



By Albert Turner, Jr.

### Turner, Jr. Oppose Renaming the Edmund Pettus Bridge

As the son of Albert Turner, Sr. one of the leaders of the Bloody Sunday March, I oppose the renaming the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

People don't come to Selma to see Edmund Pettus. Nor do they come to glorified him. Former Congressman John Lewis didn't call the Bloody Sunday March. To introduce a local Bill to say only the people of Dallas County should have a vote on renaming the Bridge is an insult to all those other Black-Belt counties residents who came to risk their lives for the right to vote on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in 1965. Some people in Selma have altered enough history about Bloody Sunday and they were not there. It troubles me how the movie "Selma " and other profiteers have distorted the voting rights movement. Ms. Oprah Winfrey did acknowledge the fact the movie was not a documentary, it was fiction. However, others keep trying to alter history that they didn't make,"

Dallas County residents did not make up a tenth of the people on the bridge on Bloody Sunday. My father who was there shared the accurate account of that historic day. He informed me on a number of occasions that they were scared, and that Dr. King told them not to go forward with the march. The fear that people would be killed because they could not protect them from the mob of Alabama State Troopers that were on hand. They were not there to be famous; they were there fighting for the rights of African Americans to have voting rights and to protest the killing of Jimmie Lee Jackson.

John Lewis didn't raise his hand in Brown Chapel Church and said follow me. John was unlucky and pulled the shortest straw is how he got on the front line. Hosea pulled the next shortest straw,

then Bob Manse and then daddy. That was how the order of the march came about according to my father.

Defying orders not to march, the large crowd of people over 350 from Perry County that had come to march pushed their leader, Albert Sr. to compel the other that they were going to march if they led the march or not. I recall my daddy telling me that he told the others that they had to go forward regardless of the consequence. It was the will of the people.

I have informed my friend and leader of the Alabama Senate Democratic Caucus, Bobby Singleton that the proposed Bill by Senator Malika Sanders-Fortier to re-name the bridge should be dead on arrival (DOA). I have also informed Perry County Commission Attorney Rep. Prince Chestnut that the proposed Bill should not see the light of day out of local committee.

What people come to Selma today for is to celebrate and pay their respect to those brave individuals who risked life in order to enjoy the freedoms of today. They don't come to shout hallelujah to Edmund Pettus. They don't come to praise the works of the likes of Edmund Pettus. People from across the World come to Selma today to say thank you. Thank you for the brave acts of defiance, the courageous efforts of a people to defy all odds to try to make it to Montgomery to protest the lack of voting rights and the killing of Jimmie Lee Jackson. Jimmie Lee Jackson was the first voting rights martyr.

My father didn't cross the John Lewis Bridge, he didn't cross the Freedom Bridge, he crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge! He and others were trying to get freedom for the people. He and Hosea Williams Bob Manse and John Lewis made history by leading a group of everyday citizens on a March for freedom across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

History is an account of events that happen in the past. History can't be erased. Good or bad, history should not be altered to satisfy someone's personal agenda.