

*"African for the African ---."*

## **MARCUS GARVEY, THE FATHER OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM**

Marcus Garvey was born in 1887 in St. Anne's Bay, Jamaica. He is the founder of one of the most important organizations in the history of the descendants of the slaves of America (African-American). That organization is the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Before I get into a detail discussion of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association, I would like to mention two key figures that are important in understanding Marcus Garvey and the UNIA. Those two figures are **Booker T. Washington** and **J Edgar Hoover**.

The foundation for the success and influence of the UNIA can be found in its relationship to Booker T. Washington and the ideals he emphasized at Tuskegee Institute. Marcus Garvey at first attempted to put the Universal Improvement Association (UNIA) together in Jamaica, but because of the racial makeup of Jamaica (under the control of the minority alliance between the Whites and Mulattos), the UNIA in Jamaica would fail. Garvey would write to Booker T. Washington explaining the problems he was facing with his organization in Jamaica. Booker T. Washington answered Garvey, encouraging him to continue to stay with the ideals he had for the organization. He explained that he went through the same thing in the early years of Tuskegee Institute. Garvey would never forget those words of encouragement and when the UNIA failed in Jamaica, Marcus Garvey departed for the United States to join Booker T. Washington. When he arrived in America he learned that Booker T. Washington had just recently died (1915). So Garvey would leave the United States and once again join Duse' Muhammad Ali in London, England. Before I discuss Marcus Garvey's stay in London and the influence of Duse' Muhammad Ali, I would like to discuss the source of the success of Booker T. Washington and the ideals he emphasize at Tuskegee Institute. That source was Andrew Carnegie, one of the wealthiest men of his time. The best source for understanding the influence of Andrew Carnegie on the ideals of Booker T. Washington is the book, *Think And Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill

*Think and Grow Rich* is one of the most important books, for those who would like to know the success formula for the economic development of the United States of America. This book is based upon interviews conducted by Napoleon Hill of the most successful people in the United States. These interviews were arranged by Andrew Carnegie.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF DUSE MUHAMMAD ALI

After finding out that Booker T. Washington had just recently died (1915), Marcus Garvey would go to London and rejoin a person who had already influence him greatly in relationship to African unity and Pan-African thought. That person was Duse' Muhammad Ali, who was already a person of fame in relationship to African and Egyptian history. He was a published writer and the editor of a popular magazine entitled, *The African Times and Orient Review*. I would like to mention two important areas where Duse' Muhammad Ali greatly influence Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association:

- (1) The Slogan, "**Africa for the African**".
- (2) The training in the Newspaper Business as a Printer.

Marcus Garvey training as a printer would lead to a publication that would become a very important part of the success of the UNIA. That publication would become known as *The Negro World*. This Newspaper-Magazine would become an important marketing tool for the UNIA and later on this Media-Marketing concept would be passed on to the **Nation of Islam** (*Muhammad Speaks* and *The Final Call*) and the present day off-shoot (*Muslim Journal*).

When Marcus Garvey returned from London to the United States, he decided to restart the UNIA in Harlem, where he would find a community that provided fertile ground for the ideals he had reworked the organization around. The cornerstone of his program was the self-help "**Drop down your bucket where you are**" attitude of Booker T. Washington and the "**Back to your African roots, Pan-Africanism**" ideals of Duse' Muhammad Ali. Garvey would centralize his headquarters into a meeting place that he would call **Liberty Hall**.

Because of the practical aspect of the Self-Help program and the attractiveness of his Pan-Africa-Back to Africa ideals, the UNIA would experience a tremendous growth. As a result of this growth and increase in membership, the UNIA would surpass the better known, integrated NAACP. This huge growth and influence of the UNIA in the African-American community would lead to the emergence of one of the most powerful figures in American history. A man who would change the concept of law enforcement. A man hated and feared by friend and foe. That man ? J. Edgar Hoover.

### THE LEGEND OF J. EDGAR HOOVER

J. Edgar Hoover was born, raised and educated in Washington, D.C. and his first major assignment as a member of the Justice Department was the neutralization of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). It is very important to keep this aspect of the career of J. Edgar Hoover in mind. When you think of J. Edgar Hoover, the first thing that come to mind is the FBI mixed in with visions of Gang Bangers of the 30's (who was mostly white) and the pursuit of Communists. But the foundation of his Law Enforcement ideology would come from his study and plans in relationship to the Garvey movement. At this point I would like to discuss how this came about.

When J. Edgar Hoover came to New York to begin the neutralization of Marcus Garvey and the UNIA, one of the first things he did was arrange for a Black middle class doctor to become part of the UNIA. This undercover agent would become known as **Confidential Informant #800**. The purpose of this was to find out whom the major players were, what fractions already existed in the movement and also to have someone with the educational background to move up into the inner circle of the UNIA. After finding out who the major players were or what fractions or potential fractions existed, now the goal was to use the concept of disinformation to create tension among these fractions and split the organization into warring parts. This process came to be known as the concept of **Infiltration and Disinformation**. This concept would become the trademark of J. Edgar Hoover throughout his career and a process he would perfect while the Director of the FBI. This process would become known as the **Counter Intelligence Program** better known as **COINTELPRO**.

J. Edgar Hoover would use this concept on groups like the gang bangers of the 30's, the Klu Klux Klan, the Black Panthers, the Nation of Islam, SNCC and after the death of Hoover, this concept and methodology would be used against modern day groups like the Aryan Nation, Mexican Mafia, El-Rukins, Crips, Bloods and any group deem to be Anti-American. The goal was always to infiltrate and study the inner workings of the group and then create factions through the concept of disinformation. For a detail study of Hoover's concept in relationship to the Garvey movement, see the multiple volume set entitled, *The Marcus Garvey Papers*.

### AFRICA FOR THE AFRICAN

At this point in our discussion I would like to briefly look at Marcus Garvey's "**Back to Africa**" program and his conflict with most of the traditional Civil-Rights programs of his time, especially the NAACP and W.E.B. DuBois.

Marcus Garvey's "**Back to Africa**" program was based upon two major sources:

- (1) The African-Centric ideals of Duse' Muhammad Ali.
- (2) The Self-Help concepts of Booker T. Washington.

The Self-Help concept would lay the foundation for the **Black Star Shipping Line** and the African-Centric ideals Marcus Garvey developed by his relationship with Duse' Muhammad Ali would lay the foundation for his "**Back to Africa**" plan.

The international popularity of the Garvey movement would create a special relationship with Liberia, the African colony founded by ex-slaves of the United States. At first this "Back to Africa" plan to Liberia was looked upon as some kind of a visionary dream with no sense of reality; but when the leaders of Liberia made some land available to the UNIA and the Black Star Line purchase a number of ships. It was then that the National and International Intelligence community would begin to take notice. France, the United States and England would pressure the political leaders of Liberia to Re-Nig on the plan to make the land available to the UNIA and at the same time, the mismanagement of the Black Star Line would create all kind of problems for the UNIA.

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While all of this was going on, the Middle Class movement of African-American Civil Rights leaders would spearhead the "**Garvey Must Go**" campaign. These leaders, most of them Mulattos, would become the most vicious enemies of Marcus Garvey and the UNIA. This conflict can be understood by looking at the environment that produced Marcus Garvey.

Marcus Garvey was from Jamaica, an environment where the Mulattos allied themselves with the minority Whites to control the large majority Black population. This would plant the seed of distrust that Marcus Garvey would always have against most of the Civil Rights leaders like W.E.B. DuBois, James Weldon Johnson and Walter White who were all Mulattos.

The breaking point in the relationship between Marcus Garvey and the Civil Rights leaders would be caused by Garvey's meeting with the Klu Klux Klan and the murder of former UNIA member Rev. James Eason. This would cause a group of African-American Civil Right leaders known as, "**The Committee of Eight**" to demand that Marcus Garvey be indicted on mail fraud and sentenced to Federal Prison. Marcus Garvey would be convicted and sentenced to Atlanta Federal Prison for the Maximum term of five years. After serving a portion of his term, he would be pardoned by the President of the United States and deported. Marcus Garvey would never again set foot on American soil. He would die in London in 1940.

It is very important to understand the impact of Marcus Garvey and the movement he created. In reality it was the Garvey movement that laid the foundation for the Harlem Renaissance Literary movement with its Black is beautiful ideology.

The Garvey movement also influenced two other important movements. Those movements are the **Moorish Science Temple** (founded by Noble Drew Ali in 1914) and the **Lost Found Nation of Islam** (founded by W.D. Farad in 1930).

There are just a few points I would like to mention that is related to Marcus Garvey and spearheaded by J Edgar Hoover.

\*The Assassination of Minister Malcolm X in 1965 and Dr. Martin Luther King in 1968.

Hoover saw in Malcolm X and Dr. King the ability to view events from an international perspective. Malcolm X and Dr King emphasizing human right (The right to be a human being). Malcolm X break from the Nation of Islam and his attempts to get the African-American case before the UN. Dr. King speaking out against the Viet Nam war. All of this was seen by J Edgar Hoover as a reminder of Marcus Garvey ability to view events from an international perspective.

This is reflected by a memo J Edgar Hoover sent out to his most trusted FBI Agents a little over a week before Dr King was assassinated.

*"To prevent the rise of a Black Messiah who can electrify the militant Black masses."* He mentioned Stokely Carmichael, honorable Elijah Muhammad, and Dr. King and explained why Dr King was the most dangerous.

From the book, *The Secret Identity of The African-American*

By Melvin Ishmael Johnson