

Reparations & Resurrection

REPARATIONS: A historic gathering will take place in Harriet Tubman (Baltimore) City on October 30th, that will carry the movement for Reparations for Afrikan People forward. Here, we discuss some of the issues and details surrounding this important event.

THE BATTLE FOR REPARATIONS COMES to Tubman City. And the NDABA will be there. On October 29 and 30, the spotlight on the issue of reparations comes to MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY and the PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE on Eutaw Street in Tubman City. The term "Ndaba" is a Zulu word that means "Big Sit Down", according to **Raymond A. Winbush, Ph.D.**, Director of the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University. The purpose: to bring together many of the nation's foremost activist organizations that are working to win reparations for descendants of the Afrikans who were brought to the United States as slaves during the *Maafa*, or "Great Disaster", in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

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RESURRECTION: The 1997 Million Woman March provided an inspiring example of what Sisters can accomplish in galvanizing and mobilizing Afrikan people. On October 25, its founder and driving force is organizing the MWM Reunion to carry out the second phase of their platform of *Repentance, Resurrection and Restoration*.

EMPRESS PHILE CHIONESU is a very busy woman. On top of the usual challenges of trying to survive in a Eurocentric and male-dominated culture, she has been involved in the Pan-Afrikan freedom and liberation struggle for over 25 years. She works as an independent consultant, performing artist, lyricist, vocalist and choreographer. She devotes much of her time to teaching others about natural alternative health and healing. She holds down a weekly Monday night radio show on THE HARAMBEE RADIO NETWORK (www.harambeeradio.com), where she regularly talks with other Afrikan-centered organizers as well as listeners to the Internet radio station. And in 1997 she was the founder and chief architect of the historic **MILLION WOMAN MARCH** in Richard Allen City (Philadelphia), PA, which was attended by crowds estimated up to 2 million people.

But she needed to do more. So, on the seventh anniversary of that historic event, she's doing it again.

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Mumia Abu-Jamal VOTE? FOR WHOM?

Let me state, from the onset, that I will not suggest who you should vote for. Nor should I. I have not voted for over 20 years, almost 25. As a captive in an American gulag, I cannot vote. It is therefore inappropriate for me to suggest what others may do.

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Editor's Column VOTE, ANYWAY

I just finished watching the second of the presidential debates. It seemed significant to me that, by delivering what some analysts considered his best performance, **George W. Bush**, the Republican Resident of the United States, was able to achieve what most observers described as a "draw" with his challenger, Democratic Senator **John Kerry**.

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THE ANCESTORS' CALL

Dr. John Chissell Triumphant

John T. Chissell, MD was born on May 31, 1926 in Charlottesville, Virginia, and received his pre-college education in the public schools in Alexandria, Virginia. He went on to earn his undergraduate degree from VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY in Petersburg, Virginia, with a major in Biology and minors in Physics, Chemistry and Psychology. Dr. Chissell earned his MD from MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE in Nashville, Tennessee in 1954. At the end of April, he passed from this world and began his transition to the Honored Ancestors.



Dr. Chissell received a "wake-up call" to the importance of maintaining optimal health in 1969 when he discovered that his own blood pressure was dangerously high. After stabilizing his condition with medication, he began to research natural ways to control his blood pressure, without relying on drugs. This led him to embrace a vegan (no animal or artificial products) diet which not only optimized his own personal health, but also gave him an invaluable gift that he would later share

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Indeed, a number of longtime reparations organizations will be in attendance. The NATIONAL COALITION OF BLACKS FOR REPARATIONS IN AMERICA (N'COBRA), the NATIONAL BLACK UNITED FRONT (NBUF), the DECEMBER 12TH MOVEMENT (D-12), the NATION OF ISLAM (NOI), the MILLION MAN MARCH LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (MMM-LOC), among others, will be here.

This will be the fourth such meeting over the last year. Ndaba I, Ndaba II and Ndaba III were held in various cities across the country, so this event will naturally be known as **NDABA IV**.

Reparations Defined

As stated by N'COBRA, reparations are "payment of a debt owed; the act of repairing a wrong or injury; to atone for wrongdoings; to make amends; to make one whole again; the payment of damages; to repair a nation; compensation in money, land, or materials for damages." Contrary to what many believe, the payment of reparations is firmly established in international law and in the laws of the United States.

External and Internal Reparations

Reparations have commonly been thought of as strictly those forms of compensation (monetary awards, land grants, social programs) designed to repair a person or a group of persons and paid for or provided by an outside entity, such as the United States granting reparations to Japanese Americans who were placed in concentration camps during World War II, or Germany and Austria paying reparations to Jewish survivors of the Holocaust (though not granting similar payment to survivors from other ethnic groups, such as Afrikans and the Romani, or "gypsy", people).

Many in the Afrikan community have been reluctant to pursue such reparations from the United States for the *Maafa*, primarily because they have become convinced that the US is so resistant to them that it is fruitless to continue the campaign for external reparations.

Another form of reparations, popularized by **Dr. Chinweizu** of Nigeria and Ancestor **Ken Bridges** (co-founder of the Matah Network out of Richard Allen City, Philadelphia, PA) is called *Internal Reparations*. These are the *reparations we pay ourselves*. In a sense, we are paying these reparations to ourselves by redi-

recting our dollars to Afrikan-owned businesses and causes, and thereby undertaking the task of *self-repair*. We are paying a debt we owe to ourselves for decades of self-neglect that came to be the unfortunate by-product of our feverish quest for integration during the Civil Rights Movement. Once we had earned the right to eat at White lunch counters and shop at fancy White-owned stores, we began to neglect our *own* businesses until today we spend less than 5% of our estimated \$600 to \$700 billion of disposable income with businesses owned by people who share our cultural heritage.

Should America Pay?

Perhaps the most comprehensive look at the Reparations issue is provided by 2003's *Should America Pay?: Slavery and the Raging Debate on Reparations*, edited by Raymond A. Winbush, Ph.D. He has compiled a variety of essays from a wide spectrum of representatives of the Afrikan-American intellectual world, as well as several Americans of European descent, each of whom makes a unique contribution to the issue of reparations using both historical analysis and commentary. Whether you support or oppose reparations, you will find something in this book to inform, inspire, and infuriate you.

For information, one can learn about the origins of the modern reparations movement. **General William T. Sherman's Field Order 15**, which allotted forty acres of tillable

land to the male freedmen (the original "40 Acres and a Mule"), was later rescinded when **Andrew Johnson** became president. **Ms. Callie House** and **Rev. I.H. Dickerson's** efforts at establishing the EX-SLAVE MUTUAL RELIEF, BOUNTY AND PENSION ASSOCIATION in 1894 resulted in their arrest and prosecution. Also discussed are the early-20th Century UNIA of **Marcus Mosiah Garvey** (who was also arrested and prosecuted and finally deported); **Queen Mother Audley Moore**; the rise of several Pan-Afrikanist and reparations-oriented organizations such as the REPUBLIC OF NEW AFRIKA (1968) and N'COBRA (1987); and the recent United Nations WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM (2001). This proves that the issue of reparations is not one that simply sprang up over the last few years in an attempt by a few opportunists to "dredge up the past" for personal gain. Indeed, the evidence in these essays, and other historical documents, is that the United States has fought tooth-and-nail to deny Afrikan people living in America their just birthright, from the abolition of slavery to the present day, and

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OUR PURPOSE is to educate the public and share ideas about community news, events, health and history. **OUR VISION** is an educated, organized and mobilized populace committed to the principles of **Ma'at** (truth, justice, righteousness, harmony, reciprocity, balance, compassion, order and propriety) and the preservation of Afrikan, Indigenous and other world cultures promoting peace, unity, respect, and true freedom.

that there was an Afrikan carrying the struggle forward every step of the way. Strong contributions to our understanding of this important history are provided by **Molefi Kete Asante**, Congressman **John Conyers Jr.**, **Jo Ann Nichols Watson**, **Deadria C. Farmer-Paellman** and the editor, Dr. Winbush, whose essay, "And The Earth Moved: Stealing Black Land in the United States", should open more than a few eyes.

Comparisons are, of course, made to other major reparations cases, including the successful campaigns of Jewish Holocaust descendants against Germany and Austria and of Japanese-Americans against the United States for their internments in concentration camps during World War II; the marginally-successful efforts by some of the First Nations (American Indians) to obtain compensation for the centuries of broken treaties, stolen lands, and genocide; and the so-far unsuccessful attempts by Indigenous Hawaiians to regain sovereignty over their homeland, as explained by Hawai'ian activist **Haunani-Kay Trask**. Several chapters look at each of these issues as a way of showing precedents that have been established but not yet recognized for Afrikan people.

Other legal precedents and some of the "burning questions" surrounding the determinations of eligibility for and the awarding of reparations are covered in essays by **Jon M. Van Dyke**, **Robert Westley**, and **Omari L. Winbush**, a lawyer and Dr. Winbush's son. A discussion between four of the US's most successful class-action lawyers from the November 2000 issue of *Harper's Magazine* offers a lively analysis of reparations in legal terms. **Kevin Outterson's** chapter on "Slave Taxes" offers a glimpse into the degree to which the federal and state governments profited from the slave trade, and should put to rest the question of whether or not the government of the United States was specifically involved in slavery.

Contemporary issues of organizing around the reparations issue are explained by several of the contributors, including **Conrad Worrill** of the NATIONAL BLACK UNITED FRONT, attorney **Adjoa Aiyetoro** of N'COBRA, and **Roger Wareham**, who presents an enlightening discussion of the preparations for the 2001 UNITED NATIONS WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM. Attorney Wareham's description of the deceitful, manipulative tactics undertaken by the United States and Western Europe, Afrika's most vicious exploiters and colonizers during the *Maa-fa*, to keep the issues of slavery as a crime against humanity and reparations off the WCAR agenda, should provide a strong lesson to all Afrikan people about the folly of taking one's case to one's former oppressor in search of justice.

A number of other contributors offer their own perspectives on reparations. These commentaries have the potential to inspire some and, perhaps, infuriate others, as commentaries tend to do, especially when they are presented, as here, in an effort to cover both sides of the reparations debate. **Christopher Hitchens**, **Molly Secours** and **Tim Wise** look at the issue from the standpoint of unearned White privilege, then and now, and the need for Whites to understand the value of reparations to not only repay a debt but also to relieve Whites of the burden of collective guilt. Meanwhile, **Armstrong Williams**, **Shelby Steele** and **John McWhorter** speak out as Black voices *opposed* to reparations, either due to doubts about the justification for them or concerns about the implications they carry for encouraging "victim" status for Afrikan people. For my part, while I strongly disagreed with some of the commentators, I commend Dr. Win-

bush for keeping an open mind when including them in this book. Only when both sides of a debate are heard can one see the entire picture and come to an *informed* opinion about reparations. This is the essence of the search for truth and the embodiment of the ancient Afrikan principle of *Ma'at* (truth, justice, righteousness, harmony, reciprocity, balance, compassion, order and propriety).

The modern implications of slavery are analyzed in three chapters. **Dr. Jewel Crawford**, **Dr. Wade Nobles**, and **Joy DeGruy Leary** discuss slavery's impact on Afrikan-American health care. Educator **Yaa Asantewa Nzingha** writes about the current mis-education system and the steps needed to create a self-affirming true education system for Afrikan people. And an interview by Dr. Winbush with two surviving sons of a former slave who currently are suing the United States government for reparations puts the lie to the claim that reparations have no merit "because none of the former slaves or their descendants are still alive," a classic dodge of the seasoned "reparations atheist".

All of these chapters are brought together in the end by a short Afterword by **Nontombi Tutu**, daughter of Nobel Laureate and Archbishop Emeritus **Desmond Tutu**. Within her four-and-a-half page essay, she blows away two of the anti-reparations lobby's key points. After reading the book, and her brief words, one may wonder why this issue has been so misunderstood for such a long time, and how so many alleged "intellectuals" can subject the issue of reparations to the vapid, ignorant analysis they so often apply.

Overall, this book presents a rich variety of viewpoints on reparations that should make it a worthy companion volume to **Randall Robinson's** 2000 work *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*. It gave me, and should give most readers, a deeper understanding of this issue. Afrikans who believe in the case for reparations should come away from reading this book better able to argue the case on historic, legal and international grounds.

The Ndaba Movement

As its literature states, the **Ndaba Movement** is "a Network of Organizations, Researchers, Scholars, Faith Based Institutions, and Activists representing the broad spectrum of the Reparations Movement in America. This network has been convening regularly over the last year to collectively intensify the Reparations Demand for Black People in America."

Among the growing list of participants in the Ndaba Movement are the NOI, NBUF, N'COBRA, the NEW AFRICAN PEOPLES ORGANIZATION, the REPUBLIC OF NEW AFIKA, the NEW BLACK PANTHER PARTY, the MALCOLM X GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT, the SHRINE OF THE BLACK MADONNA, the JERICHO MOVEMENT, AFRICANS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS FOR ENSLAVEMENT REPARATIONS, the GLOBAL AFRICAN CONGRESS, AFRICANS UNITED FOR SANITY NOW, SEHAH YOUTH INC., and several Churches. While this list does not include every Pan-Afrikanist organization, and some groups propose different strategies than the pursuit of Congressional action (HR 40, Conyers' bill to study the need for reparations) and litigation for obtaining reparations, this is an impressive coalition nonetheless, and more organizations will likely have joined by the time you read this.

The Ndaba Movement established nine (9) Working Groups during its previous organizing meetings: Organizational Collaboration; Legislative; Criminal In-Justice; Education; Black Spiritual Faith Community; *Ayare-Sa* (Internal Healing); Legal Strategies; Youth & Movement; and Research & Scholarship.

October 29-30: Ndaba IV

The agenda for Ndaba IV is as follows:

On Friday, October 29, 2004, from 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM, a **Welcome and Reception** will be held at the **Montebello Complex** on the grounds of **Morgan State University**, located on Argonne Drive, next to the Murphy Fine Arts Center, Harriet Tubman (Baltimore) City.

On Saturday, October 30, 2004, the full **Ndaba Movement "Big Sit Down"** officially begins. Registration starts at 8:00 AM, to be followed at 8:30 AM by words of Welcome, Purpose and Overview by the **Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan**, NOI and **Dr. Conrad Worrill**, NBUF. A special Presentation will be made at 9:30 AM, and the various Working Groups (listed above) will begin their presentations starting at 11:00 AM. These presentations, which will discuss the ways in which the various Working Groups are pursuing the Reparations goal with respect to their specific group focus, will continue until 4:30 PM, with a break for Lunch from 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM. At

4:00 PM, Wrap-Up and Action Plans will be formulated and presented, followed by Dinner at 5:30 PM.

On Saturday, October 30, from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM, the **Mass Rally** will be held at the **M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge, 1307 Eutaw Place, Harriet Tubman (Baltimore) City.** Key-note Speaker: The **Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan.**

Ndaba IV is **open and free to the public.** The entire Afrikan family is invited, even urged, to join the Ndaba Movement as it comes to Tubman City to carry forward the work of liberation, self-determination and repair for Afrikan people.

For more information, contact the following representatives:

- **National Black United Front**, 12817 South Ashland Avenue, Calumet Park, IL 60827. Phone: 708.389.9929. E-mail: nbufchi@always.net.

Our next issue will include a report on this Conference.

Million Woman March Mass Rally & Reunion

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Affectionately known as "**Empress Chi**" to listeners of her Monday night radio show (10 PM – 11 PM on Harambee Radio's Web Site), Empress Phile Chionesu is now building the MILLION WOMAN MARCH ORGANIZATION and establishing the MWM UNIVERSAL MOVEMENT, "the first global movement for Women of Afrikan descent", according to the statements on the Web Site, www.harambeeradio.com/mwm.

"From March to Movement"

The official kick-off of the MWM Universal Movement will take place at the **MWM ACTION CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION**, scheduled for **Thursday, October 21** through **Saturday, October 23** at THE FRIENDS CENTER, 15th & Cherry Streets, and the MANTIS SCHOOL OF BOXING in Richard Allen City. The Conference begins at **10:00 AM each day.** Registration for the full Conference is \$25.00, \$12.00 for Students. To register for the Conference, call **215.213.0078**, go online to www.harambeeradio.com or e-mail to mwmreunion1@yahoo.com. The Conference will include strategy sessions, workshops (that work) and forums to focus on the MWM platform issues and mission, including sessions on reparations & repatriation, political prisoners, the death penalty, Black women & violence & abuse, and "Voting for a cause & not just because".

Carrying forward the original 1997 Platform of "Repentance, Resurrection and Restoration", this event's main theme of "Resurrection" will continue the commitment to the holistic development and uplift of women of Afrikan descent and to "Make Herstory Today."

Other Special Events include the following (Please note change of Location on October 22):

- **Friday, Oct. 22, 7:00 PM:** Afrikan Village Community Town Meeting. Topic: *Reparations Now!* Location: *DuBois College House, University of Pennsylvania, 3900 Walnut Street, Richard Allen City.* Special Invited Guest: Alderman **Dorothy Tillman** of Chicago. Admission: Free. Photo ID Required.

- **Sunday, Oct. 24, 10:00 AM:** (1) "Mother, Daughter, Sistah Day", a day of bonding, building, celebration, caring, healing, and spiritual rejuvenation for women and girls of Afrikan descent, 10 am - 7 pm. Admission: Free. Afrikan Village Marketplace, Foods from the Afrikan Diaspora, and more. (2) "Sistahs" Rising Up talent showcase, 4 pm. Admission: \$7, Elders & Children Free. Location: CHEYNEY UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, America's oldest historically Black institution of higher education. It is located at 1837 University Circle in Cheyney, PA.

- **Monday, Oct. 25, 10:00 AM:** MWM Mass Gathering and Reunion, at CHEYNEY UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1837 University Circle in Cheyney, PA. The **MWM Five Year Action Plan** will be introduced, MWM chapters and components will be officiated, and strategic operations will officially begin. Invited Guest Speakers include **Carol Mosely Braun, Cynthia McKinney, Jill Scott, Pam Africa, Jada Pinkett-Smith** and **Sonia Sanchez.**

To be sure, the MWM Action Conference, Mass Gathering and Reunion and Afrikan Women's World Summits are an ambitious, and some might even say audacious, mission for anyone to accomplish, much more so if it's attempted without the benefit of major organizational or media backing. But one must not forget that these same doubts were expressed in 1997 when Empress Chi brought forth the original Million Woman March with a committed group of activists and organizers. Even without the public backing of high-profile activist organizations, that event not only drew speakers like **Congresswoman Maxine Waters** and **Winnie Mandela**, it brought over a million people, and some estimates say over *two million* people, to downtown Richard Allen City.

And even after the inspiring, and to some shocking, success of the March, there were still those who tried to ridicule it and its aims. Right-wing talk radio hosts, Black as well as White, attempted to lampoon the vision of the organizers, often mocking the very words of the published Platform for daring to state the blossoming Movement's aims in intellectual terms instead of stereotypical "street-slang".

Now, things are different. Those who believed that the success of 1995's Million Man March represented a "one-hit wonder" have since been shown the error of their presumptions. Empress Chi and the other organizers of this year's Action Conference, Convention and Mass Gathering have since made new friends and increased their contacts. And, as well as the Internet and e-mail campaign that resulted in 1997's victory, they have HARAMBEE RADIO (FREEDOM & AFRIKAN FAMILY) NETWORK, the official Radio Station of the Million Woman March, to assist them in carrying their message across the nation, indeed around the world. While it does not broadcast over a traditional AM or FM radio signal, anyone with a computer and access the Internet can listen at www.harambeeradio.com. Empress Chi's own talk show, "Visions of a NU DAY", airs Monday nights from 10 to 11 PM, and the Web Site also includes links to the MWM Web Site, www.harambeeradio.com/mwm, where supporters can receive updates to the schedule of events for the historic weekend of October 21 - 25. (Phone numbers to call the

MWM Reunion Coordinating Headquarters for more information are **215.213.0078** and **215.387.1617**.)

Also, unlike seven years ago, many who did not know of their efforts then, do now. Like a number of other organizations and publications that were just being born from the inspiration of the Million Man March, we at **KUUMBAReport** learned about the Million Woman March that year through word-of-mouth. Now, we join the chorus of voices in support of this and all efforts by committed Afrikan activists to bring the ancient Afrikan spirit of *Ma'at* to the people so that the Resurrection of Afrikan Civilization can be brought about.

Considering what was done with few resources in 1997, it is little wonder that Empress Chi is determined to make this special weekend a success. As Empress Chi herself has said, "The choices are few: either join us and other Brothers and Sisters who are doing the work, and are serious about Afrikan Holistic Self-Determination, or *get out of the way!*"

If I were a prisoner in South Africa, which has granted the vote to the imprisoned, it might be another matter. Indeed, if I were in several European countries, that might be the case. But, I am in America, and it makes little sense for me to do so.

That said, I do offer several observations, that may prove to be food for thought.

Please accept, or reject them, as you see fit.

Ultimately, it is virtually assured that many Americans, perhaps over 50%, in other words, a majority, will not participate in this year's upcoming election, as they did not in 2000.

It is a testament of the decline of democracy that so many Americans feel that a vote is a waste of time, and an empty exercise at the dawn of the 21st Century. Millions of such people, predominantly young, and working class, seem to feel that elections are little more than a lost cause.

What is surprising about the current election campaign is the similarities between both major candidates.

Both are men of means, from well-to-do families. Both are Yalies. Both are members of the secret society, Skull & Bones.

I have seen an amusing cartoon-graphic of a sarcastic bumper sticker printed in a libertarian-type magazine, which reads:

BUSH [with graphic of US flag, with skull & bones]
KERRY '04
REPUBLICRAT
One Vote, one party
NO choice

In the bottom, right-hand corner, in Olde English-style letters, is written: "Skull and Bones" [the graphic of this] "Yale University." It gets a grin out of me every time that I see it, for bumper stickers, which are a kind of witty shorthand of oversimplification, tend to do this, if they're good.

It says a lot about the perceptions of millions of voting-age Americans, who really see these things that way, and as a consequence, refrain from even the pretense of voting for what increasingly looks like a single party, with two heads.

VOTE? FOR WHOM?

Commentary by Mumia Abu-Jamal
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It also encapsulates rather nicely the gist of the now-flagging independent presidential campaign of consumer advocate, Ralph Nader.

To be honest, both men have varying styles, and different tones to their presentation. That given, Senator Kerry can, by no means, be seen as an anti-war candidate. On a recent news program, the Democratic candidate spoke about "staying the course" in Iraq; a use of terms that flashed back to the genocidal Nixon years, who said virtually the same thing when he wanted to shore up flagging support for the ruinous Vietnam War. I know that there are many people, perhaps millions, especially those most likely to hear, or read, these words, who feel, in their guts, that Sen. Kerry is the best possible choice. This arises from the growing ABB crowd ('Anybody But Bush').

The Sen. Kerry of today isn't the anti-war activist of yesteryear. He is, by his own words, a "tough-minded ... internationalist", who wishes to "stay the course" in Iraq, preferably with European allies to split the cost in blood and treasure.

Who to vote for? That's your choice ... but I thought you'd like to know.

--Copyright 2004 Mumia Abu-Jamal

[Read Mr. Jamal's latest work, *WE WANT FREEDOM: A Life in the Black Panther Party*, from South End Press (www.southendpress.org); Ph. #1-800-533-8478.]

"When a cause comes along and you know in your bones that it is just, yet refuse to defend it--at that moment you begin to die. And I have never seen so many corpses walking around talking about justice." - Mumia Abu-Jamal

PLEASE CONTACT the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal at P.O. Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143. Phone: 215.476.8812. Fax: 215.476.6180. E-mail: icffmaj@aol.com AND OFFER YOUR SERVICES!

Send our brotha some LOVE and LIGHT at: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM 8335, SCI-Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

WE WHO BELIEVE IN FREEDOM
CAN NOT REST!!

VOTE, ANYWAY

Editor's Column

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Two nights earlier, Vice Resident **Dick Cheney** was thought to have scored a slight victory in his only debate with Senator **John Edwards**, considered a novice in the art of the debate despite his extensive experience as a trial lawyer.

Meanwhile, Kerry failed to effectively slam Bush on his administration's failure to anticipate the *modus operandi* of the September 11th terrorist attacks (despite the fact that terrorists have been hijacking planes and conducting suicide bomb attacks for decades, and warnings had been given several times during the previous year, including from the outgoing Clinton administration), and Bush experienced several moments when he seemed to forget how to use the English language.

While all of this was going on, **Ralph Nader**, summarily banned from any of the debates, spent more time in court (trying to get on the ballot of one more state by November 2) than on the campaign trail, and his erstwhile Green Party seemed to be green with envy that he received any national exposure at all. The Libertarians seemed about as libertarian as Bush seems conservative, and Afrikan people were still agonizing over which candidate *whom they distrust* would win their vote.

Have you made up your mind yet?

Mumia Abu-Jamal sees little real difference between Bush and Kerry, and overall I agree with him. I do believe, however, that another four years of Bush is equivalent to an Express Elevator to Hell while a Kerry presidency at least promises to stop at most of the intermediate floors along the way, thus giving those of us who are committed to truth, peace and justice some time to block the shaft.

But many people still feel left out of the electoral process. They see the current race for the presidency as one in which the people lose no matter who wins, much like *Alien v. Predator*.

So, what is one to do?

The way I see it, there is one answer: Vote. Vote anyway. Yes, I know that Kerry supported the war on Iraq just like Bush, that Kerry wants to "hunt down and kill" *all* the terrorists (except those who work for the United States), just like Bush (who says "We must go on the offense", as if sending Michael Vick and Brett Favre will solve everything!), that Kerry really doesn't care about the Palestinians, just like Bush, that Kerry mouths the silly cliché about how dangerous **Saddam Hussein** was (even though Hussein's *neighbors* didn't seem to think so), just like Bush, and that Kerry believes in the United States' right to kick ass and take names whenever it perceives another nation as a threat, just like Bush. Kerry is a bit "kinder, gentler" with his American arrogance. But vote anyway.

If you feel that Bush is the man who will keep "our country" safe from terrorists, go on to the polls and vote for him, then rub yourself on the head. If you feel, as many Afrikan-Americans and progressives do, that Bush *must* be defeated *at all costs* and that the evil you don't know can't possibly be as bad as the evil you know, then go vote for Kerry and hope for the best.

(By the way, the naivete that so many Negro Conservatives show when they question "why do Black people love the Democrats so much?" really astounds me. Black people don't vote Democratic because they love the Democrats. They do it *because they're scared crapless of the Republicans!* And not one Republican president over the last fifty years or more has given

any reason whatsoever to feel otherwise, small-business tax cuts and new housing starts be damned. But I digress.)

But these two options, the "Praise the Lord and Pass the

Ammunition" vote and the "Throw the Scoundrels Out" vote, do not sit well with some of us. Well, there are two other possibilities.

There is, of course, **the Write-In Vote**. It's purely symbolic, since write-in candidates face such long odds, but if enough people voted for, say, **Mumia Abu-Jamal** or **Marshall "Eddie" Conway** for President, those results would at least have to be reported (provided the ballots aren't stolen) and that would make a public statement, just by making the news reports say their names. Maybe people will finally learn about their cases then.

The other idea is to **vote for No One**. Usually, there are other issues and contests on which to vote during an election. What would happen if millions of voters made choices for Congress, for Mayor or for any number of bond issues, local offices and referenda, *but only a few thousand voted for President of the United States?* Not only would the winner have taken a pitifully tiny percentage of the eligible voters, not only would he have earned a paltry number of those who even *voted* that day, the results could only serve as an indictment of the entire electoral process, including the Electoral College Drop-Outs. The president could not claim to truly represent the American people, even in his wildest, most delusional dreams, since so many voted for a Box Of Rocks (probably smarter anyway) for president. As **Gil Scott-Heron** used to say, *Mandate My What??*

(And by the way, I do not ascribe to the belief that anyone who doesn't vote has no right to complain. That, my friends, is a bunch of crap. Anyone who pays taxes, who has to obey the laws and who contributes *in any way* to improving this society has every right to complain, just as those who voted for the winners and the losers do. But I digress again.)

Now, I'm not saying exactly what *I'm* going to do on November 2. I do believe, as many do, that Bush must not be allowed four more wars--I mean years. This would indicate a vote for Kerry. But I don't see him as any godsend, either, however much better than Bush he may be. He and Edwards have spent the campaign trying to talk tougher than Bush ("We will kill all the terrorists") and not taking him on at his core values (I guess that among those would be the "core value" of Lying Through Your Teephus). But then, perhaps this is because their core values are not so much different. I'm getting tired of hearing Kerry yap on about how much he "respects" Bush. I don't want to hear that, and I don't think I know three people who do. When is somebody going to look somebody in the face and say, "*You're a liar?*" Well, that'll never happen with two members of Yale's **Skull-N-Bones** facing each other.

So, you can try to decide the election outright by voting for Bush or Kerry (I doubt that too many regular readers of this paper are Bushites). Or you can write-in a vote. Or you can vote for everything *but* president. Either way, you make a statement, however small, and as such you have done "your part", even if it's just to help expose the entire electoral process for the massive okey-doke that it is. Or, if it's what you want to do, you can boycott the entire process. You'll still make a statement, but people will most likely *ignore* you. But if several million voters were to write in Mumia, Eddie and **Leonard Peltier**

with others.

After a 32-year career as a family doctor, Dr. Chissell retired in 1987 "to study, model, motivate and teach" the principles and practices of optimal health. Dr. Chissell was the founder and Chief Consultant of the **Positive Perceptions Group** (an Optimal Health Education Network) and often spoke as a consultant, lecturer, writer, program producer and moderator. He also considered himself a life student of optimal health, optimal health education, natural and universal laws. He produced & moderated panel discussions on complimentary and alternative medicine since 1975 for the **NATIONAL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION** as well as numerous national melanin conferences. Among his best-known works is the book *Pyramids of Power!, an Ancient Afrikan-Centered Approach to Optimal Health*. He also had produced and hosted the **Healthline 2010** radio show, which was broadcast for several years on Thursday nights on **88.9 WEAA-FM**.

"As I began to study ancient Afrikan history I came to understand that by studying nature, as these ancient Afrikans suggested, answers to all problems are found and observed in a dynamic state," he once said. "The ancient Afrikans understood energy as the basis for everything in the universe.

"One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Great Cheops Pyramid in Egypt, still exists today to bear witness to the ability of these ancient Afrikans to create material from the mathematical expression of energy and intelligence. Since the ancient Afrikans knew that a pyramid is a mathematical expression of energy and intelligence manifested by the conversion of thought into material form, I chose the *Pyramids of Power!* to illustrate the concepts of this book.

"These *Pyramids of Power!* facilitate condensing much useful knowledge about energy, especially life energy, into a few words. ... to help [you] enjoy a longer, happier life."

Dr. John Chissell Triumphant

[Continued From Page 1]

John Chissell Triumphant

On Saturday, June 10, 2004, many in the Afrikan-centered community gathered at Leakin Park in West Baltimore to pay tribute to Dr. Chissell, and also to perform the Afrikan-centered ceremony of the ascension of the *ka* (spirit) of Dr. Chissell to the Honored Ancestors. This ceremony had been done once before in our lifetimes. That was four years ago, in this same park, where the *ka* of **Dr. Kwame SabakhuRa**, another Afrikan-centered holistic physician, a close associate of Dr. Chissell's and the Vice Chairman of the ORGANIZATION OF ALL AFRIKAN UNITY-BLACK PANTHER CADRE (OAAU-BPC), was honored in a similar way.

Members of the community served in a variety of roles on this day. KROMAH'S CATERING prepared a healthy vegan selection of food. A crew of volunteers worked long hours to construct the stage, and others prepared it for the ceremony by creating a beautiful Afrikan-centered backdrop and a framework to support it. **Heru-Ka Anu, Dr. Eleanor Hixon-Anu, Baba Ademola, Baba Sshem Saa** and others moderated the event. Dancers and musicians provided Afrikan-centered and spiritually-based entertainment. And other members of the community, because of their stature as community leaders and devotees of Dr. Chissell and his teachings, represented several of the Netcheru (Honored Afrikan Ancestors, including Ausar, Auset, Ma'at, Geb, Nut, and others) for the ceremony. **Dr. Ian Noel** portrayed the *ka* of Dr. Chissell, and he spoke as Dr. Chissell would have spoken. As the ceremony came to a close, Dr. Chissell's heart was weighed on a scale by the Ancestor Ma'at, with a feather on the other side. His heart having been judged to be as light as the feather, the *ka* of Dr. Chissell was granted entry into the hallowed halls of the Honored Ancestors by Ausar. At that moment, we all said good-bye to Dr. John Chissell, and said hello to Ausar John Chissell, or **John Chissell Triumphant**.

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Reflections on the Million Man March

By **Marvin L. "Doc" Cheatham, Sr.**
Phi Beta Sigma MMM International Coordinator

Monday, October 16, 1995 was, in my view, the greatest day next to birth, in the history of Black men.

I had the distinct pleasure of meeting, taking with and working for and on behalf of the **Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan**. I had, always, a great love and respect for the Honorable Minister, but seeing him, as often as I did, hearing him, as often as I did, feeling the love and compassion that he had for everyone, learning from him – my oh my – what a great man within our midst.

I was the Eastern Regional Director for PHI BETA SIGMA FRATERNITY, INC. at the time. We had our National Convention in Washington, D.C. in July 1995. I had signed the application for membership for **Benjamin Chavis Muhammad** into Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. when **Dr. Lawrence Miller** told me that I needed to speak before the convention about Phi Beta Sigma supporting Hon. Min. Louis Farrakhan and a major event he was planning for October 1995.

Phi Beta Sigma was the first predominantly African American organization, other than the NATION OF ISLAM, to formally approve, support and embrace the march. I, along with Dr. Miller, can take credit for this.

My area of expertise is with registering and educating voters. The 1996 National Elections saw the largest number of African Americans voting in the history of America.

My involvement has almost doubled as a result of the Million Man March. I am the Executive Producer for the Nation's Only Voter Education and Empowerment radio show entitled - "ROCIing 'D', VOTE." This nationally acclaimed show

is hosted by **Hassan Allen Giordano** who is the Maryland State Coordinator for the MARYLAND VOTING RIGHTS RESTORATION COALITION (MVRRC) and the Director of "UnLock D Block" Campaign. I am the Founder and Chairman of the MVRRC.

Marvin L. 'Doc' Cheatham, Sr., www.doccheatham.com
WOLB 1010 AM – Every Friday – 10-11:30 a.m.
Baltimore City Cable TV Channel 5

MILLION MAN MARCH

The hum, the dew, the grass, Black hue,
 Silhouettes, Dred Locks, young and old just alike,
 Sunrise, Blue Skies, Pure Air, I'm There,
 The Other, My Brother, Grand Pa not far,
 The March, My March, Our Million Man March,
 For Peace, for the Least, I'm Here, No Fear,
 Much Love, from Above,
 We did feel, For God we Kneel,
 No Fights, Just Rights, For All, on the Mall,
 Go Home, Be a Man, For Community, Take a Stand,
 Our Women, New beginning,
 Strengthening Family, Planting a Human Tree,
 Stand and Fight, Show Your Might,
 Children See, What Strength Should Be,
 Know Yourself, Show Some Heart,
 Give Those after You a Better Head Start
 If you hear it, Long Live the Spirit
 Of the Million Man March

--Eric Easton

For "Black" Males to Become African Men:

The Harambee AfriKan Cultural Organization
 by **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen We Langa**

The HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION has been in existence here at the state prison in Lincoln, Nebraska since at least the late '70s. The organization seeks to be pan-Africanist and Africentric and attempts to instill pan-Africanist and Africentric attitudes and values in our members. We meet around four times per month, with the meetings running for about two hours. We begin each session with a libation ceremony, in honor of our ancestors; followed by recitation of our organization creed and the *Nguzo Saba* (seven principles). Prior to each meeting, one of us puts a dedication on the chalk board. This is read. For the past year or so, we have been reciting the following pledge: "As African men, we commit ourselves to respecting ourselves and each other; to respecting African women; and to respecting our children and youth, and giving them proper guidance."

The body of the meeting is comprised of: reports from the members of the central committee, unfinished and new business, general discussion (usually of things on the news or on the yard that brothers want to talk about), and the education program. We try to have as much time as possible for this, as Africentric education is really the primary food we offer for the mental/

psychological/spiritual nourishment of our members and guests. The education programs may consist of presentations by the *Olotu Eko* (Education Chairman) or other members, presentations by brothers or/and sisters from the African community on the outside, video or audio tapes, or other means of relaying information and insight and generating thought and discussion. In general terms, our education programs deal with aspects of African/pan-African past and/or present history, African/pan-African cultures, traditional African values, current events and developments of importance to African people and/or that have potential for major impact on our lives.

We try to instill in our members and guests the idea that we are *African* people--not mere "Blacks" or "African Americans" and that we owe our loyalty to African people, collectively. We try to develop an understanding and appreciation of core traditional African values--such as: communalism, appreciation of ancestors, a holistic view of existence, a recognition of male and female as complements, etc.

Our goal is to bring about transformation from "Black" malehood to *African manhood*. "Black" malehood is a state of being in which a male who is of African ancestry recognizes he

has, to some visible degree, “Black” physical characteristics: brown skin, woolly hair, etc.; but he doesn’t see any significant connection between himself, his African ancestors, and a living world of African people. He has the male genitals but does not have an African-centered understanding of his responsibilities as a male adult--a *man*.

African manhood, on the other hand, involves a physically adult male of African ancestry striving to achieve an understanding of African history, cultures, and values; committing himself to African people; and directing his actions in a way that he believes will further the collective interests of African people.

We believe that the more a brother approaches and moves forward in African manhood, the greater are his chances of not only staying out of prison, once he’s been released, but being a powerful and constructive influence in the African community he is part of. Of course we know that, the more visible an African becomes as an agent of change that is Africentric in character, the greater are his or her chances of being targeted by police and/or other arms of government in this country. But an *African man* will have a set of principles and priorities and a level of discipline that will keep him from doing the kinds of things that too typically put a person with a “Black”-male mentality into jeopardy. An African man won’t be risking his life--literally or in terms of a prison sentence--to obtain material items that he does not need or that would serve little or no practical purpose; he won’t be trying to “prove” his “manhood” through silly confrontations with other brothers; he won’t be abusing women; he won’t be a slave to alcohol or drugs; etc. To put it another way, an African man is not likely to fall prey to foolishness.

But our goal of bringing about transformation from “Black” malehood to African manhood is one that encounters seemingly endless forces actively working to thwart it. If a brother makes it to every meeting, that’s only around 8 hours per month. If this brother gets in an average of 8 hours of sleep per night, that means that these forces acting against us have about 480 hours a month to kick out of his head what we have 8 hours to put in. The odds are against us.

We’re trying to cultivate in a brother the idea that he is an African and should have pride in himself and his people. But elements in the TV, film and music industries are bombarding him with the notion that he is a “nigger”/“nigga” (two pronunciations, one and the same meaning) and that neither he nor his people are worthy of respect. We’re trying to get a brother to respect and value African girls and women, while while these same elements are pushing him the message that African females are “bitches” and “hos” and have little value other than that assigned by their physical looks and sexual pleasure they can provide. We’re doing what we can to convince a brother that he has everything within himself that he needs to feel whole. But dudes on the yard, television, and other forces are working overtime to convince him that he *needs* designer clothes, flashy jewelry, luxury cars, etc. We’re putting out serious energy to build in a brother a commitment to study his African collective self, while he’s being confronted by his own family members--in the visiting room, over the phone, in letters--trying to ridicule and/or condemn him for getting involved in “all that Black s***.”

Those of us who hold leadership positions in the organization have to make realistic assessments of the obstacles that stand in the way of our goal of transformation from “Black” malehood to African manhood. We have to be patient and determined.

And we have to understand that we are not only challenged in our work by the outside forces spoken of here but by something very much inside many brothers--*fear*. This fear is not only in brothers but in people in this society in general. It is the fear of knowledge and understanding that we believe might be important. Knowledge and understanding that we see as insignificant doesn’t bother us. But when we are faced with learning and grasping and understanding of something of importance, we tend to get an irritation somewhere deep inside us, a nagging itch that tells us that the acquiring of the important knowledge and understanding will bring a new set of responsibilities into our lives and compel us to make changes. We get accustomed to living a certain way. We get comfortable with it. Many of us fear the possible disruption of this comfort, this familiarity with what we’ve done and how we’ve done it.

An African who has a “Black”-male mentality can do what he feels like doing. He can “obey his thirst” and go with whatever flow the marketers on Madison Avenue, and/or other elements of US Society, establish for him. He doesn’t have to expend much energy figuring out what wise or right decisions might be.

But an African who has grown into African manhood realizes that the African history, cultures, and values he has learned and *internalized* will not allow him to make certain choices or arrive at certain decisions without asking some strong and difficult questions. He understands he will have to make *difficult* decisions in which his *personal drives* or *wants* stand in opposition to the *needs* of his family or community. He knows that both foolish and wise choices are positioned in front of him and that, as a vital part of an African collective self, he cannot afford to be making foolish choices.

To put before a male of African ancestry in this country the prospect of African manhood is to, as far as he’s concerned, be saying, “You know how simple your life is now? Here’s how you can complicate it.” If he’s in prison, it’s probable that he’s used to a street life, a living in the fast lane of hustling, slinging dope, etc. Chances are, he’s accustomed to making decisions based on nothing more complicated than having an appetite--for sexual gratification, getting loaded, and/or obtaining some material toy(s) or other--and finding the first avenue that reveals itself in order to get the appetite satisfied. However dangerous or destructive this kind of life is, it is easy and simple, as far as decision-making is concerned. It is the economically poor male’s version of the Donald Trump/John Gotti life, the male’s American (capitalist) dream.

In the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, we are asking Africans in here to discard this dream in exchange for an aspiration for African liberation--something that will not be achieved without hard work, commitment, patience, courage, etc. As far as a lot of Africans in here--and in the African community on the outside, for that matter--we are asking a lot; we are asking too much. So despite the fact that there are 300 or so Africans in this joint, our membership rarely exceeds 30. However small the numbers, though, it’s uplifting and refreshing to see even these few trying to make “brother” more than just a word in their lives.

--December, 2003

Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen We Langa is a Veteran of the Black Panther Party in Omaha, Nebraska and a 34-year Political Prisoner in Nebraska. We will profile his case in a future issue.

The Afrika Page

The Unraveling of Haiti

THE SUFFERING NEVER SEEMS TO END IN HAITI.

As February came to a close, we also saw the end of the presidency of **Jean-Bertrand Aristide**, the victim of what some hailed as a popular revolt but many condemned as a vicious coup engineered by supporters in the United States.

As spring arrived, so did efforts to legitimize an illegitimate regime: US interests, including Bush administration Secretary of State **Colin Powell**, met with interim Prime Minister **Gerard LaTortue** to discuss the formation of the new Haitian government. \$9 million was appropriated by the Bush administration to aid Haiti's development (in a nation of 8 million people, that equates to about \$1.10 per person). The **Haiti Economic Redevelopment Act** was announced to clear the path for increased privatization by major corporations in the country, a measure which apparently is also backed by several corporate interests connected to the GROUP OF 184 (part of the "resistance" that ousted President Aristide) as well as some former members of the military regimes of past dictators **Raoul Cedras** and **Jean-Claude Duvalier**. In May, rebel leader, former police chief and convicted drug runner **Guy Philippe** announced a possible bid to run for Haiti's Presidency in 2005. He also announced the intent of the Haitian military, which Aristide had disbanded in 1995 because of its annoying tendency to terrorize the country's citizens, to reconstitute itself and return to old tricks. And finally, on August 16, fellow rebel leader and former FRAPH death squad commander **Louis Jodel Chamblain** was retried for the September 11, 1998 public assassination of pro-Aristide activist **Antoine Izmerly**. Since he had originally been convicted of Izmerly's murder when he was out of the country, he was entitled to a new trial when he returned according to Haitian law. Predictably, this time he was acquitted in a two-day trial marked by inconsistent testimony and a decided lack of interest by the alleged prosecuting attorney.

Then came **Hurricane Jeanne**. The new "government", apparently much more adept at rooting out and killing political enemies than at maintaining civil defense structures and taking care of its citizens, proved to be completely unable to protect the people of Haiti from the ravages of a Category 5 hurricane. Thousands of deaths from flooding and other destruction quickly ensued. Meanwhile, recent unrest in Port-Au-Prince is being blamed on pro-Aristide groups, says the BBC. The people of Haiti now teeter on the brink of a compounded humanitarian crisis even as their freedoms are being pulled out from under them.

More information can be found at www.haitiaction.net and the COUNCIL ON HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS Web Site (www.coha.org). But perhaps the best person to describe the suffering and sense of betrayal felt by the Haitian people is veteran Jamaican journalist **John Maxwell**:

Zombies a Go-Go

by John Maxwell
September 26, 2004

So **Kofi Annan** has at last discovered that 3 A's (Anglo-American-Australian) attack on Iraq was illegal and against

the basic premises of the United Nations. Some of us knew it then, and said so. Some of us wondered why Kofi Annan withdrew his UN inspectors from Iraq, giving the US carte-blanche to launch its bombers against an innocent people.

But courage was in short supply those days, as it is now, and cowards abound and proliferate. If the war on Iraq was a crime against humanity, what description do we use for the decapitation of the Haitian democracy?

The world Press, those brave gladiators for justice and truth, speak about "hapless Haiti" and the "hapless Haitians"; they hide their prejudice and deceit behind euphemisms and euphuisms, behind circumlocution, obfuscations and outright lies to conceal foul crimes. They say President Aristide fled 'amid a popular revolt' – of about 500 bandits in a population of 8 million.

But the Haitians are "hapless". Our leaders, like the leaders of the United States, France and Canada, the triad behind the criminal enterprise in Haiti, we are all full of hap: hatred, arrogance and prejudice .

While we, the hap-filled, are cleaning up and burying the few unfortunates killed by Category Five hurricanes, hapless Haiti is burying, in mass graves, thousands of the hapless killed by extremely heavy rain from a storm whose winds affected Haiti only minimally.

It is the second time in less than a year that thousands of hapless Haitians are dying because of rain.

History in Haiti has a habit of repeating itself. And history, in Haiti, consists largely of the United States and its assaults on Haitian freedom, all well meant, of course, and obviously intended to reduce Haiti's Haplessness index to manageable levels.

Who do they think they are?

Haiti's history of haplessness began more than 200 years ago when a Jamaican runaway slave called **Bouckman** lit the spark that fired the Haitian revolution. Bouckman, despite being a giant of a man, a born leader and probably a Muslim (think terrorist) did not survive to see the fruits of the revolution. He was betrayed, captured and his head stuck on a pike to discourage the others –perhaps a primitive attempt at exorcising demonic ideas of freedom and liberty from the revolutionaries.

It didn't work. The Haitians went on to defeat the French colonial forces, then defeated a British expeditionary force and then defeated a French expeditionary army under Napoleon's brother-in-law, killing some 60,000 Frenchmen in the process.

Before that the Haitians had fought alongside the American revolutionaries to help them throw the British out of the American colonies. Haitian help was crucial in at least two battles in which British power was broken – at Savannah, Georgia and at Yorktown.

In addition to all that, the Haitian revolution made another massive contribution to the new American nation: in defeating France, the Haitians exhausted the French treasury to the point where **Napoleon** had to sell Louisiana to the US or risk losing it to the British. The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the US.

So, if the Haitians contributed so much to American independence and development, why is it that in their extremity of grief and suffering, the United States treats the Haitians so mean-

ly? Originally, when the scale of the current disaster became known, the United States, the richest country in the world, offered about US \$60,000 for Haitian relief. Venezuela offered \$1 million, Trinidad and Tobago earmarked US \$5 million while the European Union pledged US\$ 1.8 million. Somewhat abashed, the US raised its pledge to US \$2 million. In the US itself, where the damage has been far less severe, the federal government alone is contributing more than \$6 billion in hurricane relief.

Charity, of course, begins at home or perhaps, it is simply another case of Haitian haplessness. But it must be said, however discreetly, that the United States has had a great deal to do with the current Haitian propensity to catastrophe, by destroying Haitian governments, Haitian infrastructure economic and social, and by policies which have reduced Haiti almost to a desert.

The United States and Britain refused to recognise Haiti after it declared independence. The US made recognition conditional on the former colonial power, France, recognising Haiti's autonomy. At that time, of course, the United States was busy titrating the humanity of blacks and came to the conclusion that a black was 60% human and therefore not entitled to all the rights of Man. And Liberty was as dangerous then as socialism was in the twentieth century.

Three-fifths Human

Oddly, the French, the Americans and the Haitians had all been inspired by the Enlightenment and Tom Paine's codification of the Rights of man. But only the Haitian revolution recognised all those rights. In the US blacks and women, for instance, had to wait more than a century to reach the status guaranteed to Haitians. France and the US maintained slavery more than 50 years after Haiti abolished it.

With the British and the US playing hard-ball on the recognition question, France felt able to demand that the Haitians should pay cash for their freedom. In Jamaica and other British colonies, the state paid the slaveowners compensation. In Haiti the former slaves paid twice, in blood and in treasure. When they had trouble paying back the French the kindly American bankers came to Haiti's rescue. We will lend you the money to pay off your debt, they said, and Haiti achieved another first becoming the first Third world debtor nation.

That debt was eventually paid off more than a century later—the last payment was in 1947. In the meantime it had caused Haiti the most extreme distress, wrecked her infrastructure and destroyed her independence. What the metropolitan countries could not achieve by conquest, they achieved by compound interest.

Early in the last century, the Americans became a little dissatisfied with Haitian repayment of their debt, and that led to an immediate increase in Haitian haplessness. The US invaded, changed their constitution, took away their land, chopped down their trees to plant sisal, logwood, coffee and pineapple and destroyed the agricultural base of the country. After they left officially in 1935, however, the Americans bequeathed Haiti an armed force which was corrupt, cruel, ungovernable and in thrall to the US. It guaranteed that any Haitian President either obeyed Washington or went into exile. In 1947 **Dumarsais Estimé**, said to be a socialist, was deposed after a couple of years. That began a period of dictatorship distinguished chiefly by American support for the ruthless **Duvalier** and his inane son, **Baby Doc**.

During the US occupation (1915 to 1935) the Haitians tried

to throw the occupiers out, only to be bombed and strafed in a eerie foretaste of the fascist bombing of Guernica during the Spanish civil war. Nobody made much of the Haitian version, because, after all, what were they but a bunch of "Niggers speaking French" as they were described by William Jennings Bryan, one of Colin Powell's predecessors as US Secretary of State. The Haitian resistance leader, **Charlemagne Peralte**, was like Bouckman, betrayed, murdered and his head exhibited to discourage the others.

History repeats itself in Haiti, but never as farce.

The Congo redux

Today, we watch as the United States leads its partners France and Canada in an adventure in Haiti which already resembles **King Leopold's** so-called "humanitarian" incursion into the Congo over a century ago. That enterprise, described by the King of the Belgians as rather like "a Red Cross scheme" left between ten and twenty million Congolese dead or with their hands and feet chopped off for misbehaviour. Four of them went to university.

The American adventure in Haiti has not so far been identified by anyone as an illegal enterprise. It would seem to be, on the face of it, an illegal trespass into the affairs of another country, an illegal complicity in the illegal removal of a duly elected head of state and an illegal interference in the sovereign rights of Haitians—for a start.

Mr. Kofi Annan, who has now condemned the American adventure in Iraq may yet find time to condemn the one in Haiti, but probably not before the US elections. He is the chief guardian, it is alleged, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In the meantime, however, it is clear that the intervention has had some catastrophic consequences. The bandits let loose and sanctioned by the Americans, French and Canadians, have destroyed the health, educational and democratic systems of Haiti—such as they were. More important for the latest disaster, they destroyed the Civil Defense structure, the network which would have warned Haitians of impending disaster and which would have at least attempted to rescue those worst affected. It is likely that had this organisation been in existence instead of in hiding from the interim government's murderous heroes, so many would not have died.

But it is also clear that the Americans, Canadians and French do not believe that the Haitians are entitled to the same rights as other human beings. Perhaps, using their renowned scientific expertise and prowess, they have once again figured out what precise degree of humanity is possessed by each Haitian, and perhaps by each Jamaican and Trinidadian also.

That, of course, would explain why it is not necessary for anyone to discover what really happened on February 29, when President Aristide was posted to the central African Republic as "cargo" in a CIA plane which just happened to be on hand when the US Ambassador, Mr. Foley, decided to pay a call on the President before dawn one morning.

Perhaps it may explain why various Caribbean leaders are content to watch the Haitians die without being able to organise to help themselves, because of course, the Haitians are "hapless" and not 100% human.

It may not have occurred to our leaders that in condemning the Haitians to 'haplessness', they are in fact, recognizing that the

United States has the right to legalise a new class of human being, one without rights – like the thousands locked away in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and a host of secret dungeons round the world.

It may not have occurred to our leaders that in acquiescing to this foul doctrine they are not only condemning Haitians to death but they are condemning themselves and us. It may not have occurred to them that in their acquiescence they are occupying the same moral ground once inhabited by such as Pierre Laval, Vidkun Quisling, Pol Pot and the Africans who sold their brothers into slavery.

But, as the West Indies cricket team has proved, in some cases, leaders are expendable. When the Laras, the [Jamaican Prime Minister **P.J.] Pattersons** and the Owen Arthurs fail us, there may be others on whom we can depend to defend the hapless and the wretched of the earth.

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John Maxwell's columns can be found at www.haitiaction.net.

Sudan: Crisis In Darfur

OF ALL THE TROUBLE SPOTS IN AFRIKA TODAY, the most talked about is probably the Sudan, in particular Darfur.

The name means “Land of the Fur”, but if the Janjawid have their way, it will not be for long. At least since 2003, a campaign of what many call genocide has been going on.

An area about the size of France in the western part of a country that is a quarter of the size of the United States, Darfur had long been inhabited by several ethnic groups of farmers (mainly the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa) as well as nomads (the Beni Hussein and the Rizeiqat among others). These groups had lived together in delicate harmony for centuries, the farmers planting their crops and harvesting them, then the nomads bringing their flocks into the area to graze and finally to fertilize the soil for the next year's planting season. When the desert started to encroach on the land, the farmers extended their planting season while the nomads brought their herds in earlier, upsetting the balance. Disputes ensued, but a mediation system was able to settle them. For a while.

As the resources became more scarce and the disputes intensified around January 2001, the farmers looked to the government in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, for assistance with mediation and protection from attacks. Feeling no adequate response was coming from the government, they formed organized militias in February 2003. Khartoum responded with a draconian campaign of disarmament that allowed gross violations of the human rights of farmers and nomads alike, and the Sudanese president, **Omar El-Bashir**, made an announcement in early April 2003 that military force would be used to crush the militias.

One wonders if the timing could have been worse for Sudan. The bitter civil war with the southern rebels had been raging since the country gained its independence from the colonial powers of Europe 50 years ago. Finally, in 2003, that war was coming to an end. Then, the conflict in Darfur jumped off.

In late April 2003, an attack by one of the rebel groups on the Al Fasher airport killed close to 75 Sudanese police officers, and the “war” was officially on.

According to a number of international human rights organizations, the government then began working alongside the

Janjawid, a militia made up of many, but not all, of the nomadic groups, supplying them with weapons, ammunition and even escorts as they attacked and ravaged village after village in Darfur. Sometimes, planes would drop crude bombs on a village to soften it up for the Janjawid, who often would sweep down upon the village on horseback. After executing the men and boys, and raping and/or killing the women and girls, the Janjawid would often burn the village to the ground.

A number of atrocities have been committed in these attacks including mass killings, the use of rape as a weapon of war, the forced relocation of survivors to “internally-displaced persons’ (IDP) camps”, the destruction of crops and livestock, and the complete destruction of villages. Torture and slaughter of pregnant women and babies have occurred. Ethnic slurs are reportedly hurled at the victims by Janjawid as they sack and pillage.

Close to 100,000 people have died, 70,000 from famine alone since March according to the World Health Organization, and over 1.5 million have been forced from their homes, most fleeing to IDP camps but some escaping eastward to neighboring Chad. In the IDP camps, when the men and boys leave to gather food, they are reportedly killed by Janjawid who surround the camps, and when women and girls do so, they are raped.

In the international community, condemnation seems nearly unanimous. Certain oil-consuming countries, such as Canada and China, have been careful with their scorn, since they and their petroleum companies depend on oil from the southern area of Sudan. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH and others have charged the Sudanese government with crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing, but have been slow to use the word “genocide”, as have a number of world powers. But, only ten years after **Rwanda** was consumed by genocide due to international inaction, it seems that the world will not wait so long this time. The Sudanese government is reportedly attempting to stop the violence, though the task is difficult and they must deal with distrust from the human rights organizations. The AFRICAN UNION and others have observers in place to do what little they can to slow the violence and aid the refugees. But the rainy season has compounded the crisis, threatening them with starvation since they have been unable to farm.

Within the United States, reaction has been somewhat mixed, although Sudan's defenders seem to be outnumbered. Many Afrikan-American Muslims, suspicious of motives for attacking Sudan after the recent civil war with the southern militias, do not believe the reports of government complicity in genocide and see the push for international action as the latest step in a coordinated attempt to destroy yet another Muslim and Afrikan nation. Meanwhile, the protests by AFRICA ACTION, TRANSAFRICA and others continue. And Secretary of State **Colin Powell**, after a recent visit to Darfur and discussions with Sudanese government officials, has announced that he believes genocide is being carried out, despite the efforts of the government.

The stories of the suffering people of Darfur, and by extension all of Sudan, are enough to make you weep. They are indicative of what is happening in far too many places in Afrika. But we need to understand what is happening there, as best we can, from an *Afrikan* perspective, to the degree that such a thing is possible. In our next issue, we will share our analysis of the conflict to contribute, in some small way, so Afrikan people can begin to figure out what *we* can do to stop this continuously rising body count among our people all across our own ancestral home.