

Contents

Foreword by Ricky Parris

Preface

Pan-Africanism and African Liberation in the
Twenty-First Century
by Horace Campbell

Leroy Harewood: Pan-African Humanist
by Rodney Worrell

An Appreciation
by Horace Campbell and Rodney Worell

Select Bibliography

Webliography

Index

Chapter 2 (excerpt)

The most important short-term task is for the validation of the lives of Africans. As we in different parts of the African world take stock of the tasks for the 21st century, we have the opportunity to look back and reflect on the tasks of liberation in the last one hundred years. In the process of defining the new tasks it becomes necessary to start from the basic recognition that African life is precious and that the well being of the people comes before land and the power of leaders. The deplorable nature of human existence is manifested in all spheres of social relations and is most evident when one examines the conditions of African peoples globally. The solidarity between peoples who are oppressed developed over the last century in relation to the struggle for dignity in all parts of the African world. The period of Bandung in 1955 (the coming together of peoples of Africa and Asia), at the height of the anti-colonial revolts had ignited and strengthened the movements for independence all over Africa. These movements had earlier gained inspiration from Pan-African students and intellectuals.

The consolidation of Pan-African solidarity was evident in many instances from the period of the Garvey movement (1920's) down to the international campaign against apartheid. These moments in relation to the struggles for dignity reinforced and nurtured positive identification with Africa. There was an underlying theme throughout the century that, 'the people of one part of Africa are responsible for the freedom and liberation of their brothers and sisters in other parts of Africa and indeed the task of black people everywhere was to accept this responsibility.'¹ It was this dictum that inspired the spirit of Pan-African thought and action in the USA throughout the last century.

Over the past one hundred years the conception of liberation has gone through definite stages from the demand for self determination, to the demand for economic freedom, political independence, regional economic integration, democratization, the end to genocide, reparations, the emancipation of women, the humanization of the male and the humanization of the planet. At the end of the century, the conquest of state power by the forces fighting against apartheid in Southern Africa brought an end to that phase of liberation where the liberation was understood simply as the liberation movement raising the flag and gaining a seat at the United Nations. There has been the same disillusionment in Eritrea where the promise of social transformation has been shattered by militaristic rule. It is now clearer that in the main, decolonization and Pan-African liberation was formalized to mean that African males entered the corridors of the old oppressive regime and sought to use this apparatus as the vehicle for creating spaces for a new class. By the end of the twentieth century, the organized African women's movement had redefined the tasks of liberation and broadened the questions of freedom to include the freedom from all forms of oppression. Radical feminists from all four corners of Africa are raising the questions of sexuality, rape, reproductive health and the dangers of deformed masculinity.²

The questions that are being forced on the agenda are not new, but had been muted in the all class nationalist period of decolonization. In the process, the new tasks are fundamentally different from the old debates on great revolutionary leaders. Thus, no discussion on Pan-Africanism in the present period can go on without the input of African feminists. This writer identified five main elements of the Pan African struggles that emerged from one such discussion in Trinidad in 2001:

- i) The struggles of Africans everywhere to fight for the provision of adequate and accessible health care, especially in the context of the AIDS pandemic. The struggle is also to bring a coordinated global campaign against this disease.
- ii) The struggles for peace and reconstruction in the context of the African Union, ending militarism and militarization.
- iii) The need for Pan-Africanists to support the struggles of women in the fight against sexism and all forms of violation and violence.
- iv) Reparations.
- v) Struggling against the modern manifestations of plunder and domination as manifest in the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Health Organization (WHO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and modern institutions of imperialism.³

These five core issues emerged from the myriad of questions that must be tackled with new skills and new forms of organization. Increasingly, it is becoming clearer that the old forms of analysis, old forms of organization and the conceptual basis of the politics of liberation had been flawed. However, it was not possible to learn these lessons before exhausting the old patriarchal model of liberation. This lesson in South Africa reinforced the lessons from Algeria, Kenya, Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia and all of the societies where the working poor made major sacrifices for the armed struggles for liberation.⁴

It was a simple lesson that the colonial state could not be used as the basis for emancipation. In many parts of Africa, the fact that the same leaders who were at the forefront of the Pan-African movement are at the forefront of repression, ensure that

many African women do not want to associate themselves with Pan-Africanism in the way it is presently formulated by the leaders of yesterday. The youths are even clearer in their intention to form a new basis for community solidarity and peoples cooperation away from the politics of exclusion and the ideological illnesses of the past generation.

This challenge of doing things differently and focusing on African Knowledge and self-reliance principles has been a theme put forward at meetings in all corners of Africa, especially at women meetings. These meetings critique the negative direction of the present leadership that focuses on the further integration of Africa into an unjust social system that has been the source of insecurity since colonialism and the partitioning of Africa. The positions of African workers, scholars, grassroots organizations and civil society organizations continue to be clearly different from the leaders of the Group of 7, and international organizations such as the World Bank and the IMF, that believe the African Union can be an instrument for fighting 'poverty' without the end of the structural imbalances and inequalities of the global system of capitalism.

The majority of Africans who had always been singing and pleading for African Unity have some clarity on the balance of international military and political forces and stress the fact that the positive aspects of African partnerships (such as NEPAD) must be embraced so that there can be an African project that is quite independent of the project of international capital.⁵ These social forces that are engaged in the deliberations of how to break the long history of genocide, disease, war and economic exploitation, agree with the positive aspects of NEPAD that spell out the determination of the peoples and leaders of Africa to move to a new era of international cooperation beyond the history of militarism, imperial partitioning, and plunder.⁶ The program of Action for the implementation of NEPAD centralizes peace, security, and democracy as the fundamental building blocks for the economic transformation of the conditions of the African peoples.

It is this same Pan-African principle of people's rights and security that is at the base of the search for peace and renewal in Africa. Regional wars, the looting of natural resources, ethnic and religious manipulations and the multiple sources of insecurity in Africa reinforced the position that wars and militarism in one region will infect other states and peoples in that region. Just as wars in Palestine and other parts of the Middle East will negatively affect Africa, wars in Colombia will negatively affect the whole of the Caribbean region. Pan-African conceptions of peace have (in the past) been based on state security and not on the basis of the well being of people or *people's security*. The concept of *people's security* starts from the rights of the people, rights for workers and small farmers, environmental rights, gender equality, women's rights and the rights of children and moves away from the sterile concepts of state security and state sovereignty.

Independence and decolonization for the producers (workers, small farmers, traders, patriotic business persons etc.) should have meant a transformation of the colonial state and a better standard of living. However, these expectations were dashed because for the assimilated and educated, independence meant inheriting the levers of coercion and administration. There was no major effort to counteract the legacies of force, coercion, low prices for crops and the devaluation of African labor power. Not only had the emergent political elite internalized the ideas of modernization but the ideas of ethnic legitimacy and tribal rivalry had become so pervasive that African leaders have

developed a high tolerance for political careerists who rule on the basis of fear and the promotion of genocidal violence.

¹ Walter Rodney, "Towards the Sixth Pan African Congress," in Horace Campbell, ed, *Pan-Africanism: The struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism: documents of the Sixth Pan African Congress*, (Toronto: Afro-Carib Publications, 1975).

² Ifi Amadiume, *Daughters of the Goddess: Daughters of Imperialism*(London: Zed Books, 2000) and Patricia McFadden, "Impunity, Masculinity and Heterosexism in the Discourse of male Endangerment: An African Feminist Perspective(Working Paper Series, Center For Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, No.7, March 2002).

³ These points emerged from a summary session of a conference held at the University of the West Indies at St. Augustine to celebrate the life of Henry Sylvestre Williams and the one hundredth anniversary of the First Pan African Congress in 1900.

⁴ For an elaboration of the elements of the patriarchal model of liberation see Horace Campbell, *Reclaiming Zimbabwe: The Exhaustion of the Patriarchal Model of Liberation* (Trenton: Africa World Press 2003).

⁵ Thandika Mkandawire, *Our Continent, Our Future: African Perspectives on Structural Adjustment* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2000).

⁶ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Dar Es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1972) and Bruce Vandervort, *Wars of Imperial Conquest in Africa, 1830-1914*(Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).