

RACISM, REPARATION & RECONCILIATION: THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

by

©V. A. Shepherd, Director, Centre for Reparation Research, UWI

The International Decade for People of African Decent - Summit

March 8-11, 2018

GUYANA

Paying Respects to Foremothers

- When the true history of the antislavery cause shall be written, women will occupy a large space in its pages; for the cause of the slave has been peculiarly woman's cause.
(Frederick Douglass)

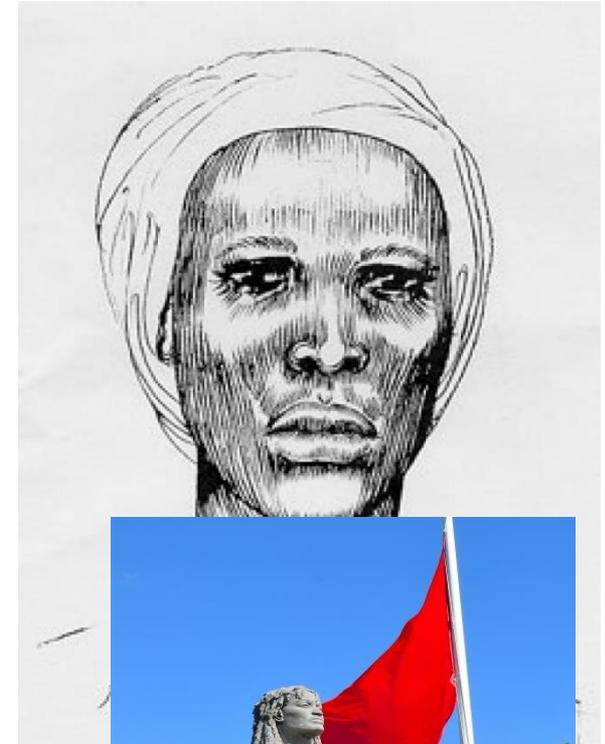
African Rebel Women in the Americas

- Antigua/Barbuda: Abba, Philda, Queen
- Barbados: Awbo, Nanny Grigg, Yabbo, Harriet, Phyllis
- Bermuda: Angelica, Mary Prince (also Antigua & Turks & Caicos); Sally Bassett
- Dominica: Charlotte and Angelique
- Guyana: Susanna, Amba, Phati, Lucretia
- Haiti: Cecile Fatiman, Marie-Jeanne Lamartinière
- Jamaica: Nanny and Mountain Lucy of the Maroons; Mary Ann Reid; women of the 1831/32 Emancipation War (Ann James, Eliza and Jane Whittingham); Whaunica

African Rebel Women in the Americas

- St. Kitts/Nevis: Betto Douglas
- St. Martin: One Tete Lohkay (breast cut off because she was categorized as a run away)
- St Vincent/Grenadines: Nelly, Eliza, Sue, Sally, Phoebe
- Suriname: Alida
- Trinidad & Tobago: Abenkina, Luce, Mary Ann, Aliza, Jeannette, Marguerite, Adelaide Disson (Queen of the 1805 plot in Trinidad)

Alida, Sally Bassett, Nanny, One Tete, Solitude



Opposition

- *Caribbean nationals are not entitled to, and will never get reparation for slavery because from ancient times until it was abolished in the 19th century, slavery was regarded as a natural institution and was practised by all ancient civilizations. As such, it was an unspoken agreement that slavery was right. Planters in the Caribbean were not slave raiders; they obtained slaves by purchasing them from sellers.” (Howard Rennie)*

More Opposition

“Mr. Prime Minister, there is currently a well-organised effort in the Caribbean to get your country to pay us black descendants of African slaves in this region reparations for slavery. While some of our intellectuals think that the reasons are sound, I, a proud black man, think that the reasons are not only baseless but also insulting. it can be argued that your government has already paid reparations. Firstly, our ancestors in Africa were paid. Secondly, during the 1960s and later, your country gave us these priceless islands. Thirdly, your government has helped to sustain us with generous technical and financial grants and assistance. Why give us another economic bailout with reparations? Please, don't insult our pride with more handouts such as reparations.” (Dingwall)

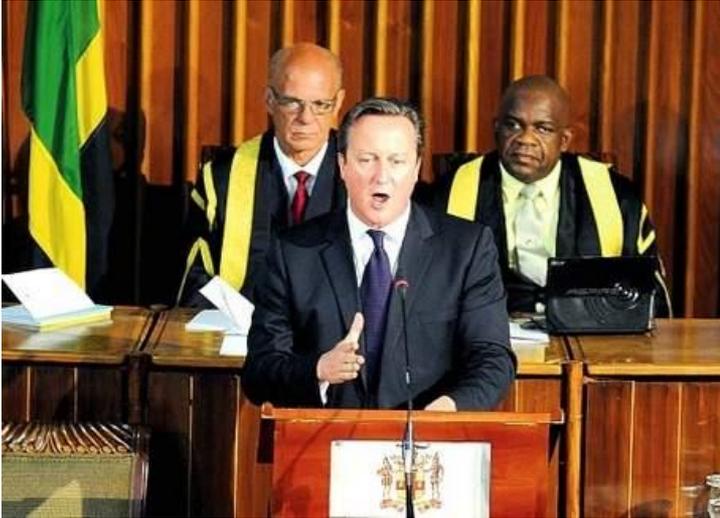


Reparation Entrenches Victimhood



- the horrors of slavery cannot be used to justify reparation for individuals of African descent residing in the Caribbean. Arguments in favour of providing reparation to the descendants of slaves living in the British Caribbean are quite

Move on and Forget It!! Cameron, 2015



Jamaica should 'move on from painful legacy of slavery.' **British prime minister ducks official calls for UK to apologise for its role in the slave trade or pay reparations.**

Discriminatory Treatment

- The attempt to trivialise and diminish the significance of 300 years of British enslavement of Africans and the trade in their bodies reflect the continued ethnic targeting of our ancestors and their progeny for discriminatory treatment in both the annals of history and in the present.” (P.J. Patterson, 8/10/15)

The Price of Freedom – Haiti/Ayiti

- France demanded that Ayiti pay 150m gold francs – ten times the fledgling black nation's total annual revenues. Reduced to 90M
- It took Haiti 122 years (1825-1947) to pay off the debt imposed
- Ayiti demands restitution of that money
- This historic payment was illegitimate and illegal
- The loser set terms of settlement!!

Compensation Indecency

- 46,000 enslavers were compensated more than twenty million pounds (£20M) at Emancipation in 1834
- This is estimated to be £16.78 billion (USD\$23B]today
- An estimated £27M more through the Apprenticeship system as settlement for the loss of their “property”

Enslavers in Guyana given huge pay-outs

- Big pay-out to James Blair, MP
- Homes in Marylebone, central London, and Scotland.
- Awarded £83,530 (£65m today), for 1,598 on the plantation he had inherited in then British Guiana.
- John Gladstone, father of 19th-century prime minister William Gladstone, received £106,769 (£83m today) for 2,508 enslaved people across nine plantations.
- His son, who served as prime minister 4 times during his 60-year career, was heavily involved in his father's claim.

CARICOM'S TEN POINT ACTION PLAN

- Full, Formal Apology
- Indigenous Peoples Development Programme
- Repatriation
- Development of Cultural Institutions
- Addressing the Public Health Crisis
- Education & Illiteracy Eradication
- Development of an African Knowledge Programme & Restoration of Fractured/Ruptured African Connectedness
- Psychological Rehabilitation
- Technology Transfer
- Debt Cancellation

The POA for the Decade and Reparatory Justice

- Acknowledging and profoundly regretting the untold suffering and evils inflicted on millions of men, women and children as a result of slavery, the slave trade, the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, apartheid, genocide and past tragedies, noting that some States have taken the initiative to apologize and have paid **reparation**, where appropriate, for grave and massive violations committed, and calling on those that have not yet expressed **remorse** or presented apologies to find some way to contribute to the **restoration** of the dignity of victims; ” *for “grave and massive violations committed”*

The Programme for the Decade and Reparation, contd.

- Invites the international community and its members to honour the memory of the victims of these tragedies with a view to closing those dark chapters in history and as a means of **reconciliation** and healing; further noting that some have taken the initiative of **regretting** or expressing **remorse** or presenting apologies, and calls all those who have not yet contributed to restoring the dignity of the victims to find appropriate ways to do so and, to this end, appreciate those countries that have done so
- Calls upon all States concerned to take appropriate and effective measures to halt and reverse the lasting consequences of those practices, bearing in mind their moral obligations.

Will Britain Pay?

- Britain was anxious to use federation as a means of discarding its then unwanted responsibilities as a colonial power. Britain “sought withdrawal from the Caribbean area without providing the sort of economic aid to which, on any showing, the colonies were entitled.” (G.K. Lewis)

The UK's Position

“The British Government does not believe that reparations are the answer”



Legally Correct

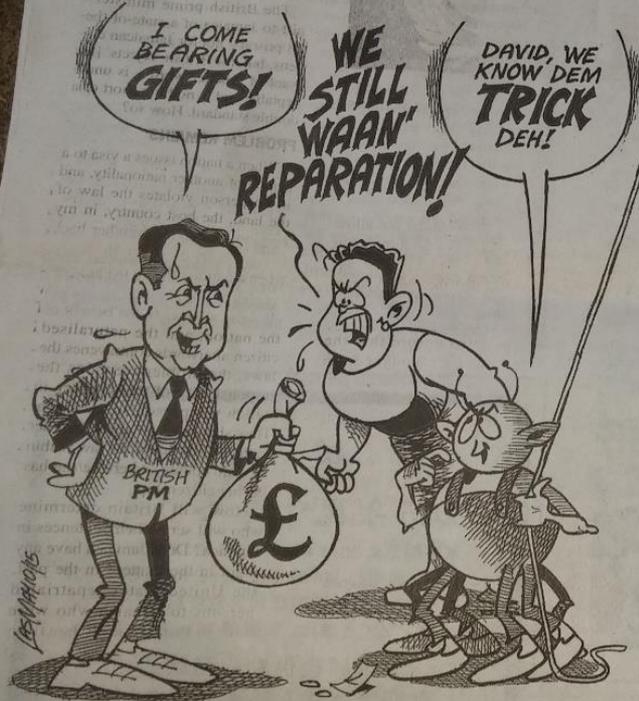
- **The right to reparation is recognized by international law**
- **There is no legal barrier to prevent those who still suffer the consequences of enslavement from claiming reparation even though the crimes were committed against their ancestors**
- **International law provides the means for descendants to receive recompense on behalf of their ancestors.**

Live Up to Your Responsibility UK!

- *“An administering power...is not entitled to extract for centuries all that can be got out of a colony and when that has been done to relieve itself of its obligations by the conferment of a formal but meaningless – meaningless because it cannot possibly be supported – political independence. Justice requires that reparation be made to the country that has suffered the ravages of colonialism before that country is expected to face up to the problems and difficulties that will inevitably beset it upon independence.” (Sir Ellis Clarke, 1964)*

We Still Want Reparation!

The opinions on this page, except for the above, do not necessarily reflect the views of The Gleaner. To respond to a Gleaner editorial, email us: editor@gleanerjm.com or fax: 922-6223. Responses should be no longer than 400 words. Not all responses will be published.



We haven't emerged from slavery, Mr Cameron

Bert Samuels
Contributor

THE DEMANDS against the British government by the Jamaican people have achieved one great result: its visiting prime minister was forced to respond – albeit unsatisfactorily – to the claim for restorative justice.

Cameron's position of "wha' gone bad a morning can't come good a evening" is to be struck down as an irresponsible response to a legitimate claim. He cannot say we have "emerged" when the gross domestic product per person was merely US\$5,290 in 2013 (Britain's GDP per person was US\$41,790), and when, for every dollar of taxes we pay, well in excess of 40 cents go to repaying our country's debts.

He cannot argue that our IMF-assisted economy – with its bitter medicine – is unconnected to the state of the economy when we reaped the fruits of Britain leading "the way in its (slavery's) abolition" in 1838.

This point was made to our Parliament by the British prime minister beating his chest as if, after 300 years, when sugar became unprofitable, and after compensating its planters, including his own family, the Jamaican people should pay homage (sic) to Britain for its awakening to civilisation, leading to its pioneering work in abolishing slavery.

I wish I were able to counsel any of my clients, who may have caused deep wounds to innocent people, to tell those people to "move on". I would not for fear of enraging the judge and risk a harsher punishment for my client.

Also, for us to "move past the legacy of slavery" is to ask of us the impossible. Not only do deep wounds leave behind ugly scars, but they often touch vital organs of the body.

It was the British who taught us lessons in schools all over the Commonwealth about their scorn of the institution of slavery. An 82-year-old woman emailed me recently in support of my call for reparation, and reminded me of a song she was made to sing in primary school during the time we were a colony of Britain, which unilaterally determined our curriculum. This is what was on the lips of every schoolchild back then: "Britannia (the warship) rules the waves, Britons

(Englishmen) never, never, never shall be slaves" Jamaicans who fought on those ships were taken in World War II to fight, sacrificing their lives to ensure that Britons, including Cameron's parents, would not be slaves!

Mr Cameron, we know how revolting the institution of slavery is, having fought your war to make sure you have no history of ever experiencing our holocaust, so come to the table to deal with your enslavement of the grandparents of those soldiers who guaranteed your liberty and freedom. You speak of us "emerging"? There are some of us lying at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, who jumped to our deaths or were thrown overboard by slave ship captains, who will never be able to emerge.

CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

I wish you were conscious of the fact that when you emerged from your aircraft at the Norman Manley International Airport, you were setting foot on a crime scene called Jamaica.

We have discovered one huge, dark secret kept from us for almost 180 years. Your Parliament agreed to add four more years to our 1834 freedom year, when planters – dissatisfied with the £20-million settlement – lobbied for an additional £27 million.

We were tricked into calling the additional four-year sentence "our apprenticeship period". We, the slaves, were made to pay for the added £27 million, calculated as equivalent to four more years of free labour, designed to "usher us into (the freedom) you now say you kindly invented for us.

Are you aware that your "gift" of a new prison, apart from its obvious self-serving motive, has ironically stirred up the fact that the Tower Street Adult Correctional Centre, better known as General Penitentiary, the excuse for a prison you left us with in 1962, sits at the port at which we arrived and were sold, to work on your great-grandfather's plantation?

■ Bert Samuels is an attorney-at-law. Email feedback to columns@gleanerjm.com and bert.samuels@gmail.com.

British government... population is a many-sided... The indication from... there will be no money... will certainly get is more... care of present sinners... front burner and return... from whence they came... motherland may be a... There has been much... prison system, as it... those serving time... whether it contribute... times, the exper... Superintendent Kell... Prison, where cond... limited extent that... ties allow, brought... the management... will also be reflex... society upon their... **REDUCING CRIM**

Perhaps a mix... of rehabilitation... ing and training... with family is... psychological... are addressed... crime providin... We could also... proper facility... found to hav... nesses but fo... facilities for... Statistics... remarkably... sises rehabi... of crime a... offenders a... ports the t... fits from... Persons in... physical e... emphasis... governor... when th... behave... Decemb... It is s... experie... no dou... years c... we mu...

Culled to the Bar

Black Gold, showed the 'dark side' of coffee. Farmers in the developing world are typically paid around US\$8 for one...



HIM Haile Selassie 1 / Bob Marley

- *Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned; everywhere is war. Until there are no longer first class and second class citizens of any nation; until the colour of a person's skin is of no more significance than the colour of his/her eyes; until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all, without regard to race - Dis a war. That until that day, the dream of lasting peace, world citizenship and rule of international morality will remain but a fleeting illusion to be pursued, but never attained.*

Time Come!!!!

Thank You