



## THE U.S. AFRICAN AMERICAN RESTORATION ACT

As did the Hebrews of Egypt, enslaved Africans in America once prayed to God for righteousness and emancipation from the cruel inhumanity of slavery. That prayer was answered through the passage of the “Emancipation Proclamation”—an executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. 100 years later, on August 28, 1963, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. and declared that, **“one hundred years later, the Negro is still not free”**. That historic afternoon, before a crowd of 250,000, the African American hymn, “We Shall Overcome” was sung at the beginning *and* end of Dr. King’s historic, “I Have A Dream” speech. That hymn and speech were gifts from God—vessels of faith and hope. Forged from the prayers of the suffering and compassionate, these sacred proclamations carried the promise made to American Blacks by God—that they would indeed “OVERCOME SOMEDAY”.

More than fifty years later, African Americans shout, “Black Lives Matter!” Their tear-filled and blood-drenched cries for freedom, justice and equality, once again appeal to the heavens to end the suffering, anguish, misery and torment they continue to suffer in America. No matter the pain, their spirits are not broken. No matter the cruelty, humiliation and indignity they must endure, they continue to pray to God. –And God is listening.

African Americans are not a broken people in need of reparation; they are a distressed, oppressed and suffering people in need of *restoration*. In order to survive and prosper, like any successful culture or civilization, American Blacks must build their futures on a deeply embedded foundation of high-quality education. –Something that has been legally and categorically denied American Blacks since being abducted from Africa.

Experts the world over agree that education is the proven solution to eradicating poverty and crime. It is also the key to the cultural, economic, social and political transformation of Blacks in America.

The devastating generational byproducts of slavery in America and across the globe are well documented, having resulted in crippling emotional and psychological damage to the descendants of those once thriving Africans, who were kidnapped and enslaved for profit. The after-effects of slavery in America have also now manifested themselves into cancerous racial polarization and profound damage to the overall psychological and ideological state of the union.

Among other effects, the malignant vestiges of Slavery, Jim Crow Laws, Mass Incarceration and Institutional Racism in the U.S. have metastasized into the five-to-one ratio of Black men incarcerated in America, over that of Caucasian men (According the US Bureau of Justice Statistics). Countless studies have demonstrated that African Americans do not commit more crimes than other Americans, however, due to institutionalized racial profiling by police, they are arrested and incarcerated in far greater numbers than non-African Americans. The disproportionate, mass incarcerations of Blacks continue to damage the lives and futures of African Americans long after slavery was abolished.

One would think that these proven facts would be sufficient to cause positive changes in American domestic policy. Disturbingly however, in a 2014 study published in the journal, "Psychological Science", Stanford University psychology researchers Rebecca Hetey and Jennifer Eberhardt found that **"White participants who were exposed to higher racial disparities in incarceration rates reported being more afraid of crime and more likely to support the kinds of punitive policies that exacerbate these racial disparities."**

In other words, presenting studies and statistics proving that African Americans have always and are still suffering hatred, discrimination and abuse because of the color of their skin, does not solve the problem for Blacks in America. In fact, it actually makes it worse. Instead of demonstrating outrage and compassion after being informed that Blacks are unjustly locked up five times as often as Whites, many Americans put more locks on their doors and support harsher punishment of Blacks than Whites.

Perhaps this explains why, Detroit Congressman John Conyers' "Reparations Bill" - **"H.R.40 - Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act"**, after more than 28 years since he first proposed it, has not been dignified with a congressional vote...let alone passed. The "HR 40" bill did not itself seek monetary reparations for American Blacks, but simply to secure a budget to establish a commission, which would then examine the institution and impact of slavery on American Blacks and "recommend appropriate remedies". As we now know however, publicly demonstrating statistics of Black lynching in America, increases rope and pitchfork sales.

Ironically, it is perhaps American Republican President Donald J. Trump's own words—a man who has publicly discriminated against blacks all of his life, that best display the scorn with which far too many Americans still hold Blacks. In an attempt to woo African American voters during his 2016 presidential campaign, Trump famously stated:

"What do you have to lose by trying something new like Trump? What do you have to lose? You live in your poverty, your schools are no good, you have no jobs, 58 percent of your youth is unemployed. What the hell do you have to lose?"

Apparently unimpressed by Trump's heart-felt speech, 92 percent of African Americans voted AGAINST him in the 2016 Presidential election. Nonetheless,

as we know, Donald J. Trump was elected the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States.

As Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King put it: **"We must come to see that the roots of racism are very deep in our country, and there must be something positive and massive in order to get rid of all the effects of racism and the tragedies of racial injustice."**

Dr. King was right. We know that, while critically important, studies alone won't solve the problem and in some cases, make things worse. However, there is good news. There is a much simpler alternative to shaming America into doing the right thing.

### **AMERICA'S ADMISSION OF GUILT**

In 2009, six months following the election of President Barack Obama, Iowa Senator Tom Harkin—a White man—successfully sponsored a bill, which admitted to the evils of slavery and apologized to Blacks on behalf of America. In presenting this bill to Congress, Senator Harkin stated the following:

*"While the reconstruction amendments, the 13th amendment banning slavery, the 14th amendment granting full citizenship to all slaves, and the 15th amendment guaranteeing the right to vote supposedly signaled equality for all, widespread oppression continued. Jim Crow laws, African-Americans were denied voting rights, denied employment opportunities, denied access to public accommodations, denied entry into military service, denied criminal justice protections, denied housing, denied education, denied police protection, denied due process. In short, denied their very humanity.*

*"Not until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and other federal protections did legal -- legal -- segregation effectively cease in this country. The destructive effects of both slavery and Jim Crow remain, however. As President Bush noted, 'the racial bigotry did not end with slavery.' President Clinton stated that the racial divide is 'America's constant curse.' Today many African-Americans remained mired in poverty. Average incomes remain below that of white Americans. There remains an achievement gap in education and, for many, health conditions. African-Americans bear a disproportionate burden of disease and injury and death and disability. African-Americans are more over disproportionately involved with the criminal justice system in our prisons."*

### **ENTITLEMENT**

As a meaningful and long overdue gesture of contrition for what the New York Times has called, "America's Original Sin", I propose that the United States Congress pass, the **"U.S. AFRICAN AMERICAN RESTORATION ACT"** (USAARA).

Once passed, the USAARA will, without prejudice, provide to African Americans—regardless of economic status or criminal background—FULL post-secondary and vocational scholarship vouchers for tuition, books, materials,

housing and meals. No direct cash disbursements need be made to any USAARA recipient.

Question: So, who will pay to execute this LAW?

The answer is; it has *already* been paid for. –Paid for with the blood, sweat, tears and very lives of Africans enslaved in America and whose unpaid forced labor was used to establish and build America into what it is today. The value of that toil—the murder, rape, torture, and abuse levied against of African American slaves, is indeed immeasurable. As such, the descendants of African American slaves will now be the direct beneficiaries of this historic and just entitlement.

How much will this all cost? Well, have you ever asked yourself that question when you see the police putting an African American youth into a patrol car? Consider that according to a recent College Board report, for the 2015/16 academic years the average overall cost for tuition, fees, room and board to attend an in-state public college in America was \$20,090. By comparison, according to the US Bureau of Justice Statistics, the average annual taxpayer cost in America of housing a prisoner is \$31,286 per inmate with some states such as New York, as high as, \$60,000 per prison inmate.

In addition, countless studies have concluded that education drastically reduces crime, recidivism and poverty rates. In other words, this historic legislation will, among other things, actually SAVE US taxpayers billions of dollars annually by providing African Americans with the educational resources they need to truly OVERCOME—not just get by. –Resources, which have been historically and legally denied to them since first stepping—foot and shackle—onto American soil.

These essential entitlements will free American Blacks from systemic and generational cycles of educational, economic and parental poverty. They are essential to restoring all African Americans to their pre-slavery place of cultural stability, relevance, productivity, prosperity and self-sustainability. –These traits—the building blocks of any successful civilization, were systematically stripped from American Blacks through slavery and denied them through the legalized murder, hatred, racism and discrimination of Jim Crow Laws and institutional racism.

To be certain, the U.S. African American Restoration Act shall by no means constitute a "free lunch" for anyone. To begin with, the word, "Free" is unsuitable to describe these educational dispensations. As previously mentioned, a quality education for all African Americans must be considered an entitlement, having been PAID IN FULL by the blood, sweat, tears and lives of their enslaved ancestors. That said, this program will mandate a full and sustained scholastic commitment from each and every recipient, in order to redeem USAARA educational vouchers. –Recipients must attend class and get passing grades in order for the federal funds to be disbursed to the academic institution.

## CONCLUSION

There is no downside here. This action is long overdue and in order to succeed MUST be supported by Americans of all races. We now ask for your support—as Americans—to stand with us and use any and all legal means necessary to compel a bi-partisan congressional coalition, as elected and paid servants of the American people, to sponsor and sign the U.S. AFRICAN AMERICAN RESTORATION ACT into federal law. In doing so, America will have finally atoned for its atrocities and close one of the darkest of chapters in its history. America will truly earn the right to represent itself as, **“the land of the free and the home of the brave”**.

For African Americans, education is and has always been the key to the gates of the “Promised Land”. There can be no further obstacles standing in the way of the fulfillment of this dream.

In the words of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,

***The Negro has no room to make any substantial compromises because his store of advantages is too small. He must press unrelentingly for quality, integrated education or his whole drive for freedom will be undermined by the absence of a most vital and indispensable element—learning.***

Thank you and may God Bless America.

-Isaias Gamboa

Founder / We Shall Overcome Foundation

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