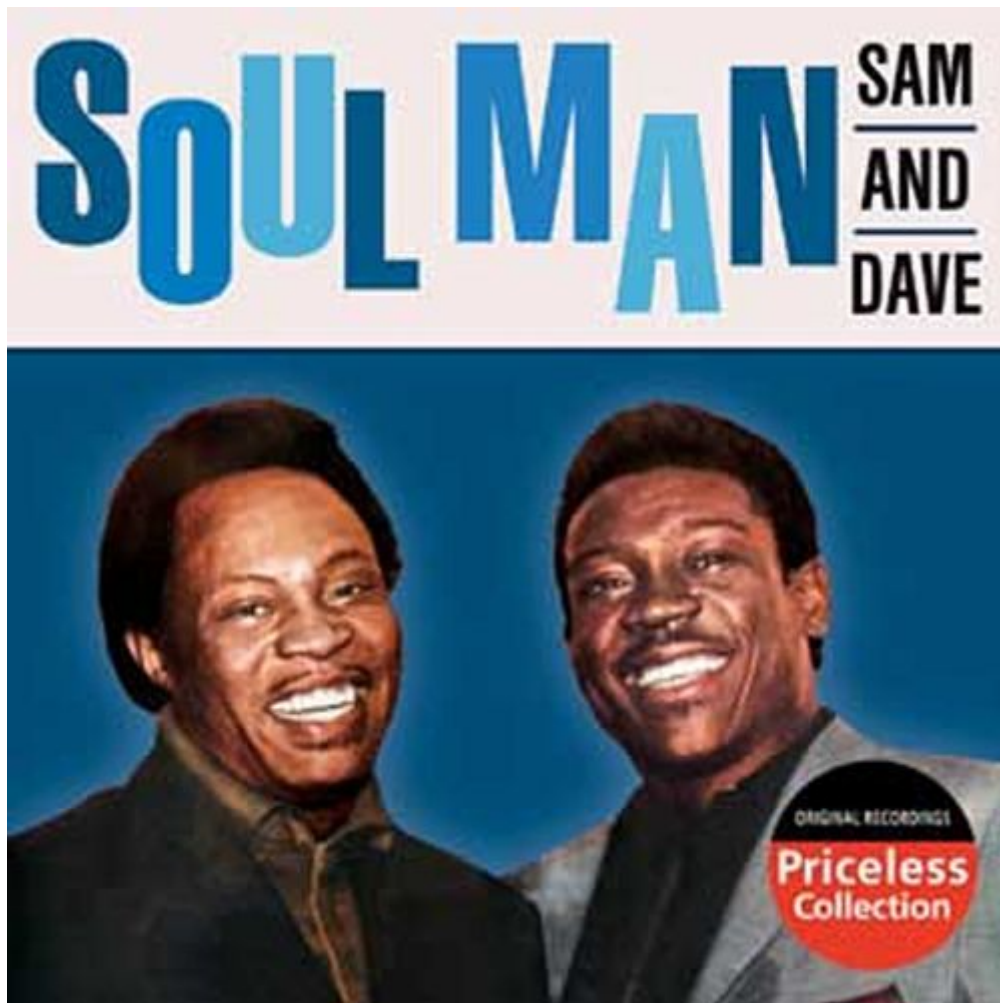


Soul Man

by Gary Fouse



On Tuesday evening, I happened to watch Fox News' Tucker Carlson's show in which one of his guests was Sam Moore of the famous duo of the 1960s, Sam and Dave (the latter is now deceased.) The topic under discussion was the refusal of so many pop stars to appear at the presidential inaugural on Friday. (Many who came out and said they would not perform had not even been invited according to Donald Trump.) Mr. Moore was saddened to hear that a prominent black singer had felt forced to withdraw because of the backlash she was receiving. Moore said that he would be in Washington on Friday to perform and/or support the inaugural. He also said that he didn't understand why so many people were refusing to attend or recognize Trump's presidency before he was even sworn in.

Mr. Moore is now 81 years old, ten years older than me. I recall so vividly back in the late 1960s when I was a young soldier stationed in Germany during the Vietnam war. Racial tensions in the army, like racial tensions across American society at the time, were high. As a military policeman, I often found myself right smack dab in the middle.

At that time, Sam and Dave's classic hit "Soul Man" had hit the American military community in Germany. Among black troops, the song was almost like an anthem to them. I recall being in GI bars when black soldiers came in and went straight to the jukebox and played "Soul Man." Yes, sometimes I thought it was meant as a statement of defiance.

Now comes Congressman John Lewis (D-GA), an authentic civil rights hero, whose skull was fractured during the famous Pettis Bridge march in Selma, Alabama. I greatly respect Congressman Lewis' civil rights credentials, but I disagree with many of his positions. I find it outrageous that he has joined some 50 other Democrat members of Congress who are boycotting the inauguration as well as his statements this week that he doesn't regard Trump's presidency as legitimate. I also think Trump was not wise to strike back verbally at Lewis. As president, he is going to have his hands full just running the country.

It is sad that so many Democrats of responsibility are behaving in such a petulant manner. Whatever the Russians did in their hacking during the campaign, Hillary Clinton lost this election on her own flaws not because of the Russians. Trump won the Republican nomination fair and square as well as the general election.

I wish that Lewis and others would follow the example of Sam Moore. We need to come together and give Mr. Trump a chance to lead this country. We can ill afford so many in our society turning their back on our incoming president.