



**ACHIEVING AFRICAN LIBERATION:
NANA GARVEY'S RADICAL REDEMPTION AND UNFETTERED FREEDOM**
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DR. MAULANA KARENGA

ON THIS AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY, IN this year of our people 6263 (2023), as always, we of the African American Cultural Center (Us) send greetings of solidarity and continuing struggle to all African peoples throughout the world African community, and to all oppressed, struggling and freedom-seeking peoples in the world. And we reaffirm our uncompromising commitment to the liberation and uplifted life of African people everywhere and to a shared African and human good and the well-being of the world and all in it.

Let us begin, as is our custom, paying rightful homage to our honored ancestors. And so, we offer *tambiko*, sacred words and water to them, those who opened the way forward for our people and our liberation movement. Indeed, they are the unbending bridges that carried us over, those who lifted up the light that lasts, our deepest and most defining moral and spiritual values. Let it be said of us, we honor them through our still standing steadfast in struggle, still speaking truth to the people and to power and still trying our best to live and advance the awesome and compelling legacy they left us.

Here I want to pay special homage on this year's African Liberation Day to the Hon. Marcus Garvey by lifting up his legacy as a pan-African of the highest order whose life, work and struggle were dedicated to *the radical redemption of Africa and the unfettered freedom of African peoples everywhere*. He, like all our great men and women, offers us lessons we can learn from, a model we can emulate and a mirror by which we can measure ourselves. And so, we lift him up and honor him by trying as best we can to live and advance the beautiful and challenging legacy he left us.

In teaching us the morally compelling nature of our liberation struggle, Nana Garvey reminds us of the sacrifices made by our honored ancestors and tells us we have an awesome debt and duty to fulfill. He says to us, "I trust each and every one of you therefore will realize that you have a duty which is incumbent upon you; a duty that you must perform, because our fore-bears who suffered, who bled, who died had hopes that are not yet completely realized" by the righteous and relentless struggle they waged for Black liberation, African liberation. "They hoped that we as their children would be free, but they also hoped that their country (Africa) from whence they came would also be free to their children, their grand-children and great grandchildren at some future time".

He tells us that their struggle and sacrifices were acts of "transcendent love", a love that calls for reciprocity from us. Thus, he asks us, "What then are you going to do to show your appreciation of this love, what gratitude are you going to manifest in return for what they have done for you? As for me, knowing the sufferings of my fore-fathers I shall give back to Africa that liberty (freedom) that she once enjoyed hundreds of years ago, before her own sons and daughters were taken from her shores and brought in chains to this Western World?", and before colonialism and its accompanying genocide and plunder. Also, he says, "I shall struggle on and urge others of our race to struggle on to see that justice is done to the Black peoples of the world".

Furthermore, Nana Garvey teaches us that we must strive and struggle for an unfettered freedom of Africa and African people. He says to us Black people, Africans "have as much right to be free as any other race that

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God Almighty ever created, and we *desire freedom that is unfettered, freedom that is unlimited, freedom that will give us a chance and opportunity to rise to the fullest of our ambition*". Defining this unfettered freedom further, he states that it is "a freedom that has no boundary, no limit, a freedom that will lift us to the common standard of all men, whether they be white men of Europe or yellow men of Asia. Therefore, in our desire to lift ourselves to that standard we shall stop at nothing until there is a free and redeemed Africa".

This calls for us to wage radical and righteous struggle for our freedom. Nana Garvey reminds us that "'radical' is a label that is always applied to people who are endeavoring to get freedom". But he counsels us that "they cannot be anything else, because they are revolting against the conditions that exist. Conditions as they exist reveal a conservative state, and if you desire to change these conditions you must be a radical" and therefore, pursue and secure the radical redemption of Africa.

Also, he reminds us that we are our own liberators saying, "Chance has never yet satisfied the hope of a suffering people. Action, self-reliance, the vision of self and the future have been the only means by which the oppressed have seen and realized the light of their own freedom". Likewise, he tells us not to imagine and be immobilized by the hope of change of heart or mind of the oppressor

on his own. For after centuries of oppressing us, our oppressor "is not going to liberate us to the higher freedom, the truer liberty, and the truer democracy. We have to liberate ourselves". Indeed, "If you want Liberty (freedom) you yourselves must strike the blow. If you must be free you must become so through your own effort, through your own initiative".

FINALLY, NANA MARCUS GARVEY TELLS us on this African Liberation Day and always to remember we are struggling not to defeat and then emulate our oppressor, but to imagine and bring into being a new world of freedom, justice and shared human good. He says to us "I pray God that we shall never use our physical prowess to oppress the human race, but we will use our strength, physically, morally and otherwise to preserve humanity and civilization". We, African peoples of the world are, at this hour of urgency in human history, profoundly aware, as Nana Garvey notes, of the pervasive lack of "the sense of justice, the sense of love, the sense of equity, the sense of charity that would make men happy, and make God satisfied". Given this, he informs us that we are "called upon to evolve a national ideal, based upon freedom, human liberty and true democracy". And this would not only lay the basis for the radical redemption and unfettered freedom of Africa and African people everywhere, but also decisively aid in initiating a new history and hope for humankind.▲

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