

## [INTRODUCTION]

**GENIRO:** Welcome to the What We Now podcast by Greenpeace USA.

**RICO:** We're kicking off a brand new season by bringing some of our producers from behind the scenes to the mic to share our successes and challenges from 2023 and what we need now for 2024.

[INTRO JINGLE] -Extend Intro & Segue into Main Content]

**RICO:** Welcome back, welcome back, welcome back! It's been a minute, y'all.

**GENIRO:** Yes. Happy New Year! Happy MLK Day!

**TANYA:** Happy Black History Month, or if you prefer, Happy Black Futures Month!

**JEFF:** And we also missed National Fresh Squeezed Juice Week, so we hope you all got to get your celebration in for that.

**RICO:** I really should have. I don't think I knew when that was. I got, you know, an orange tree in the back, so I could have definitely made some fresh squeezed juice. I will definitely observe next year.

Happy Valentine's Day! Ooh side note, M4BL put out a really dope set of Black Love cards, which are like Valentine's Day adjacent cards, and they celebrate Black history, Black life, Black futures, and Black love—all of that. So y'all should check those out if you haven't already.

**TANYA:** Oh, that sounds nice! Well, since it's been a while and we have some new folks on the team, let's introduce ourselves.

I'm Tanya. I use she/her pronouns. I live on Manahoac Land, otherwise known as Fairfax, Virginia. I am five feet four inches tall. I wear glasses - usually. I have black curly hair in a kind of Afro with kinda like some blonde colored tips.

**GENIRO:** Hey, y'all! I'm Geniro. I use he/him pronouns. I am currently on Piscataway Land, also known as Southern Maryland. I have locs; they're twisted; they're about mid-length to my back- you know, so I got some growth going. I would say I'm a medium brown skin complexion. I have a full beard, and I'm wearing my Greenpeace staff shirt for the podcast. I'm sitting down, so I ain't going to get into height. That's all y'all get. I am the justice and equity director at Greenpeace.

**RICO:** Word. Cool. I'm Rico. I use he/him/his pronouns. I'm on Chochenyo Ohlone land in Oakland, California. And yeah, visual description: I have a hat on that says "End Cash Bail." I have a hoodie, which is my favorite hoodie, it's got a picture of Erykah Badu's face. It just says Badoo on it. I have a beard that hopes to one day grow up to be full like Geniro's, but right now it's just, you know, it's just riding out on positive affirmation. Also, medium brown skin tone. And I have some really big headphones on, and there's a huge mic covering most of my face right now. And I am the national warehouse program manager for Greenpeace, so I work on our actions team.

**JEFF:** I'm Jeff. I am the digital platforms manager at Greenpeace US. I use he/ him pronouns. I'm on Powhattan Land here in Richmond, Virginia. And visual descriptions: I'm a six-five freckled American light skin - probably about Goldenrod three maybe, on a day. I have a very fluffy red and brown beard that I'm cultivating. And I have no hair, 'cause I'm a bald man.

**RICO:** I would say the beard is well-cultivated at this point. But I do have a question. Golden Rod 3. Is that how colors work? You can just apply a number?

**JEFF:** I mean, there's different tones of a base color. Yeah. I think the last time I looked it up, I was a Goldenrod three or four.

**RICO:** Ahhh! Okay. I'ma have to step up my visual description next time, next time it comes to this.

**TANYA:** I think I need to work on mine next time. I'm very inspired Jeff.

**JEFF:** I was nervous. I looked up everything.

**TANYA:** But you're doing so great! And I'm not just being ...what you call it, gratuitous? I don't remember the word. But you're doing great.

**RICO:** So Geniro and Jeff joined the What We Need Now team in 2023, and we're really excited about that. Unfortunately, though, Tamera Adams—who you heard a lot last season, hosting doing parody ads, and reading poetry, doing...lots things, honestly—she left last year for a new job.

**TANYA:** Yeah. We miss Tamera. Shout out Tamera! We love you. You are awesome! But we're happy to welcome some new folks to the team as well. And we're looking forward to working with them. And of course, those are not the only big changes that happened last year.

**RICO:** Yes! Last year was a really big year in the world, in our collective movements, and here at Greenpeace as well. Though there was a great deal of tragedy and a number of setbacks, we think there was also important positive shifts that are worth highlighting.

**RICO:** So we're going to kick the season off with a little bit of a review. And let's just be honest. All last year, we were doing a lot of things, but we weren't doing a whole lot of podcasting. We were doing many other things. For example, I had a baby and spent a lot of last year on parental leave.

**GENIRO:** I also had a baby and spent some time on parental leave

**TANYA:** And, I didn't have a baby but I spent a lot of time doing work

**RICO:** (Tanya continues to have kids.)

**TANYA:**,,, and take care of my three kids.

**TANYA:** Yeah, and at the organization, Greenpeace, we had some major changes as well, including all the way at the top. Ebony Twilley Martin became the sole executive director of Greenpeace USA.

Yeah, Ebony becoming the sole executive director at Greenpeace USA is a significant milestone in the organization's history and in the history of the environmental justice movement. She is the first Black woman to take on this role in the history of the organization.

I think because we, Black folks, have historically been underrepresented in leadership roles across sectors, and including green organizations, we view representation of any kind as celebratory. But what makes Ebony's rise celebratory is not the fact that she is Black and a woman, but that she is that and that her values and actions are in alignment with racial and environmental justice.

Her story is a deeply fascinating one and very relatable for many of us called into movement work. That is, something agitates us to action. Her story is one that folks should look into. But, to give a too brief summary, it was the realization that her son's asthma was a direct result of the contaminated environment that agitated her to take action and to stay in this fight. I know what keeps her in this fight is that she understands we all deserve a healthy, clean environment to live in.

**RICO:** Yeah, I think it was in season 3, we interviewed Ebony and I really enjoyed hearing her story kind of firsthand, about like that journey. Congratulations to Ebony!

And yeah, you know, we also pushed forward a Global Oceans Treaty last year, which I think is probably one of the biggest pieces of positive news to come out of the whole year. Tanya, I know you've been working on that campaign for, actually, how long has that campaign been going on?

**TANYA:** Well, Rico, it actually took us decades to get to this point, but in 2023, we finally won a Global Ocean Treaty that can help us to deliver the protections we need in our oceans.

Because, as you know, our oceans are in crisis. So this treaty is a tool that can allow us to establish vast protected areas on 30% of the oceans by 2030, which is otherwise known as the “30 by 30 target.” And for us here at Greenpeace, this organization played a key role in the treaty process from the very beginning, and so it was definitely a big moment for this organization and generally across the environmental movement to see this treaty come to fruition.

And of course, you know people power, without the millions of people on absolutely every single continent who joined us in calling for ocean protection, the strong treaty that we ended up with a 30 by 30 target would not have been possible without those folks. So definitely, this triumph signifies not just a win for the environmental advocates and organizations, but it stands really as a beacon of hope for our planet for what people power can do.

And really, the significance of this treaty can't be overstated. And, you know, just to share a little bit of why it matters, as I said, the treaty paves the way really for unprecedented protection of our oceans. It's a powerful tool that will allow us to create some of these marine protected areas to conserve biodiversity and protect marine ecosystems, which we all know are connected in real ways to the lives and livelihoods of people.

**GENIRO:** Yeah, I think that's the challenge that some folks have like when they hear “Global treaty”, they think, “this is something this way out there that has nothing to do with me.” I'm wondering if you can speak to what does a global ocean treaty mean for Black and Brown folks in particular?

**TANYA:** Yeah, it's true what you said Geniro, like a lot of us can actually feel disconnected from these big issues, but we need to remember that the ocean is one of the biggest carbon sinks. It absolutely helps to regulate our climate. Like... it's a source of most of the oxygen that we breathe. We simply need the ocean to breathe. So winning the Global Ocean Treaty is definitely a victory for environmental justice and it acknowledges a shared responsibility of all nations to protect our oceans including the need to have collective action to address environmental challenges that disproportionately affect vulnerable communities, including those in the BIPOC communities, and I know last year on one of our episodes we spoke a bit about “Ocean Justice”. So yes, it's also important for communities like ours.

**GENIRO:** So that was a huge victory for us last year but we also had other victories. We won a lawsuit.

**RICO:** Yep. Last April, Greenpeace defeated a 100 million dollar SLAP suit brought on by Resolute Forest Products. And so, yeah after seven years of litigation in court finally dismissed the case. I've been at Greenpeace for man going on for like 13 years. And so almost... a little more than half the time I've been here we've had that lawsuit over our heads. It's a long time to be litigating and that's the point.

SLAPP suits as these are known, are strategic lawsuits against public participations. The whole point is to make it as long as possible as hard as possible for the folks that are facing them and actually a report from Earth rights International found that the fossil fuel industry has you slaps to Target more than 50 people and organizations just in the last five years and so, you know, the fossil fuel industry and other environmentally destructive companies use these bullying legal tactics to threaten journalists, activists Indigenous water protectors, and Movement for Black Lives Protesters and just to be super clear like the damages, what they ask for– a hundred million dollars, 300 million dollars is a lot, but the cases themselves have little to do with recovering damages. The goal is to silence anybody thinking of speaking up by putting a price on speech.

In fact, one of the rare things about these SLAPP cases against Greenpeace is that you're actually hearing about them. Right? I mean, the mere filing of a lawsuit like this often has the intended impact of silencing powerful voices because most people in organizations who are hit with these suits don't have the financial resources to fight back and even if the company doesn't win it can be incredibly expensive. Again, imagine litigating a lawsuit for seven years.

So the intent is to silence nonprofits and activists or make them go bankrupt and so this dismissal is a huge victory for us, but more than that it is a victory for free speech, protest, and descent.

**TANYA:** So yes, that is wonderful. But unfortunately, that is not the only SLAP suit that we are dealing with.

**RICO:** I mean,. Yes, that's true, I was gonna try to keep it upbeat, you know end it on a high note. But yeah, you're right. We are fighting a huge slapsuit right now. Energy Transfer the corporation behind the Dakota access pipeline is suing Greenpeace for 300 million dollars in a SLAPP lawsuit related to the protest at Standing Rock. So that's scary and the suit absurdly accuses Greenpeace of allegedly orchestrating the entire Indigenous resistance as Standing Rock. So this an attempt to basically rewrite the history of the Standing Rock protests and erase Indigenous leadership and I think no matter how you look at it, it is honestly infuriating. And so this trial is set for this summer in North Dakota we've seen hopefully before that we'll do it for dive into this case and other attacks on free speech cuz this is happening a lot y'all.

**GENIRO:** Yeah. We've seen it a lot, you know especially in the course of the Stop Cop City work that's happening in Atlanta for folks to to try to have a chilling effect on protesters and advocates fighting for a change. You know we've seen environmental or domestic terrorism charges be levied against Stop Cop City protesters. This is a fight that has escalated to the point where even one activist was shot and killed. And Tortuguita had their hands up when they were shot and killed standing up to...standing up to the fight to Stop Cop City.

**RICO:** Yes, absolutely tragic, and unfortunately, many of these tactics are not entirely unfamiliar. We've seen some of the same tactics used in Ferguson, Standing Rock used during the uprisings in 2020 things, like alienating those folks who are taking action who are organizing by

calling them outside agitators rather than highlighting the local leadership that's involved. The outside agitator thing was also used a lot during the Civil Rights Movement and some of these really heavy charges that really try to chill as you said protests and keep folks from wanting to continue joining those fights.

And actually since that Standing Rock protests in 2016 oil and gas companies have played a key role in the creation and spread of anti-protest laws with provisions specifically intended to stifle protest near fossil fuel facilities.

Personally, I was charged with a felony under anti-protest legislation back in 2019 under something called a critical infrastructure law in Texas. I took part in a protest below the Fred Hartman Bridge outside of Houston back in 2019. Shout out to all my friends and folks that did that with me.

The way critical infrastructure works, these laws, is they take a form of protest or direct action that might normally carry a trespassing charge or something like failure to disperse and it actually turns it into a felony just because it takes place at or near fossil fuel infrastructure. So luckily in my case, the felony was bumped down to a misdemeanor in 2020 and as of last year all the charges against me and the other 21 activists have officially been dropped so that's dope and I guess I guess there's the high note I was looking for. And again shout to all 22 of us for making it through that.

**TANYA:** That's a wonderful highnote and I'm glad to hear that you and the other activists in the case were able to defeat those charges and hopefully we'll have a victory to celebrate in the ETP case later this year

**RICO:** Absolutely, we are manifesting victory for Greenpeace in that case and victory for activists in the Cop City cases in the Bay Bridge 78 and folks all over world who've been standing up for their rights.

Up next we've got even more highlights of Greenpeace work in 2023 and other campaign wins in the broader movement. Later we're going to talk about what you can expect in 2024.

**TANYA:** But first, a word from our fake sponsors.

### **[Parody ad 1: Tar, Sands and Shale]**

V.O

*This Episode of what we need now brought to you in part by Tar, Sands, and Shale, the climate commitment Consultants.*

NARRATOR:

*Are your customers bothering you with questions about your environmental impact? Are they demanding that you hold yourself accountable to the public? Have they threatened*

*your bottom line with a pesky boycott? Well, then Tar, Sands and Shale have the solution for you! It's time for a climate resolution.*

*Pick a nice round year to achieve your goals by. Nothing too far away or your customers will think you're not taking the climate crisis seriously, but not too close or they might actually hold you to it. How about 2050?*

*Now set a goal that you know you'll never accomplish by that year. Make sure you throw in a percentage... By 2050 we will reduce such and such by 50%. By 2070 all of our blah blahs will have.... you get the idea. Your customers will love it*

*Lastly and this is most important. Once you make the commitment, put it everywhere! Put it on billboards, make sure its the result of every google search about your company, for a small nominal fee we could get your advertisements painted on the backs of sea turtles. Then after the push is over, never mention it again. They'll all forget and leave you alone. And you can quietly go on doing your business the way you always have.*

*Act now to get your Climate Resolution plan in place by Earth Day. We're offering all new clients a New Year's discount of 5% on all consulting fees for the year and 100% of your integrity for life. At Tar, Sands, and Shale we show you how to keep your promises empty and your pockets full.*

**RICO:** So, Geniro, I know that last year we signed on to Green 2.0, and I know that its important, but I don't actually know what it is.

**GENIRO:** I think that is completely okay. It's a relatively new partnership. Green 2.0 is an organization that gives oversight to green organizations regarding their justice, equity, diversity and inclusion commitments. They do this by asking organizations to report on the demographics, to provide narrative explanations of the progress of the work they've done so far.

**RICO:** Word. So it's kind of like grading green groups on their implementation of Justice commitments.

**GENIRO:** Yes, many organizations make commitments to this work but have no external mechanism through which they are actually reviewed or evaluated. Green 2.0 gives the wider public an additional data point to consider when they have questions about green organization's commitment to this work. It is not exhaustive by any means, but it's it definitely feels a void.

**TANYA:** So, what does it mean for Greenpeace to sign on?

**GENIRO:** Greenpeace gets an additional opportunity to tell our story. It's important because we are an organization that has gone from less than 10% BIPOC in the early 2000's to nearly 50% BIPOC today. I the perception of the organization is that we are still overwhelmingly white, and

not doing work that impacts BIPOC communities. We get an additional opportunity to share how we have changed and why we have changed. That is to say racial Justice is inextricably linked to environmental justice and our movement can't win without issues that impact Black brown and indigenous folks being centered.

**TANYA:** So here are other big campaign moments from last year. We won't go into a ton of detail here, but we will include links in our blog for you to find out more about all of these

**RICO:** Tanya. I really hope in my heart that you're about to rattle all of these off like an old Baptist preacher, but no pressure at all. Just do you

**TANYA:** I'm gonna do my best Rico. Here we go:

- We had the 10,000 people marching in New York to demand climate Justice.
- We had Bitcoin projections by our team in New York.
- We had climate projections in DC and Hollywood.
- We had a wonderful plastic support that revealed the toxicity of plastic.
- We had the deep sea mining industry *not* getting the light that they hope for last year.
- We had the dollars versus democracy report which detailed tactics at the fossil fuel industry as used to suppress protest and dissent in the US, and after a wonderful run that, in this case of course is across the country and even around the world, Fire Drill Fridays hosted by the iconic and brilliant Jane Fonda wrapped up. How did I do?

**RICO:** That was.. that was amazing. No, I was feeling it, that was great. We did a lot of stuff. This is admittedly the most we've ever talked about Greenpeace on any episode of the podcast because we like to use the platform to highlight grassroots organizations and Black folks working on the ground. But, you know, it was a big year. And also, we do have just one other internal Greenpeace USA update for y'all that we have to share.

**JEFF:** Yes! We have a collective bargaining agreement finally! So yeah, after three long years of fighting, and negotiating rather, we have a contract and the contract improves our pay equity giving market rate adjustments to many of our colleagues... So yeah, we all love more money and it set future pay increases. So our contract helps support people's health and well-being through redefined sick leave; we get more sick leave and more personal time. So yeah... love a vacation. Plus it also input provisions that advance Equity, Justice and DEI within the company. So that's all good. And it gives our workers a more collective voice and a part of moving the organization forward and our struggle for climate and environmental just so yeah really excited about that because empowered and protected workers are better for environment and the organization. So yeah really happy.

**RICO:** Snaps to that.

**GENIRO:** And it was a big year for unions generally with some historic union victories in multiple sectors. We asked our Chief Program Officer Tefere, the former Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO to share some context on just how big of a year it for unions.

**TEFERE:** 2023 was a big year for unions for sure and for workers in general not just for unions, even for unorganized workers. More than anything else, 2023 had a potential of actually changing the game and changing the system that has kept workers down. From what we saw for example from the United Auto workers from the UAW was not just that they won pay increases and benefits and work hours, but the fact that they fought and they struggled in winning the future of our manufacturing in this country that is more and more electrified and more and more engineless vehicles. And that's really a monumental change because that, in my view, really brings the environmental movement and the workers movement together to actually blur the line between the false choices that we've been given of "a good paycheck versus a clean air that we to breathe.

So the UAW has lead one that but it was not only the UAW you it was really so enriching to see Starbucks shop after Starbucks shop actually saying, "enough is enough" and standing up for their rights and winning. It was not just fighting in 2023 for workers.

That all being said, still the fundamentals remain the same. We still need system change. The rules are again stacked against workers. Organizing is one of the hardest things you do in the workplace. It's not because people are not organizing and they don't have the skills. It is our government and our system which have tilted the playing field way too much into the corporate agenda. That's why I think the only thing to win over that is for environmentalists, for social justice activists, and for worker-right activists, actually finally holding hands and being one. And actually demanding what we all deserve a clean air, safe communities and family sustaining jobs. That's what 2023 means to me.

**RICO:** Cool. So yeah huge year for for Union victories and obviously unions have played such a pivotal role in changing Progressive movements over time, like shout out to unions for our eight hour work day and for children not, you know, working in factories, but some other big positive news from last year

- Brazil Supreme Court ruled in favor of Indigenous land rights by squashing a proposed time limit for land claims.
- We had breakthroughs in a variety of medical research from malaria to cervical cancer
- Studies now suggest that solar is on track to become the main source of world energy by 2050. So yes, it was a tough year. But also there was a lot to celebrate.

**TANYA:** Yes indeed. So when we come back, we're gonna share what's happening in 2024 and you will hear our answers to the show's favorite questions what we need to for Black Liberation and environmental justice.

**JEFF:** But first a word from our fake sponsors.

**[Parody ad 2: DIET M.L.K]**

V.O

*This Episode of what we need now brought to you in part by Diet M.L.K, a smoother more palatable M.L.K, now edited for white comfort.*

NARRATOR:

*In moments of crisis you may turn to the inspiring words of Dr. Martin Luther King. His quotes go a long way in the comment section of a Reddit thread, but sometimes they're a little too spicy.*

*While regular MLK may force you down the rabbit hole of injustice in society, diet MLK is great for when you just want to win that comment battle on your niece's facebook!*

*Here's some samples of what we have to offer:*

*Did your daughter's boyfriend just say Black Lives Matter? Try this quote:*

*"I look to a day when police officers will be judged not by the content of their character, but by the color of their uniform."*

*Are people saying 'looting is a victimless crime'? Use this MLK comeback "Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which maintains property value."*

*Here's a few of our favorites:*

*"A dream deferred is still a dream."*

*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere except here..."*

*"Hate cannot drive out hate; only a newly painted Black Lives Matters Plaza can do that."*

*"In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the hashtags that they shared."*

*"I have a dream that one day we will walk hand in hand with police that work so hard to end Black and Brown lives."*

*"There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right. Luckily that time has not come."*

*With Diet MLK, you'll be seen as the most progressive person in your circle.*

***Let freedom ring...quietly with Diet MLK!***

**TANYA:** So, Rico what are you looking forward to this year on the podcast

**RICO:** What I'm looking forward to this year is, you know, just like having some of that new energy from new staff. We have like new Black folks in leadership at different levels of the organization and you folks that I've talked to who are excited about the podcast who didn't know we had a podcast. Who want to collaborate. I'm excited for the perspectives that you know, Jeff and Geniro can bring this year. I'm excited to continue working with Tanya. This your third season, you know, so we out here getting better and better. So yeah, I think that's one of the things that I'm looking forward to is just like how the podcast can be more connected to what's happening at Greenpeace. And then also with that being able to connect more with grassroots organizations. There's some stories I really REALLY want to tell and some conversations I really

really want to have this year. So yeah. I hope that's just vague enough to be an answer. But what about you Tanya? What are you looking forward to this year?

**TANYA:** Yeah, I think I agree with you Rico I'm very excited to have new members on the team. Welcome Jeff and welcome Geniro. It's strange it's already been two years. I can't believe it. Yeah, but I'm enjoying it. Looking forward to telling some more great stories. Every time I read the news or you know just check out some of what's happening out there...so many great stories to be told and just looking forward to working with our team to tell those stories and to help to bring some of that What We Need Now energy to those other issues.

**GENIRO:** Yeah, I'm looking forward to discussing some of the vital work we have. Prepping for the podcast, we talked about, you know the latest LNG decision from the Biden administration. Like that's a huge Victory and I think this is a place where we can really highlight, you know, what it means for the material conditions of Black folks like right now.

I think a lot our work can feel like it's... we're talking about an existential threat to a planet so it feels very big and far removed our everyday lives. I think, you know, the decision feels very big and far removed from our lives. But as we were kind of sharing about the news internally, you know, somebody shared a couple of interviews that we did with folks who live in proximity to some of these LNG export plants and... you know, this affects people's lives. The everyday routine the mundane, boring. I'm getting up and going to get groceries and I see this fireball down the street from my house and it smells like eggs, and this is what my kids have to breathe. So, I think you know this podcast being a space where we can talk about some of that work and possibly interview folks and hear perspectives from our great staff here. That's all exciting. This is vital important work and it's meaningful. It's not something that's detached from what we do and how we live. It's very much related to everything that's going on in our lives.

**RICO:** Yeah. [singing]Jeffro

**JEFF:** [sing-songy] Haaay. Yeah. How do I follow that up? I guess "D. All of the above" would be my answer? I –yeah I'm just excited about everything. This is my first real foray into a podcast. Been a guest before but like never– done this much involvement. So looking forward to yeah, just elevating my own voice, my colleagues voices, other Black people in the community, leaders just a bit of everything. So yeah "D." all the above.

**RICO:** And so, you know, we ask this question to every guest that comes on the podcast and we are no exception and it's kind of at the core of why this podcast exists is like we want to hear this perspective from as many Black folks working on the ground as possible, as many Black folks in as many sectors as possible. **What do we need now to achieve Black Liberation and environmental justice?** And so yeah. It's a big question.

**JEFF:** It's huge.

**RICO:** Yeah and I'm like trying to figure out who I should give it to first, but everybody looks so in thought right now that I don't want to...you know...

**GENIRO:** I'll go first man. I got my answer

**RICO:** Let's hear it.

**GENIRO:** What we need now is deeper connection to organization and community and I think... Like as you framed it, like you know, how do we achieve Black Liberation? That's a question about us as a collective. So we don't get there individually, we get there collectively and so, you know, we have to join formations in some shape or manner. You know, liberation is not going to be an individual effort. One of the things I'm challenging myself is to get deeper connected to... you know, Black organizations that align with my personal politics and beliefs including what we need to do to secure vibrant life here on this planet, and I think that's what we all need as Black folks is connection to organizations that are going to do what's necessary— organize resources, organize people. That's how we get to liberation.

**RICO:** 100% agree

**JEFF:** For me, my thoughts first went to increase access just to everything. Increase access to information, education, local funds. All that in some of manner is not equal or fair in many areas of this country. So we're not all considered equal until the playing field is and there's many ways to go about that. A lot of people think reparations is the way go. I don't disagree because... we haven't tried it, but hey, I'm open to it. But on a more foundational level, things need to be easily accessible and equally accessible for things to even resemble freedom in this country.

**RICO:** You just reminded me so many years ago. We were like, "let's do an episode on reparations." We were talking about like connecting...

**TANYA:** I am still pro reparations episode.

**RICO:** Yeah, I really want to do that. We were talking about it. We would want to also bring some Indigenous folks on and talk about Land Back and how those two things are connected, right? Like a nuance kind of deep dive conversation. That would be that would great to dig into again. But yeah, Tanya what you think? What we need now?

**TANYA:** Yeah, I agree with Geniro and Jeff that is a bit of a complex...Not a bit. It's a very complex question because there are many similarities to the struggles that Black people face around the world, but it's also very unique circumstances. So I think, one of the key things that we need— not to be cliché is that we need Unity, you know in very simple terms. We really need to figure out how as a people we can come together across the globe, across the country, across communities to support each other. I really believe in the power of intersectionality.

You know, I think it was Jeff said, you know, we're not free until all of us are free and whatever that liberation looks like for each of us, may be very different but all of us are able to take some thing to the table to help someone else out. And our power comes from our ability to unite and work together.

And yeah being Jamaican, of course, I'm gonna reference Marcus Garvey. So here we go, you know, so Marcus Garvey really believed in the power of unity. And yeah, I will have to keep referencing that. So for me, fundamentally that's important.

I also think essentially we can do all of the work as people and people have been out there doing that but it really comes down to a point where we need our political leaders to make that kind of change to have the kind of will to implement these things that we already know. We already know that climate change is hurting our communities. We already know that things like Cop City are hurting, you know people in those communities, but what we need are our political leaders and those people who have the decision making power and authority to meet those changes. So yeah.

**RICO:** I a hundred percent resonate with that and my answer is very connected to what y'all are saying as well and it's an answer that I've said before so if you've ever listened to any of these like collective producer episodes of the podcast, you're like, oh you can skip mine because it's the same thing I said last time but basically it's around us just knowing our history. I think that there's a reason that there are attacks on history education. I think it's like a really powerful tool because we have achieved so much. We've survived so much as a collective, as a people and the ways in which that has been done, the ways in which we've arrived at the rights we have, you know, we mentioned some like Union victories earlier in the episode— it's important for people to know why you have some of these things— why you have an eight hour work day, right? Similarly when we're facing challenges of today, it's so important to know that you know, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and folks like that—these leaders that we look to did not work in isolation as Geniro referenced, right? They worked with large groups of people. They were in collaboration. They were in community with others and that's really important not just what has been done, but how it was done and some of the values that informed it because we are facing some unique and brand new challenges, but some of it is not new. Some of it is just the old stuff coming back.

So Yeah, that's my that's my old timey advice is like “listen, you young ones. Listen young blood”

**TANYA:** Consistency is good Rico. I like it. Cut and paste.

**RICO:** Yeah, I'll probably just... I think I said it better last time so I'ma just copy and paste it over.

**TANYA:** Yeah, but I'll chime in that regarding as well to reference again Marcus Garvey. Like for me, I know the study of history was very fundamental to the shaping of my perspective on the world and one of the things that I always remember is, you know, Marcus Garvey said like, “a

people without knowledge of their history and culture is like a tree without roots.” Like you can’t grow without that so much of our understanding of who we are is coming from history, not necessarily beginning with you know, enslavement because our history goes way past that but it’s so important to understanding our current situation and how we can shape the future.

**[SIGN OFF & CALL-TO-ACTION]**

**RICO:** And with that, we’ve officially kicked off season 5. We want to thank Tefere for the cameo and we’re looking forward to digging in deeper with him in the future. “What We Need Now” from all of you is text ‘WHAT WE NEED NOW’ to 86799’, we’ll send you a link to our blog that has a transcript and links to all of the reports and campaigns we referenced on the show.

Visit [StopCop.city](http://StopCop.city) to find out more about the important work happening in Atlanta. And be sure to dig into the Fossil Fuels vs Democracy report we mentioned earlier in the episode.

That’s all for this episode! As always, if you enjoyed what you heard, share it with a friend, like, comment and subscribe wherever you get your podcasts. That’s all for now but we’ll see you next time!