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## Samuel H. Davis Address, National Convention of Colored Citizens, Buffalo, 1843, n.d.

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For Ty -

**SAMUEL H. DAVIS ADDRESS  
NATIONAL CONVENTION OF COLORED CITIZENS:  
HELD AT BUFFALO  
ON THE 15TH, 16TH, 17TH, 18TH AND 19TH OF AUGUST, 1843  
FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSIDERING THEIR MORAL AND  
POLITICAL CONDITION AS AMERICAN CITIZENS**

1. "GENTLEMEN: I CONSIDER THIS A MOST HAPPY PERIOD IN OUR HISTORY, - WHEN WE, AS A PEOPLE, ARE IN SOME DEGREE AWAKE IN A SENSE OF OUR CONDITION; AND ARE DETERMINED NO LONGER TO SUBMIT TAMELY AND SILENTLY TO WEAR THE GALLING YOKE OF OPPRESSION RIVETED UPON US, AS WELL BY AN UNHOLY AND CRUEL PREJUDICE, AS BY UNJUST AND UNEQUAL LEGISLATION. MORE PARTICULARLY DO I CONSIDER IT OMINOUS OF GOOD, WHEN I SEE HERE COLLECTED, SO MUCH OF WISDOM AND TALENT, FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THIS GREAT NATION, COLLECTED HERE TO DELIBERATE UPON THE WISEST AND BEST METHODS BY WHICH WE MAY SEEK A REDRESS OF THOSE GRIEVANCES WHICH MOST SORELY OPPRESS US AS A PEOPLE"

2. "AMONG YOU ARE THE MEN WHO ARE LATELY FROM THAT PART OF OUR COUNTRY, WHERE THEY SEE OUR BRETHREN, BOUND AND MANACLED, SUFFERING AND BLEEDING, UNDER THE HAND OF THE TYRANT, WHO HOLDS IN ONE HAND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, WHICH GUARANTEES FREEDOM AND EQUAL RIGHTS TO EVERY CITIZEN, AND IN THE OTHER 'THE SCOURGE DRIPPING WITH HUMAN GORE', DRAWN FROM THE VEINS OF HIS FELLOW-MAN."

3. "HERE ALSO ARE THOSE WHO LIVE IN MY NATIVE NEW ENGLAND, AMONG THE 'DESCENDANTS OF THE PILGRIMS,' WHOSE LAWS ARE FOUND RECORDED ON THEIR STATUE BOOKS, OF WHICH WE NEED COMPLAIN. BUT THOUGH THEIR LAWS ARE NOT MARKED WITH SUCH PALPABLE AND FLAGRANT INJUSTICE TOWARDS THE COLORED MAN, AS THOSE OF THE SOUTH; YET THERE WE ARE PROSCRIBED, BY A FIXED AND CRUEL PREJUDICE, LITTLE LESS OPPRESSIVE."

4. "WE WISH TO SECURE FOR OURSELVES, IN COMMON WITH OTHER CITIZENS, THE PRIVILEGE OF SEEKING OUR OWN HAPPINESS IN ANY PART OF THE COUNTRY WE MAY CHOOSE, WHICH RIGHT IS NOW UNJUSTLY, AND, WE BELIEVE, UNCONSTITUTIONALLY DENIED US IN A PART OF THIS UNION."

5. "WE WISH TO ALSO TO SECURE THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISE IN THOSE STATES WHERE IT IS DENIED US, - WHERE OUR RIGHTS ARE LEGISLATED AWAY, AND OUR VOICE NEITHER HEARD NOR REGARDED."

6. "WE ALSO WISH TO SECURE, FOR OUR CHILDREN ESPECIALLY, THE BENEFITS OF EDUCATION, WHICH IN SEVERAL STATES ARE ENTIRELY DENIED US. AND IN OTHERS ARE ENJOYED ONLY IN NAME."

7. "TWO OBJECTS SHOULD DISTINCTLY AND CONSTANTLY BE BORNE IN MIND, IN ALL OUR DELIBERATIONS. ONE IS THE DIFFUSION OF TRUTH, AND THE OTHER THE ELEVATION OF OUR OWN PEOPLE. BY DIFFUSION OF TRUTH, I MEAN THAT WE MUST TAKE A BOLD AND ELEVATED STAND FOR THE TRUTH."

8. "WE MUST, BY EVERY MEANS IN OUR POWER, STRIVE TO PERSUADE THE WHITE PEOPLE TO ACT WITH MORE CONFIDENCE IN THEIR OWN PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY - TO MAKE LAWS, JUST AND EQUAL FOR ALL THE PEOPLE."

9. "BUT WHILE THE COLOR OF THE SKIN IS MADE THE CRITERION OF THE LAW, IT IS OUR RIGHT, OUR DUTY, AND, I HOPE I MAY SAY, OUR FIXED DETERMINATION, TO MAKE KNOWN OUR WRONGS TO THE WORLD, AND TO OUR OPPRESSORS; TO CEASE NOT DAY NOR NIGHT TO TELL, IN BURNING WORDS, OUR TALE OF WOE."