

# The BLACK C o M M e n t a t o r

An independent weekly internet magazine  
dedicated to the movement for economic justice,  
social justice and peace - Providing commentary,  
analysis and investigations on issues affecting  
African Americans and the African world.

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**January 8, 2009 - Issue 306**

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## **Reparations for African People Will Never Die!** **Worrill's World**

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Our great historian and departed ancestor, Dr. John Henrik Clarke described in his classic book, *Notes for an African World Revolution*, that, "The idea of uniting all Africa had its greatest development early in this [20th] century." In this context, the idea of Reparations for African people will never die.

Dr. Clarke wrote that, "In 1900, the Trinidadian lawyer, H. Sylvester Williams called together the first Pan African Conference in London. This meeting attracted attention and put the word Pan African in the dictionaries for the first time."

According to Dr. Clarke there were only thirty delegates to the conference that came mainly from England, the Caribbean, and the United States. Dr. W. E. B. DuBois led the small delegation from the United States. When we use the term Pan Africanism we must be very clear. Pan Africanism is the belief that people of African ancestry throughout the world have the same racial and cultural characteristics and the same social and economic conditions as a result of our African origin.

The Pan African component of the Reparations Movement launched its first international conference on Reparations in Lagos, Nigeria in December of 1990. After that conference, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) set up a Group of Eminent Persons (GEP), in June 1992. Its aim was to work out the different ways in which to proceed, and secure technical advisors, who would help solve some of the difficulties associated

with the claim for reparations.

A second conference on Reparations was held in Abuja, Nigeria in 1992, attended by representatives from throughout the Diaspora. That conference issued a declaration, "The Abuja Proclamation," which called for a national reparations committee to be established throughout Africa and the Diaspora. The African Reparations Movement (UK) was formed in 1993, as a result of this proclamation.

It is important that we understand that the idea of Reparations has caught on with the masses of African people worldwide, in spite of the opposition of the forces of white supremacy.

A delegation from the United States, led by the late Dr. Jacob H. Carruthers and Dr. Ron Walters, participated in Abuja's First Pan African Conference and reported back to the leaders of the Reparations Movement, in this country, their observations and analysis of the conference.

As we think about Pan Africanism and continue our struggle, let us reflect on the contributions of our ancestor, Malcolm X. We must remember his role in helping to stimulate the Pan African Movement that we stand on today as we fight for Reparations for African people throughout the world.

In Malcolm's last visit to Africa before his untimely departure from us, he visited the President of Ghana; Osagyefo Dr. Kwamé Nkrumah. Malcolm gave this account of the meeting in his autobiography. Malcolm said, "We discussed the unity of Africans and people of African descent. We agreed that Pan Africanism was the key also to the problems of those of African heritage.. My time with him was up all too soon. I promised faithfully that when I returned to the United States, I would relay to Afro-Americans his personal warm regards."

There is no doubt that the spirit of Malcolm and other great Pan African leaders are helping to push the Reparations Movement forward.

"The Abuja Proclamation" should be the basis for our continued organizing of the Reparations Movement throughout the world. The following are some of the key points presented in "The Abuja Proclamation: on April 27-29, 1993. These ideas are still relevant to our organizing work in the Reparations Movement today:

"Recalling the Organization of African Unity's establishment of a Machinery the Group of Eminent Persons for appraising the reparations in relation to the damage done to Africa and its Diaspora by enslavement, colonization, and neo-colonialism.

Convinced that the issue of reparations is an important question requiring the united action of Africa and its Diaspora and worth of the active support of the rest of the international community.

Fully persuaded that the damage sustained by the African peoples is not a **thing of the past** but is painfully manifest in the damaged lives of contemporary Africans from Harlem to Harare, in the damaged economies of the Black World from Guinea to Guyana, from Somalia to Surinam.

Cognizant of the fact that compensation for injustice need not necessarily be paid in capital transfer but could include service to the victims or other forms of restitution and readjustment of the relationship to both parties.

Convinced that the claim for Reparations is well grounded in International Law."

We must always remember what Dr. Clarke taught us and that is, **"powerful people never teach powerless people how to take power away from them!"**  
**Reparations for African people will never die!**

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