americans in Catt's time were viewed by people of color the same way Nazis were viewed by Jewish people in the 1930s and 1940s.

White supremacy and racism have *never* been acceptable to black, red, brown, yellow and progressive white peoples. Never. During the worst days of slavery, conquest or imperialistic domination, **WHITE SUPREMACY AND RACISM WERE ABHORRENT AND UNACCEPTABLE!**

Catt may have been a product of her time but she had a choice, and her choice said getting the vote for white women was more important than standing united with her sisters of color. She could have done what Jessie Daniels Ames did.

Ames, a white woman from Texas, worked in the woman's suffrage movement, too, and, along with Catt, helped get the 19th Amendment passed. Ames, whose story is told in the book, *Revolt Against Chivalry*, was also active in the League of Women Voters that Catt helped found. In the early 1920s she helped found the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching in her vicious home state, which had the second highest amount of lynchings of black people in the nation. *That* took courage.

Ames was also a product of her time.

John Brown, the fiery abolitionist who took up arms against slavery, was also a product of his time.

Senator Charles Sumner and Congressman Thaddeus Stevens, who unsuccessfully tried to obtain forty acres and two mules for every freed slave, were products of their time.

Lucy Stone, who led the American Woman Suffrage Association and endorsed suffrage for Black men, was a product of her time.

Andrew Goodman, Mickey Schwerner and Viola Liuzzo, who gave their lives in the Civil Rights movement

of the 1960s, were products of their time, too.

Catt, like Nazi sympathizer Charles Lindbergh - who has precious few, if any, buildings named after him - is someone who sullied her accomplishments with a vile political stance.

#### **WOMEN ARE BEING HELD TO A DIFFERENT STANDARD - LOOK HOW MANY BUILDINGS AND STREETS ARE NAMED AFTER RACIST MEN**

The September 29th Movement has never said Catt Hall should not honor a woman, or women collectively. In fact, we support this.

However, we do point out that Jack Trice was held to a different standard when it came time to name ISU's new stadium. Trice, an African-American, is the only ISU athlete ever to die in an athletic contest while representing the university. When it was suggested that the new stadium be named after him, somehow it became necessary to compromise and name the structure Cyclone Stadium-Jack Trice Field. How many other stadiums can you find in the nation with a split name? Why was it necessary to compromise?

Many buildings at ISU may very well be named after men with racist views; we haven't bothered to research this. But we do know they were named at a time when there were few people of color, and probably few progressive and/or poor whites, on Iowa State's campus. They were not named at a time when the ISU administration was loudly proclaiming an interest in promoting racial diversity. Claiming to promote diversity while offending those you say you want to attract is a major contradiction.

If the administration wishes to promote diversity, it needs to act like it. The naming of Catt Hall is not the only area where they come up short. The cultural studies programs are insulting; retention has dropped in the past two years; after being accepted,

more minorities refuse to attend than decide to come to ISU, and so on.

If the university's upper-echelon administrators want to promote diversity, they must walk it like they talk it. And if they don't know how to bring about change, they should admit it and ask those who do know. The Movement will show them how. It's not enormously complicated, you just have to care about what you're doing.

They don't.

#### **THE SEPTEMBER 29th MOVEMENT IS DIVISIVE AND PITS BLACK PEOPLE AGAINST WHITE WOMEN**

We hope not. If we are pitting ourselves against white women, it may be that those white women who feel that we're divisive are being insensitive to their sisters of color. If they maintain we are opposing womanhood, or feminism, or whatever, it means they simply don't know the history of The September 29th Movement.

*Celia Naylor-Ojurongbe, the director of the Women's Center, first raised her voice and asked for public discussion of the issue over a period of almost a year preceding the dedication.*

It may be more accurate to say that the women who planned the dedication of Catt Hall and chose to ignore Naylor-Ojurongbe's requests were being divisive, not The September 29th Movement because we chose to point out their mistake. Those women chose to stand against their sisters of color, as well as African-Americans, American-Indians, Asian-Americans and Latino-Americans in general.

*On September 29, 1995, Meron Wondwosen and Janet Uche Nnadi published a special edition of UHURU!, a newsletter funded by the Black Student Alliance. The newsletter extensively documented Catt's statements and history. Although the newsletter received wide media coverage, the ISU administration chose not to respond to their concerns. AT*

*THIS POINT, NO CALL HAD EVEN BEEN  
RAISED TO RENAME CATT HALL.*

These are the origins of the movement. Women only. Today, five women sit on The September 29th Movement's Central Committee.

To say that The September 29th Movement opposes women is just plain silly.

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The ISU administration made a mistake, plain and simple.

They should have gauged the opinion of the ISU community *before* they named Catt Hall. They compounded their mistake by minimizing the importance of Catt's insensitive and politically expedient views, and chose what they thought was a politically expedient route themselves in naming the hall.

If the administration wishes to promote diversity, they cannot continue doing business as usual. "Business as usual" means making economic interests paramount over everything: students, the emotional well-being of the community, education, and so on. The September 29th Movement stands opposed to business as usual.

The September 29th Movement stands committed to change, to progress that embraces all communities, and to an ISU that CARES about the well-being of all those committed to racial diversity and harmony.

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## **AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT JISCHKE:**

*Insight into the power of symbols helps one to understand a man and his relationship to himself, to other men, to life, death, history and the future.*

*--Martin Grotjahn*

*Only when lions have historians will  
hunters cease to be heroes.*

*African proverb*

September 9, 1996

Dear President Jischke:

The September 29th Movement regrets your decision to meet with us only if we would do so without moderator Frances "Francie" Kendall present. We feel strongly that the presence of a skilled moderator like Kendall would facilitate a productive meeting. We also believe that a meeting between you and Movement officials is inevitable simply because the issue of Carrie Chapman Catt Hall is not going to disappear, it's only going to grow bigger and bigger until the building is renamed. We're determined, we're inventive and we're patient. We're also growing.

Your spokesman, John Anderson, made remarks, to *The Des Moines Register* (Sept. 4, 1996) that were unfortunate but revealing. He said you felt a meeting with a moderator would be "counterproductive," and that you wanted "to find out what's on [The September 29th Movement] minds." He went on to say having a moderator "raises the level of this meeting and possibly the tenseness of this meeting...beyond what it could be."

Let's address these comments because they show we're diametrically opposed to these issues as well the name of Catt Hall. Meeting with you alone would be counterproductive for one simple reason: you're the president of the university and you would work overtime to control the meeting and keep anything from happening except "finding out what's on our minds." Then you'd pat us on the back, thank us, and tell everyone how you'd taken a step for diversity by meeting with us. No thank you.

Yes, we wanted a more formal meeting because we're dealing with a

serious issue. Was Anderson suggesting that these issues only merit an informal meeting? Finally, what does he mean about "rais[ing] ...the tenseness? Good moderators attempt to lower tension; that's why we wanted one.

Each step you make on diversity makes us question your commitment more. For instance, you just appointed Prof. Derrick Rollins to serve as your advisor on diversity. We admire Prof. Rollins, both for his outstanding academic achievements as a person. Not many people have a Ph. D in statistics and another Ph. D in chemical engineering.

On the other hand, Kendall, who we wanted to moderate the meeting, is also a Ph. D and has more than 20 years experience in the field of diversity, yet you didn't want to sit in the same room with her. We've been told you're a logical man. Where is the logic in having a scientist advise you on diversity at the same time you're shunning an expert on diversity? If you were building a chemical plant, would you appoint Kendall as an advisor?

Let's say it out loud: We think you appointed Rollins because he's an African-American, not because of any expertise he has on diversity. We don't believe you know how to make a serious commitment to diversity, and your actions--such as allowing Old Botany to be named after Catt-- say that you're only interested in cosmetic changes. We're starting to believe that you don't even know when you're being offensive to people of color.

We knew you would be problematic after The September 29th Movement's Silent March to Catt Hall last March 6. Following the march, your official spokesman, John Anderson, made offensive and insensitive remarks during an interview with Channel 8 reporter Virginia Huie and no correction came from you, probably because you agree with him.

"The leaders of the [women's suffrage] movement had to make some difficult choices, and they did indeed

employ some strategies that would be construed racist by today's standards," Anderson said. "But that was in yesterday and that was not today." He (and by extension, you) didn't even seem to know he was rendering people of color invisible with his unfeeling statement. Has he (or you) read about this condition of invisibility Ralph Ellison eloquently described in his novel, *Invisible Man*?

Racism was no more acceptable to people of color or progressive white people in Catt's time than it is now. Racism has never - ever - been acceptable to people of color or progressive white people. It's a covert abomination now; it was an overt abomination then. But we understand what Anderson meant. Implicit in his remark, "that was in yesterday," was the opinion that only the views and feelings of white supremacists counted then.

Do our opinions count to you today, Dr. Jischke? Do our feelings count? Do you realize that, to people of color and progressive white people, Catt Hall is a burning cross on this campus?

From the very beginning, The September 29th Movement has said that we find the ideology of white supremacy repulsive and, in every way, unacceptable. However, we must be clear: our position is *not* an attack on white people because *white people can stand opposed to white supremacy, too, if they choose*. The September 29th Movement wants students, faculty and staff of all colors, races and ethnicities to look long and hard at this issue and decide where they stand concerning the ideology of white supremacy.

Where do you stand, Dr. Jischke? Outstanding Iowan or no, Catt took some ugly positions. Whether she was being an opportunist or a venal racist is really beside the point. Dedicating a building to this woman after unilaterally deciding that her views should be overlooked and didn't have to be discussed on campus was a major mistake.

A faculty member with the Movement made a trenchant observation. Suppose you had come to the ISU community and said something like this: "Folks, we know you won't like some things this woman stood for, you can't possibly like them because they are repulsive views. But she's an Iowan who accomplished some important things in her lifetime and we want to honor her. Is there some way we can make it right and maybe atone for the horrible things she said about African-Americans, American Indians, Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, other Latino/as, immigrants, and poor people of all colors? If we make the cultural studies programs full departments, and provide the financial resources to make them quality disciplines of study, will that show that we really have a substantial commitment to diversity, even though we're naming a building after a woman who got the vote for white women on the backs of your people?"

If something like that had been said, we would have known you respected us. Reasonable people could have found a reasonable way to work the issue out. Instead, you did what was politically expedient and ignored us, because \$5 million was being raised, and possibly because raising money was more important than we were.

Now, the name must come down. You haven't felt our pain and, if your actions are any indication, you don't even know we're in pain. If you do know, your actions say you don't care.

We can move toward healing - on both sides - or we can allow rage to consume us - on both sides. The September 29th Movement wants to move toward healing, and every action we've taken since our inception supports this. We work very, very hard at transforming the rage that burns within us into civil discourse. Dr. Jischke, this rage has burned for centuries under the corded whip built from imperialism, colonialism, genocide, slavery, segregation and, presently, a

nationwide attempt to rescind the gains made during the Civil Rights Movement. Suppressing or transforming rage only lasts for so long.

We will say it again: Catt Hall represents a burning cross to people of color and progressive white people, inextricably linked to Catt's infamous comment, "White supremacy will be strengthened, not weakened, by woman suffrage." This is what she was stemgthening:

One. The Holocaust of Waco in 1993 was preceded by the Horror of Waco of 1916, when 10,000 white people lynched a 17-year-old black illiterate hired cotton picker and mule driver named Jesse Washington. His ears, fingers and toes were cut off; he was unsexed; he was chained and dragged around town by a car; he was stoned by the mob until he was bloody. Next to the mayor's office he was hoisted upon a tree by means of a chain around his neck and repeatedly lowered into a fire. Later, his teeth were sold for \$5 each. In 1916, 10,000 people killed one person; in 1993, one person killed a congregation. "Which is worse?" may be left an open question, though it is useful to remember that the point about decimation, the Roman military punishment, was not that one soldier in ten was randomly killed, but that the nine others deliberately did it. *Murderers are created.*

Jesse Washington was lynched while Catt wooed the Southern vote to get the 19th Amendment passed, Dr. Jischke.

Two. Diamond Dick Rowland, an ordinary bootblack, accidentally stepped on the foot of a young white elevator girl in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in May of 1921. A few days later he was indicted for rape, and the newspapers urged lynching. "But when his life was threatened by a mob of whites, every one of the 15,000 Negroes of Tulsa, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, was willing to die to protect Dick Rowland,"

reported Walter White, the NAACP investigator writing in *The Nation*. In response, the police, National Guard and Ku Klux Klan together besieged Tulsa's Little Africa. Machine guns, armed men in automobiles, and dynamite dropped from planes destroyed 1,000 homes, killed at least 200 and led to the internment of 6,000 black people in "concentration camps." White concluded, "Perhaps America was served sleeping pills." "

This law and order campaign occurred the year after the 19th Amendment was passed, and seems to indicate that Catt got her wish of seeing woman suffrage strengthen the noxious codes of white supremacy. This is the behavior your spokesman suggested was racist only by today's standards.

If you choose to keep her name on the building, we will continue our campaign to tell the world - on every news program and on the front page of every newspaper - that a cross burns on this campus, just south of Osborne Road and west of Bessey Hall.

For The September 29th  
Movement,  
Milton McGriff

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The individual can compel the establishment, can say to it, "You are accountable to me." The individual can expose the dark machinations of any regime in the world, in any sphere, by means of civil disobedience. An action like mine teaches citizens that their own reasoning, the reasoning of every individual, is no less important than that of the leaders. They use force and sacrifice thousands of people on the altar of their megalomania. Don't follow them blindly.

---Mordechai Vanunu, an Israeli nuclear technician who "revealed" the "secrets" of Israel's nuclear capabilities to the world. (Vanunu remains in prison in Israel; far from being embraced by the

liberal left, he has been abandoned, left to cope with conditions created to make him insane.)

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A Chronology of The September  
29th Movement to rename Catt Hall

The decision to name Old Botany after Carrie Chapman Catt was made six years ago. The building was not actually dedicated to her until October 1995. During those six years leading up to the dedication, many, including journalists, teachers, faculty and students voiced their concern for the name choice. The issue was brought up in 1989 during a discussion between faculty and students of color at the Black Cultural Center. Yet no one in the administration did anything about Catt's past and the plans to name Old Botany after her. Among the most vocal opponents of the naming were Celia Naylor-Ojurongbe, the director of the women's Center and Laurisha McClarin, a Carrie Chapman Catt associate. Yet the voices of these two women and many others who objected were not heard.

### September 29, 1995

An article entitled *The Catt is out of the Bag: Racism within the suffrage movement* was published in UHURU! , a news letter funded by the Black Student Alliance and which addresses the issues of people of color on the ISU campus. The article documented Carrie Chapman Catt's racist remarks and actions.

### October 1-6, 1995

The celebration and the dedication of Old Botany to Carrie Chapman Catt took place without any mention or acknowledgment of her racist, classist and xenophobic remarks. A panel discussion that was supposed to address those issues did not

discusses any topic related to her racism and classism.

**October 17, 1995**

Celia Naylor-Ojurongbe, Director of the Margaret Sloss Women's Center and the advisor of the Women's week Committee wrote an editorial to the Iowa State Daily addressing the lack of discussion of racism at the celebration.

**October 24-25 1995**

ISU Student Benjamin Gilespe and Joe Geha and ISU English Professor wrote letter to the editor questioning the naming of the Catt without research or discussion.

**November 3, 1995**

A story is published in the *ISU Daily* which quotes Catt's statements from her book "Woman Suffrage by Federal Constitutional Amendment. Naylor-Ojurongbe as well as Jane Cox, a theater professor expressed differing views on Catt.

**November 9, 1995-February 17, 1996**

There was no action taken on the part of university officials and administrators to address the concerns of those who raised questions regarding the methods used in naming Old Botany after a person who made racist, classist and xenophobic remarks.

**February 17, 1996**

During the trip back from the 19th annual Big 8 Conference on Black Student Government, a letter writing campaign asking president Jischke to support the name change of Catt Hall kicks off.

**February 23, 1996**

A meeting is held at the Black Cultural Center (BCC) by students, faculty and

staff to announce the letter writing campaign to President Jischke asking for his support for the name change of Catt Hall.

**February 26, 1996**

The first signed letter is delivered to President Jischke's office.

**February 27, 1996**

Five letters were delivered to the President's office. Each week day five letters are delivered.

**March 6, 1996**

One hundred students, faculty and staff participated in a Silent March from Parks library to the building formerly known as Old Botany. Those who support the Movement to change the current name of the hall have called themselves "The September 29th Movement" after the date of publication of the *UHURU!* article which documented Catt's offensive remarks and actions.

**March 22, 1996**

A resolution supporting the name change of Catt Hall and urging the Board of Regents to change the name was passed by the Government of the Student Body (GSB).

**March 27, 1996**

The September 29th Movement asked for the support of five well known women with bricks in the Plaza of Heroine. The organizers of The September 29th Movement urged Rosa Parks, Hillary Clinton, Betty Friedan, Oprah Winfrey and Elaine Brown to ask for their bricks to be removed if the building's name is not changed.

President of the Government of the Student Body (GSB), Dan Mangan, vetoed the resolution (an opinion of the

senate) asking the Board of Regents to change the name of Catt Hall.

**April 4 , 1996**

Panel discussions on Catt issue begin. Students, faculty and staff on both sides of the issue discuss racism classism, xenophobia within the suffrage movement as well as the handling of the naming of the building.

**April, 11 1996**

The Ames branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) announced its support for the efforts of the September 29th Movement to rename Catt Hall.

On the other side of the coin twenty-six female lawmakers of Iowa voiced their support for keeping the name of the building after a person who used people of color, immigrants and the poor as a means to gain support for suffrage.

**April 16, 1996**

Blue Maas, an ISU secretary and Phyllis Harris, a graduate student, both members of the September 29th Movement covered their bricks at the Plaza of Heroines protesting the name of Catt Hall.

**May 3, 1996**

196 letter have been delivered to President Jischke's office.

**APRIL -JULY 1996**

While representatives from the Movement covered the two honorary bricks of Mass and Harris, the black clothes of protest were repeatedly being removed from the bricks.

**June 28, 1996**

In a letter to university officials the September 29th Movement, asked for an investigation on the part of the university to discover who is removing the bricks.

**July 25, 1996**

University officials removed the bricks of Blue Mass and Phyllis Harris from the Plaza of Heroines in front of Catt Hall. However their stance on the issue of the renaming of the building remains staunchly opposed to the Movement.

**July 25 , 1996**

President Jischke nearly a year after the controversy of the naming of Catt hall and five months after the launching of the letter campaign to him, wrote and invited the September 29th Movement to discuss the issue ssurrounding Catt and the Movement.

**August 7, 1996**

The September 29th Movement accepted Jischke's invitation for dialogue but included two requests: that the meeting take place after classes have resumed and that Frances Kendall be allowed to moderate the meeting.

**August 26, 1996**

Five letters were delivered to president Jischke's office on the first day of the 1996-97 school year as an indication that the Movement continues and so will the flow of five letters a day.

**August 28, 1996**

The first issue of *UHURU!* for the 1996-97 school year is published as a special issue. It included an introduction from The September 29th Movement as well as a research article entitled *White Woman's Burden: Carrie Chapman Catt and Racism within the Woman Suffrage Movement.*

August 30, 1996

President Jischke rejected the request of the September 29th Movement for Frances Kendall to facilitate the meeting between the two sides.

The Catt Hall issue as well as the September 29th Movement have appeared in many publications around the country and internationally including: Time Magazine (International Edition), The New York Times, USA Today, The Omaha World Herald, The Ohio Ackron, US News and World Reports, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Jet Magazine, the Des Moines Register, The Chicago Tribune, The Chicago Sun Times, Rocky Mountain News, Charleston Gazette, The Washington Times, The Courier Journal-Milwaukee, the Cedar Rapids Gazette,

CHANGE THE NAME  
OF CATT HALL!

September 29th T- Shirts are now  
available!

Buy one and  
support the Movement!

Incredible Price of \$10!  
Contact Meron @294-2869

" Racism has undergone some fundamental changes, both structurally and ideologically, which means that we can no longer use the old theories, the old strategies, in order to try to chart our movement forward. I see racism as being even more dangerous in the latter nineties than it was in the sixties. For one thing, it is more structurally entrenched in the economic system, and so the globalization of

capital has led to racist structures that are often not recognized as racism."

---Angela Davis

### Oppression

invisible to many	as we live
the misfits	we are the poor,
the women	the colored,
freedom	robbed of our
political expedient	we are the
games	the pawns in the
the abused	the used, the sold,

### Resistance

we must know that our  
actions speak for us  
as much as our  
inaction's do.  
we can't expect change  
to come if we sit around  
and wait  
freedom has to be won,  
must be fought for  
and it must be died for  
if necessary.

in other words:

Agitate, Agitate and uh, Agitate!

<sup>1</sup> "Que Vive?: The Farce of the Death Penalty," by Peter Linebaugh. In *Defense of Mumia*, S.E. Anderson and Tony Medina, eds. New York: Writers and Readers Publishing, Inc., 1996. p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

SEPTEMBER 27, 28 & 29, 1996

THE SEPTEMBER 29TH MOVEMENT

CELEBRATES

*A YEAR OF RESISTANCE*

*A YEAR OF STRUGGLE*

FRI., SEPT. 27 - NOON RALLY  
Place: TBA (to be announced)

SAT., SEPT. 28 - "KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM,  
UNDERSTANDING"  
WORKSHOPS & FILMS  
about Resistance and Struggle.  
Place: TBA

SUN., SEPTEMBER 29: TBA

STAY TUNED...

IN THE MEANWHILE, LA LUTA CONTINUA !  
Agitate, agitate and uh, agitate!