

A World Champ 'n A World Chump
by: Del Jones, War Correspondent



Since Jack Johnson used to dust off slow footed and sluggish punching white boys to dominate the heavyweight division, the championship has meant a lot to our people as a source of upliftment against the anti-Afrikan propaganda that belittles us before the world. It meant so much to us we looked the other way on any other short comings the champs had. Just the idea of legally kickin' a white boy's ass and getting paid for it made it an extraordinary event. Although, many times a Black versus Black kind of conjured up slave matches that saw whites betting slaver master earnings as two Black men fought to the death, biting, scratching and kickin' to survive the enemy's damn prize fighting.

I came along during the final days of Joe Lewis and I remember how we sat around the radio listening to every blow and how the 'Hood exploded when the "Brown Bomber" won. People flew outta their houses and a street party began because we had won 'cause Joe had won. You had to be around then to understand how little we had to be proud of because the racism, hatred and self hatred was so damn thick. The 50's was one hell of a time, many Negroes were left behind because they couldn't make the transition from Negro to Black, others were left back when they couldn't accept Black Power, still others are spinning in the past as we've moved to reclaim our Afrikan identity. In other words our community is covered with people litter haunting our tomorrows.

We were proud of Jack 'n Joe, while Sonny Liston was too much like the brute that reminded us of yesterday's Black overseers and "slave prize fights." No! Not because he was dark skin, but because he was a Mafia flunky who use to bust up Blacks as a collector of extorted dough for white loan sharks and protection scams on Black folk. Later they would murder him and discard him. Before him came Floyd Patterson who was an introverted quiet speaking soft punk who allowed a Swedish white boy by the name of Ingemar Johansson to thoroughly kick his ass and go-rilla the heavyweight crown from off his head. Never mind he later almost beat Johansson to death taking the crown back, unlike Joe Lewis he was not forgiven for the lost. Floyd used to travel through the hood with a disguise in shame after the infamous defeat.

Liston destroyed Patterson with awesome power that left him splattered all over the ring like a piece of indistinguishable modern art "splattt" on a white canvass. Like his reactionary twin, stupid traitor George Foreman, it was thought he could never be beat. George who was without question the most hated champion the community ever seen, mainly because he waved that silly little Amerikkkan flag during the '68 Olympics after Tommy Smith and John Carlos raised their Black gloved fists in front of the world. Their courageous act, of course, politically signaled that the shit was on! While his reminded us that Uncle Toms were gonna protect master with their sorry lives. By the way, many had to be snuffed for defending master's domain.

However, it was Muhammad Ali who busted on the scene with a brilliant flash of talent, skill and for a while he even was politically in tuned with the progressive youth of his time. Beating Liston twice, we think, he became the embodiment of the Black youth of the time. Brass, bold, beautiful and making no apologies for being what we were. His battle with the government over being drafted into their military during the Vietnam War is legend. Since I was around let me describe it all to ya. Most of the Negroes still in shock that the apathy of the 50's was over took the position that "that boy is crazy, he ought to go into the military like Joe Louis and work for Special Forces. All he would have to do is some boxing exhibitions and poster boy work Like Joe Louis did and come out and go make his money" they said with twisted reason.

Never mind that individualism was being suppressed and we as a group, a tribe, a village was moving for the collective. Never mind, Amerikkkan

imperialism was slaughtering innocent people to keep freedom hostage. And never mind that any work with the Amerikkkan war machine was an endorsement to our youth of the 'Hood, who were dying in record numbers anyway. The Vietnamese were not our enemy, our enemy was the white Supremist military machinery, that was killing throughout Asia and Afrika.

Then, of course, there were the "I went and served my country why can't Cassius Clay or Ali or whatever his name is." This sad group couldn't even understand the Civil Rights Movement much less the Black Power thrust. They advocated that he serve, sit down and shut up. If, in fact, he do what he was told, he would get paid. Sound familiar? Lastly, there was our group of revolutionaries of all ages and the youth who were proud of his stance as it exposed the Vietnam hustle Amerikkka was pulling on the whole society. Needless to say, Ali's strength and resolve heightened the contradictions in white society and their children went buck wild in opposition to a war they actually was sleeping. Ali's stance was consistent with the movement of our people to engage the enemy at every turn. He's got to be given credit, he paid the price and supplied the needed upliftment for us to continue the fight.

This made him the most hated Black man in this country, by whites, because he was a symbol of Black rage and defiance. For years he was kept from legally fighting as the system conspired to starve and humiliate him. In the eyes of the world he got bigger and bigger until he had the most recognizable face in the world. It would take years before they wore him down to the reactionary pitiful Amerikkkan he is today. Ya see, Ali was a contradiction, an ugly one, who privately never lived up to the front he put up. I know this hurts but we gotta grow up and look at the historical facts as we kick the crutches from under ourselves and build tomorrows courage with truth.

Outside the ring Ali was a child like womanizing creep. In Jim Brown's autobiography he repeats over and over how Ali wanted to screw everybody's women. And even though publicly he spoke against the white devils privately he had no problem boning white girls. Even though he spoke of Black pride, he called many Black fighters "ugly Black go-rillas, Black bears etc.

Thus, his claim to be living morally clean and positive was a large lie that the people in the 'Hood picked up on. However, he was the most political Champ we ever had. However, as he got older he began to work with the same killing machine he rejected as a youth. He became the Ambassador of Goodwill traveling globally on behalf of Amerikkkan foreign policy.

Now, whites love him and where ever they are celebrating white culture you will see him stumbling up to presidents, governors and mayors. Kissing the asses of Amerikkkan corporate demons, they love him now. Now that he obviously supports white Supremist issues he is loved and used to push forth their agenda. Ali along with stooge Joe Frazier and punk Floyd Patterson supported Ronald Reagan probably as a reward for murdering Black Panthers and working against Black folk as Governor of California. Joe Frazier is still hated in Philly for his support of wild illiterate former police chief and mayor Frank Rizzo. Later whites allowed Ali to light the Olympic torch and he was welcomed like a "Greek God."

In a couple of decades they had transformed our hero into a trembling cartoon and I'm sure they laugh at his transformation. Champ or Chump? You tell me, huh , Champ or Chump.

In Cuba a boxing legend by the name of Teofilo Stevenson was the number one amateur boxer for over two decades. Tall. Black and handsome, he ruled the heavyweight and super heavy divisions in both the Pan-American and Olympic Games. He had three Olympic titles and was a national hero in Cuba. Many times he was offered millions of dollars to turn pro but each time the answer was no.

Stevenson was a supporter of the Cuban people and their revolution and would not sell out. Whites longed to see the Cuban rumble Muhammad Ali, but the answer was always no. He was not interested in prize fighting like a slave, he was a firm supporter of amateur sports and was not attracted to sports for profit, gamblers and exploitation of man by man.

In an era when young Cuban athletes defect to Amerikkka for profit, the lesson of Stevenson is clear "forward with the revolution." Now known as one of the greatest athletes the world has ever seen he has always been fiercely loyal to his people. Recently, while leaving Miami he was harassed by some Uncle Tom Cubans at the airport. After one shouted some negative remarks at him about Cuba, its people and their leader Fidel

Castro, Stevenson was accused of assaulting what turned out to be an airport official.

Though detained, he was released and allowed to go home. He said he would allow no one to disrespect his country, his people, his leader. He is talking about the Cuba that exports doctors and dentists to poor countries to care for the sick. The Cuba that has given asylum to political prisoners like Assata Shakur, queen of the Black Liberation Army. The Cuba that helped defeat the South Afrikan Military in Angola which led to the liberation of Namibia, an embarrassing retreat by the South Afrikan Apartheid Army and the dismantling of Apartheid leading to the release of Nelson Mandela.

Yes, it was a military defeat that changed Southern Afrika's political realities. This is the Cuba Stevenson has supported with his love, his labor and his fame. He is a true revolutionary champ, while Muhammad Ali chose the road that defines him as the Chump!

It is a privilege to be Afrikan, but Afrikans must unite!