

## WE REMEMBER GARVEY

"I asked myself, 'Where is the Black man's government? Where is his king and his kingdom? Where is his president, his country and his ambassador, his army, his navy, his men of big affairs: I could not find them, and then I declared, I will help to make them' "

--Marcus Garvey, 1887-1940

Marcus Mosiah Garvey deserves a high place in our memories because he gave the ideas of Pan-Africanism concrete expression. He tried to make self-disrespecting Black men, women, and children recognize in themselves the possibility of restoring their dignity and respectability in the world. But his life did not begin with these ideas.

Garvey, the youngest of eleven children, was born on August 17, 1887 between St. Ann's Bay and Roaring Rive in Jamaica. His parents were poor peasants and from his earliest years he came to know what hunger and deprivation meant. In you h youth, Garvey worked for a while as a timekeeper on a banana plantation. He saw, at first hand, the disturbing plight of the black workers, and more and more this exploitation of Black people preyed on his mind.

In 1918 Marcus Garvey read Up From Slavery by Booker T. Washington, and it was after reading this book that he decided it was his responsibility to help lead his people along the path of self-determination and power. There in Jamaica, in 1914, he formed the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Briefly said, the purpose of the organization was to unite all Black people of the world into one powerful body to establish a nation and government absolutely their own. The UNIA motto was: One God! One Aim! One Destiny!

By 1919, the organization spread to the United States and established a world headquarters in Harlem. Garvey's organization made unprecedented economic and racial achievements: a steamship company, factories, shipping line, nurses group, pilots and police brigades, schools and world conventions that attracted thousands of people.

He also popularized the tri-colors: red, black and green. He declared these the colors of the flag for the African nation that his movement intended to build. Marcus Garvey lived and lives today as an example of the Will of African people throughout the world. As a result of his efforts and his confidence in the ultimate solution of the problem of the Black man--Pan-Africanism--others have taken up the mantle which he carried so diligently.