

THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON AT 50

IBW BLACK PAPER

A DEPOSIT WAS MADE
BUT THE CHECK STILL BOUNCED!

An IBW Black Paper On the Last Half Century of The Struggle



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IBW BLACK PAPER

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Foreword

Dr. Ron Daniels

There is a “state of emergency” without urgency in Black America. This is the essence of the message I conveyed in a Vantage Point Article more than two years ago. Indeed, the Institute of the Black World 21st Century (IBW) has been crying out with “urgency” urging Africans in America first and foremost but equally important to private sector actors, policy-makers and the nation as a whole to act on the multiple crises afflicting what I have come to call America’s “dark ghettos” – distressed/marginalized, urban-inner city communities across this country. It is this “state of emergency” that compels IBW to release a Black Paper on the eve of the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington.

It is termed a Black Paper, not in opposition to any other race, ethnicity or nationality but, because there is an urgent need to address the particular and peculiar successes, failures and plight of Black people a half-century after the great gathering on the National Mall in 1963. Accordingly, Dr. Zachery Williams and Dr. Mtangulizi Sanyika, Executive Editors and Don Rojas, Associate Editor have assembled a document which reflects the thinking of some of the brightest and best progressive, African-centered, scholar-activists on the status of Africans in America and the Pan African world fifty years after the historic March on Washington. In the best tradition of scholar-activism, this Black Paper is comprised of historical reflections and compendiums of pertinent data. As such, IBW hopes that it will serve as a resource to inform the deliberations of organizations, activists and organizers in formulating action agendas to address the crises in Black communities. We have seized on the occasion of the Commemoration to renew/revive the process of utilizing progressive, African-centered data collection and research to empower Black people to finish the journey toward full freedom, dignity, equality and equity in America and the world. IBW is firmly committed to engaging this process through its Research Consortium, which is directed by Dr. Zachery Williams. Let the revival begin!

I was privileged to attend the March on Washington in 1963 as a young, emerging civil rights activist out of Youngstown, Ohio. It was an incredible occasion. I remember the venerable Roy Wilkins, President of the NAACP, softly but proudly proclaiming as he surveyed the massive assembly of 250,000 people, “I knew you would show up.” I recall the great labor leader Asa Philip Randolph (whom I knew very little about at the time) declaring in a booming bass voice, “today we are witnessing a great social revolution.” Then there were the rumors racing through the multitude of an effort to block John Lewis, Chairman of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), from speaking. This did not sit well with the more militant participants in the March, particularly young people like me who identified with and were inspired by SNCC. The highlight of the day, of course, was the brilliant oration by the charismatic and courageous leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I cannot honestly say that I remember much of what Dr. King said that day except the exhilarating vision of his “dream” for a new America, as he took us to the mountaintop in a manner characteristic of prophetic preachers in Black

America. But, I do vaguely recall him saying something about a “promissory note” that keeps coming back “marked insufficient funds.”

This reference gained little notice among the rave reviews and optimism generated by one of the most inspiring speeches delivered by one of the greatest leaders Black America, the U.S. and the world has ever known. As we returned to our respective communities, the walls of de jure and de facto discrimination and segregation were still very much intact. However, after the March on Washington, there was a widespread belief, that as Sam Cooke might put it, “it’s been a long time coming but ... change is going to come.” Change did come, particularly in the legislative arena as the Congress of the United States passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in response to “Bloody Sunday” and the Selma to Montgomery March. In addition, this era witnessed the launching of the War on Poverty and Great Society programs designed to unleash federal resources as rebellions in northern urban centers signaled that civil rights laws might address issues of access to public accommodations, employment and the ballot box, but, massive resources were required to redress centuries of economic injustice and inequality in Black America.

It is perhaps one of the great ironies and tragedies of American history that the legacy of Lyndon Baines Johnson, a Texas southerner who emerged as a folksy but effective voice and force for civil rights and social programs to aid minorities, workers, the middle class and the poor, was tarnished by his decision to divert massive resources to the misadventure in Viet Nam. It was this fateful “guns over butter” decision that compelled Dr. King to declare his opposition to the Viet Nam war as a matter of principle and domestic policy priority. He may have feared that the “deposits” made on the social and economic security of African Americans and the poor were being jeopardized. He viewed the War as a “demonic suction tube” draining massive resources away from urgently needed domestic programs. As he prepared to launch the Poor Peoples Campaign, Dr. King must have felt that once again the fate of Black people would suffer from the negative consequences of a promissory note with “insufficient funds.”

Dr. King also foresaw another factor that could potentially perpetuate the “bounced check” syndrome as it related to fulfilling the civil rights/human rights aspirations and agenda of Africans in America – a “white backlash.” Unfortunately his concerns were justified. The ink had barely dried on the Civil Rights statutes and the legislation for social safety net programs before political demagogues on the right began to fuel the perception that the gains of Blacks were encroaching on the rights of White people, that somehow eradicating segregation and fostering social programs to address the needs of minorities and the poor of all races/ethnicities was being achieved at the expense of progress for Whites! The scope of this *Foreword* will not permit a detailed elaboration of the impact of the appeal to White fears propagated by the presidential campaigns of Governor George Wallace, the “southern strategy” adopted by the Republican Party under RNC Chairman Lee Atwater and the not so subtle mobilization of racially antagonistic White voters by Ronald Reagan. Suffice it to say that a sizeable segment of the White electorate was persuaded that they were bearing the “burden of government” on their backs – and that burden largely consisted of civil rights laws and social programs that gave preference to Blacks. The white backlash that Dr. King feared became a formidable force in American politics precipitating a virulent assault on civil rights and social programs

that some commentators have called a “Second Post Reconstruction.”

No matter how it is characterized, the net effect of this pernicious backlash was the gutting of the social safety net and drastic reductions in programs designed to assist marginalized urban communities. This dramatic retrenchment virtually guaranteed that the promissory note would have insufficient funds in terms of government investment. Changes in the political economy, particularly the phenomenon of deindustrialization due to globalization also had an adverse impact on Black communities. This development demanded the investment of more, not less resources in America’s dark ghettos to stave off the kind of deterioration and dysfunction evident in distressed Black communities today. As I have written in numerous articles over the past decade, rather than finish the unfinished civil rights/human rights agenda, Black communities became the targets for the “War on Drugs” and other racially biased and disproportionately punitive criminal justice policies. This fundamental retreat from a commitment to social, economic and racial justice is the driving force behind the violence, fratricide, mass incarceration and devastation distressed Black communities are experiencing today. The “bounced check” continues to be a persistent obstacle to full “emancipation” for the “totality” of Black America.

Full freedom for the “totality” of Black America is an important concept to be considered in assessing the state of the race fifty years after the March on Washington. It certainly would be a mistake to suggest that Africans in America have made no progress in the areas of race relations and upward mobility – after all a highlight of the Commemoration will be an address by America’s first Black President. However, as we note in IBW’s *Martin Luther King/Malcolm X Community Revitalization Initiative* “... there would now appear to be two Black Americas, one where the middle and upper classes have escaped to the outer edges of the inner-cities and the surrounding suburbs to live better than anyone might have imagined fifty years ago, and the other Black America where poor and working class Blacks are, as Malcolm might put it, catching more hell than ever before.” The Civil Rights/Black Power movements opened huge doors of opportunity for millions of Black people to achieve “success” and a better quality of life. While data suggests that the “privileged” classes in Black America still lag behind their White counterparts in income and wealth accumulation, they have sufficient status and income that the indignities of racism are largely a nuisance or inconvenience. This is not the case for the millions of Blacks who have been left behind in distressed/marginalized communities. It is Black people imprisoned in the “dark ghettos” who are most seriously affected by institutional racism in all of its insidious forms -- social isolation, economic underdevelopment and the in-your-face daily indignities of racially biased policing and criminal justice policies and practices; it is in the dark ghettos that millions of sons and daughters of Africa in America most desperately need the fulfillment of the promissory note Dr. King referenced fifty years ago.

Therefore, this Black Paper is not conceived as an academic exercise to confirm the myriad crises and the recurrent insufficiency of the promissory note afflicting distressed Black communities. It is ultimately a call to action to Black people to end the class divide and to do whatever necessary to revitalize America’s dark ghettos. The “bounced check” in the face of the unspeakable suffering of our people is a blatant insult, an intolerable act which demands the rekindling of the fighting spirit of fifty years ago, a spirit that led freedom fighters to utilize sit-ins, wade-ins, demonstrations, economic sanctions, civil disobedience and



disruption in search of freedom, dignity and self-determination. The contributors to this document are scholar-activists who have undertaken this task in hopes of encouraging, inspiring and compelling Black people to strike righteous blows in the quest for the total liberation of the daughters and sons of Africa in America. It is in that spirit that this Black Paper is intended to be a vital resource for Black empowerment!

Dr. Ron Daniels, President, Institute of the Black World 21st Century;
Distinguished Lecturer, York College, City University of New York.

About IBW Black Paper

Dr. Zachery Williams and Dr. Mtangulizi Sanyika

This IBW Black Paper is focused on the last half a century of struggle from 1963 to the present in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the Historic “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.” It is an effort to offer a perspective, a 50-year reflection on the progress, or lack thereof, of African-Americans since 1963, and an effort to suggest strategic directions for the future, which will hopefully re-ignite movements for democracy and social change.

We perceive this Black Paper as a major contributor to the discourse regarding how we as Black people see ourselves evolving as a citizen nation in the neo- Civil Rights, neo-Black Power era of Obama and beyond. Over the last 50 years we argue that a deposit was made into the account by America (by providing relative “equality” for some Black folks), but the check still bounced because it did not provide “equality” for the overwhelming majority of Black folks.

The messages of this Black Paper are directed at a cross section of Black America: everyday people, activists, organizers, scholars, workers, planners, as well as the progressive social justice movement. This we feel is necessitated because of the general assault on Black critical thinking and the resulting intellectual timidity to discuss Black issues and concerns. We categorically reject the oft-repeated assertion that targeting conversation and analysis to Black people, or focusing on Black issues is politically incorrect in today’s “post racial environment.”

IBW regards such distorted thinking as fundamentally flawed and incorrect (whether it comes from Black folks, white folks or other folks) and calls on sober minded persons of all races to join us in this 50 year reflection, analysis and dialogue. By extension then, the messages of this Black Paper are thus also directed to all people and communities of conscience and good will who still dream of a socially just and democratic society which also respects the unique distinctiveness of all of its people as Martin and Malcolm attempted to do 50 years ago.

The Black paper is organized into five units or components, each of which presents a 50-year perspective:

- 1) An Overview and Critical analysis of Black conditions over the last 50 years.
- 2) Quality of Life/Sectoral changes within Black America over the last 50 years.
- 3) Occupational and Constituency changes among Black Americans over the last 50 years.



4) Institutional and organizational changes over the last 50 years.

5) Critical perspectives for the future.

In the near future, IBW will sequentially post the full papers to its Website for more interactive discussion and commentary. It will also publish a hard copy version of the black paper, and host further seminars and workshops on specific subject matter covered in the various essays. We hope that you will find this Executive Summary useful in the dialogue on building a democratic and just society in America, free of all forms of domination, oppression and exploitation.

We thank IBW for the opportunity to have been of service.

The Executive Editors:

Dr. Zachery Williams, Coordinator, IBW Research Consortium, and Associate Professor of History, University of Akron.

Dr. Mtangulizi Sanyika, Scholar-Practitioner and former Professor of African World Studies, Dillard University, former Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Texas Southern University.



An Historical Perspective on the Context for the IBW Black Paper

Dr. Mtangulizi Sanyika

The last 50 years has been a time of fundamental change in the status and condition of the African- American nation in the U.S. The middle of the 20th Century witnessed the completion of the transition of the African-American population from a rural to an urban base, and the beginning of sharpening class distinctions among the Black population. The end of WWII also ushered in a more militant consciousness evidenced by returning veterans, which helped to incubate a nascent social movement to fight white racism and elitism.

As that movement began to mature in its fight against racism, macro-economic policy often conditioned the rate and nature of progress in the historic battle against Jim Crow segregation. For the next 50+ years, the country alternated between “liberal”, “moderate” and “conservative” federal administrations whose attitudes and policies regarding racial justice were often supportive, but were also ambivalent, and adversarial.

During the Kennedy (1960-63), Johnson (1963-68), Carter(1976-80) and Clinton(1992-2000) years, the government made “deposits” (social welfare programs, more equality and access, growth of the middle class, etc.) into the American account by supporting moderate-liberal macro-economic policies that grew and expanded a small black middle class, while simultaneously leaving the majority Black population behind.

During the Eisenhower (1952-60), Nixon (1968-74), Ford (1974-76), Reagan (1980-88), Bush 41 (1988- 92), and Bush 43 (2000-08) years, the government made “withdrawals” (cutbacks, wealth concentration, unequal, elitist resource allocation, redlining etc.) that significantly reduced and weakened the Black middle class and further marginalized the Black poor, vulnerable, and working classes. Thus, “a deposit was made, but the check still bounced.”

Sufficient resources were never put into the social account to sustain both the Black middle class and the Black poor and vulnerable. Furthermore, the withdrawals constantly exceeded the deposits, and further marginalized both classes within the Black population. At the same time, roughly 10% of White Americans were also left behind, obviously a dramatic difference compared to the Black population that was left behind.

In the present environment, there is an intense focus on the middle class, and very little mention of low-to-moderate income and poor families, the vulnerable, the working classes and those needing a safety net. Those who have been left behind, the 44 million in poverty, the working poor and the vulnerable

are often publicly ignored in the narrative regarding policy preferences. In addition, there is a cruel myth of a "post racial society" which has gained prominence in some quarters and further confuses the nature of the new racism which is responsible for the crisis in Black America.... systemic or structural racism. This type of racism (aka institutional racism) marginalizes and discriminates against entire populations by virtue of the normal operation of the institutions of society regardless of intent or personal prejudices.

Race has historically been at the center of American social policy, and it remains so to the present day, despite the obvious limited gains of the last 50 years that are documented in this Black paper. It is equally obvious that class (especially occupation and income) also plays a significant role in determining the quality of life for so many in the Black population.

It is the protracted existence of the marginal population in the Black community who are victims of structural racism that necessitates this Black Paper as we approach the 50th Anniversary of the MOW. Unfortunately, at the present rate of class formation (as defined by occupations, income and education) it may take another 50 to 75 years for the 2/3 in the lower classes in the dark ghettos to achieve a middle class position. A cursory review of the relationship between the macro-economy, and the social movement will demonstrate the vulnerability of all strata in the Black community, and especially its 2/3 majority.

From the 1960's to today, we have witnessed the growth of the black "middle class" (as determined by occupation, income and education) from 7 - 10 % of the black population to the 2013 level of 33%..."from a talented tenth to a talented third."The general standard of middle class membership is an income between 30 to 100 thousand dollars a year, although there are varying strata within this income range. On the flip side, we have also witnessed a worsening of conditions for the remaining 67% of African Americans who populate the "lower and marginal classes," trapped in the "dark ghettos" as defined by socio-economic indicators (such as high unemployment, low wage work, high poverty rates, poor schools, bad housing, high crime rates, drugs, incarceration, bad health etc.). Thus, there are two dark ghettos in America: black haves and black have nots. This social stratification of the black population and the ongoing deterioration of Black life quality gave birth to social movements, for both CIVIL RIGHTS and BLACK POWER, whose precursors were incubated in the '40's and '50's as indicated earlier, and fully matured in the '60's, '70's and beyond.

Both of these social movements sought to address and correct the long-standing American domination, exclusion, oppression and economic deprivation/exploitation of its Black citizens because of their race and class location. The changes that have occurred in Black America over the last 50 years have resulted from the dual character of our social movement, which seamlessly alternates between seeking justice through equal participation and seeking justice through autonomous action and self-determination.

At different moments in history, racial domination might be more evident than class exploitation; however the dark ghettos of today result from a structural combination of both forms of white elitist oppression. The period of the 60's also corresponds roughly to the decolonization, liberation and self-determination movements of Africa and 3rd world countries which many actors in the African American social movement



were quite aware of, and felt historically connected to. Whether the movement was in its Civil Rights 'equality' phase (1954-65) or its Black Power self-determination phase (1966-1975), the demand for justice, liberation, freedom and equality were consistent themes just as they were in Africa and the 3rd World. The two phases of the modern day social movement often appear seamless today as America might simultaneously respond to the demand for equality (rights, representation) and the demand for power (decision making and control of place/space). However, the pyramid of power and wealth remains intact as Black people remain at the bottom of the food chain of wealth and power, especially the 67% in the poor and vulnerable classes.... the have not dark ghetto. To be sure, there is a limited Black middle class within that pyramid, but its position is tentative, precarious and insecure.

This author argues/contends that African-American social movements are an absolute requirement to achieve even the most modest levels of social justice in America, and are needed to address the racial divide between blacks and whites, as well as the deepening class divide among African-Americans. Whether the demand is for equity/equal participation, or for autonomy/self-determination, it is obvious that the pressure and influence of mass based social action is critical. Neither American morality nor the good will of individuals is a substitute for well-organized, strategically directed actions that disrupt the status quo and propose alternatives to its racism and elitism. This Black Paper is informed by the historical observation that racialized class stratification generally results in intense American social friction between the races, and a re-awakening of the social forces that galvanize the demands for change in the Black condition.

During the '60's the Civil Rights movement forced America to dismantle the apparatus of de jure segregation and provide democratic rights to its Black citizens. The macro-economy was experiencing a post WWII growth cycle and was in the early stages of the transition from a manufacturing and industrial economy into a knowledge based, service and info-tech economy, which lasted thru the 70's.

In the mid '60's, the emergence of the demands of the Black Power movement exposed the underbelly of the free market paradigm and the general powerlessness of the Black community nationwide. From the National Black Power Conferences of 1967 and 1968, to the Congress of African People in 1970, and the National Black Political Conventions of Gary in 1972, Little Rock in 1974, and Cincinnati in 1976 and the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) in 1980, the audacious demand for power and self-determination energized every strata of the Black nation.

Thus, despite the conservative Nixon years and the more moderate Carter years, the Black movement remained intensely active as the Black Power (or Black Nationalist) phase defined the discourse. Although the social movement shifted its paradigm from equality to power, many of the civil rights issues of rights, equality and participation seamlessly morphed into aspects of the Black Power message. Once again however, the macro-economy began a decline during the late '70's that ushered in the Reagan era of retrenchment, cutbacks and voodoo economics.

Thus, during the '80's, the Black condition deteriorated as the Reagan Administration dismantled many of the Great Society programs and initiated serious government cutbacks, while both the government

and the private sector disinvested from the inner cities and exported American jobs abroad. Affirmative Action programs came under intense judicial scrutiny and attack as a black conservative movement arose to neutralize the achievements of the prior 20 years. However, the spirit of the 1972 Gary Convention was re-born through the two Jesse Jackson Presidential campaigns (1984, 1988) which demonstrated the possibilities of self-initiated political efforts in alliance with other progressives. One sensed the possibility of a significant historical break from the neo-liberal elitist paradigm and the emergence of a true politics of change and transformation that would benefit the black majority. Despite the retrenchment and right-wing assault on Black gains of the civil rights era, the Jackson campaigns re-invigorated the remnants of both social movements and ignited an effective progressive fight back.

During the 90's another growth spurt in the economy occurred during the Clinton years which allowed the expansion of the middle class, and reductions in unemployment and poverty rates, but without radically changing the worsening conditions in the inner city dark ghettos. It was in the 90's that the Black social movement organized one of the most massive socio-political gatherings in the history of America.... The Million Man March (MMM). It attracted about 2 Million men and women to Wash.D.C, and resulted in a transformation in Black consciousness regarding our responsibility to our community and ourselves, and the potential of public policy correctives. In the midst of macroeconomic growth which enhanced segments of the middle classes, the MMM as a nascent social movement sought to remind us of our obligation to the suffering masses of our people who were the overwhelming majority.

At the turn of the 20th century, the Black condition experienced continued deterioration as another conservative administration engineered an upward redistribution that favored the rich and wealthy... the Bush tax cuts. The middle class declined in number while the marginal classes deteriorated as well. Later in the decade the banking crisis and mortgage meltdown disproportionately and specifically decimated black families and households across all strata. The middle class loss wealth, equity and many of its recent gains, while the marginal, lower classes and the poor continued their slide into depression level inequalities. African-Americans, the Occupy movement and other impacted groups fought back and resisted the assault on their hard won gains. That fight is continuing to this day as evidenced by the Moral Monday movement in No. Carolina.

In summary, the last 50 years demonstrates the vulnerability of all strata of the Black community: the middle class primarily by race and the marginal classes by race and class. The last 50 years also demonstrates the ongoing relevance and necessity for grass roots social movements to resist white elitist domination and exploitation. The gains that black folks have made are the direct result of the heroic struggles for justice waged by our people. Regardless of whether macro-economic policy has been dominated by supply side or demand side, or a combination of both, the majority of African Americans have "no side." As long as distributive policies favor the 1% to 10% of the population, the dark ghettos will remain intact at the bottom of the food chain for the foreseeable future.

Even, the election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States is ultimately traceable to the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement, the 1972 Gary Convention, the two Jackson presiden-



tial campaigns and the heroic sacrifices of millions of ordinary black folks. It was the social movement of the last half century that produced this historical result. The debate regarding whether this Administration is moderate-liberal, or moderate-conservative is still in progress. It is capable of initiating policy prescriptions that fit both categories. There is little reason to believe that the dark ghettos will be completely eliminated in the next couple of years because of their deep structural roots and origins; however there is evidence that some of its stresses may be partly ameliorated. The social movement is needed now more than ever to accelerate the process.

Thus, the Black community should continue to organize itself and its resources in its legitimate quest for self-determination and it must continue to organize itself in its legitimate demand for democracy, equity and social justice. Both the middle class and the marginal classes have a joint interest in targeting public policy to eliminate racial and class disparities and to eliminate the marginality of the dark ghettos and advance the proposition of equity and fairness for all marginal citizens in the political economy. The black social movement thus has an interest in asserting its right to its own voice while simultaneously working with allies who respect its Agenda and its right to self-determination in all its relations. The righteous must speak truth to power in the name of those who are still owed. Why? Because.....“A deposit was made, but the check still bounced.”

And until America deposits sufficient resources to cover its debts, the future of democracy and the American experiment will be in doubt.

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Wake Up Everybody: Understanding the Growing Black Unemployment Crisis.

Dr. James Stewart

Removing barriers limiting employment opportunities for African Americans was one objective of the 1963 “March for Jobs and Freedom” (MOW). The economic landscape for Blacks had shifted dramatically between 1930 and 1940, as massive numbers were pushed out of the agricultural sector as a result of both technological change and public policy. Expanded industrial employment opportunities generated by World War II had led to a net out-migration of Blacks from the South of 1.6 million between 1940 and 1950. By 1950 the proportion of black males and females employed in agriculture had fallen to 0.25 and .10 respectively. Conversely, between 1910 and 1950 the proportion of Black males employed as operatives had increased from 0.06 to 0.22 and the proportion employed as service workers increased from 0.06 to 0.14, virtually accounting for the entire shift out of agriculture. For Black females, the decline in the proportion employed in agriculture from 0.52 to 0.10 was almost totally explained by increases in the proportions employed as service workers (0.04 to 0.19), operatives (0.02 to 0.15), clerical and sales (0.00 to 0.05), and household workers (0.39 to 0.42).¹

Post-war economic gains experienced by Blacks were fueled in part by increasing access to union jobs. In 1970, the percentage of black males who were union members for all industries and occupations was 29%; the corresponding percentage for white males was 27.6%. The comparable percentages for Black and White females were, respectively, 13.8% and 9.8%.² A study using 1970 data found that the relative earnings of blacks were higher in cities with proportionately more manufacturing jobs and in cities with proportionately higher percentages of unionized jobs.³

Now, fifty years after the MOW, formidable barriers continue to frustrate efforts to achieve employment equity. The twin forces of deindustrialization and globalization have wielded dramatic changes in the national, regional, and local labor markets in ways that have severely disadvantaged Blacks. Deindustrialization has involved a massive decline in employment in the manufacturing sector along with a shift in jobs to the service sector. During the 1970s, deindustrialization resulted in the loss of between 32 and 38 million jobs.⁴ The gigantic shift from a manufacturing-based to a services-based economy has contributed to stagnation in wages, due, in part, to the decline in private sector union jobs. As noted in Table 1, the proportion of the workforce that is unionized has declined precipitously compared to representation rates in 1970. As can be seen in the table non-unionized Black male workers earn 27% less than their unionized counterparts, and non-unionized Black female workers earn 21% less than unionized Black females. Private service-producing industries accounted for nearly 90 percent of the job growth in the 1990s and



increased their share of total non-farm employment by more than 4 percentage points. The expanded labor force participation of women accounted for much of the growth in employment in the service sector. Of the 70 million jobs created in the U.S. between 1964 and 1999, 43 million were filled by women. In 1964 two-thirds of workers, the jobs held by women were in the service sector, by 1999 that figure had increased to 80%.⁵

Table 1

Union Representation and Relative Earnings of Black and White Male and Female Workers - 2010

	Black Men	White Men	Black Women	White Women
Percent of Workers Represented by Unions	16.2	13.7	13.8	12.2
Median Weekly Earnings of Full-time Workers Represented by Unions	\$827	\$985	\$720	\$872
Median Weekly Earnings of Full-time Workers Not Represented by Unions	\$606	\$817	\$574	\$651
Ratio: Non-union Earnings/Union Earnings	.73	.83	.79	.75
Ratio: Black Union Earnings/White Union Earnings	.84		.83	
Ratio: Black Non-Union Earnings/White Non-Union Earnings	.66		.88	

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Table 1, "Union Affiliation of Employed Wage and Salary Workers by Selected Characteristics". URL: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t01.htm>; Table 2, "Median weekly Earnings of Full-Time Wage and salary Workers by Union Affiliation and Selected Characteristics." URL: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t02.htm>

Globalization involves increasing economic integration across national boundaries, and the migration of workers in search of better opportunities is an important dimension of this process. Immigration has been credited with contributing significantly to some cities' population and labor force growth and, consequently, to globalization and revitalization efforts. For example, in early 2000 approximately 10.4 percent of the U.S. population was foreign born, compared to 7.9 percent in 1990. The foreign-born population accounted for 17.4 million, or 12.4 percent, of the total civilian labor force of 140.5 million.⁶ Migrant professionals and managers, and low-skill immigrant and domestic workers are all part of the new international labor force. Trends in the employment of low-skilled workers constitute a special concern for African Americans. The labor force of multinational corporations is increasingly segmented such that these companies can recruit locally for unskilled workers, at the national level for higher-skill levels, and internationally at the highest levels.⁷ Although domestic costs of production are kept low by the availability of low-wage work-

ers, more activities are being contracted out to other countries.

Immigrants are disproportionately employed in business services, construction, non-durable and durable manufacturing, health care, and personal services. The proportion of foreign-born workers is higher than that of native born workers in service occupations ; in operating, fabricating, and laboring blue-collar occupations; precision production, craft, and repair (10.5 percent); and farming, forestry, and fishing occupations.⁸ Low-wage-low skill workers are not only important as a source of blue collar labor, they also increasingly provide consumer services for more skilled workers including nannies, restaurant workers, laundry workers, dog walkers, and residential construction workers. Although the jury is still out regarding the extent to which immigrant workers competed directly with African American workers, we do know that larger pools of unskilled workers keep wages low, which hurts African American workers. There is wide variation in the overall representation of the foreign-born across cities.

A 2013 study has found that the wage gap between Black and White workers is greater in larger cities than in smaller ones.⁹ Another study comparing per capita income of Blacks and Whites across metropolitan areas in 2009 found that Black per capita income (PCI) was typically between 45% and 55% of White PCI. In New York City, for example, Black PCI was only 47.9% of White PCI. The figures for Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. were, respectively, 53.8, 49.0, 54.8, 52.0, 52.5, and 54.8.¹⁰ In many respects, Detroit has become the poster child exposing the worst fears of opponents of globalization. Total manufacturing employment in Detroit declined by over half between 1947 and 1977. The unemployment rate for adult males increased from 7.5 percent in 1950 to 11.7 percent in 1980; while the rate for African-American men, exploded from 11.8 to 22.5 percent. By 1980 only 56% of working-age African American males were in the labor force.¹¹ This is the sad history that undergirds the recent bankruptcy filing by the city of Detroit. The obvious question is, "to what extent does Detroit's plight represent the future for other cities with large African American populations?"

It is clear that the future employment prospects for Blacks are not promising. One study reports that after taking educational attainment into account, seven out of eight (87%) of U.S. occupations can still be classified as racially segregated. The study also finds that occupations with smaller shares of black men have higher wages.¹² Predictions regarding likely areas where employment growth will occur do not suggest that better opportunities are on the horizon. The occupational group with the largest expected growth between 2010 and 2020 is healthcare support, which is expected to grow by 34.5%. The second and third fastest growing occupational groups are expected to be personal service and services occupations (26.8%) and healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (25.9%). The four detailed occupations expected to add the most employment are registered nurses (712,000), retail salespersons (707,000), home health aides (706,000), and personal care aides (607,000).¹³

The harsh realities detailed in this essay should be a wakeup call for participants in the 50th anniversary of the MOW. In fact, the starkness of employment crisis facing African Americans warrants a recommitment at this March to mobilize to ensure that African Americans have equitable employment as the 21st century continues to unfold.



Notes

- ¹ James B. Stewart, "Historical Patterns of Black-White Political Economic Inequality in the United States and the Republic of South Africa," *The Review of Black Political Economy* 7 (3), (1977), 266-295.
- ² Stewart, "Historical Patterns," op. cit.
- ³ Thomas Hyclak and James Stewart, "A Note on the Relative Earnings of Central City Black Males," *The Journal of Human Resources* 16 (2), 1981), 303-313.
- ⁴ Barry Bluestone & Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America*. New York: Basic Books, 1982.
- ⁵ James B. Stewart, "Globalization, Cities, and Racial Inequality at the Dawn of the 21st Century," *The Review of Black Political Economy* 31 (3) (Winter 2004), 4-32.
- ⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2001). "Profile of the foreign-born population in the United States: 2000." *Current Population Reports. Special Studies. Report P23-206*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- ⁷ Rosabeth Kanter, *World Class, Thriving Locally in the Global Economy*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 1995.
- ⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, "Profile of the foreign-born population in the United States: 2000," op. cit.
- ⁹ Elizabeth Ananat, Shihe Fu, & Stephen L. Ross, "Race-Specific Agglomeration Economies: Social Distance and the Black-White Wage Gap." NBER Working Paper No. 18933 (April 2013).
- ¹⁰ G. Scott Thomas, "Study finds broad income inequality," *bizjournals.com*. URL: http://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/blog/the_score/2010/09/study_finds_broad_income_inequality.html
- ¹¹ Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. (Princeton Studies in American Politics). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- ¹² Algernon Austin, Darrick Hamilton & William Darity Jr. "Whiter Jobs, Higher Wages: Occupational segregation and the Lower Wages of Black Men." *Economic Policy Institute* (February 25, 2011). URL: http://www.epi.org/publication/whiter_jobs_higher_wages/
- ¹³ Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment Projections: 2010-2020 Summary." URL: <http://bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.nr0.htm>

Homeownership: The Great Recession and Loss of Wealth

Atty. Mtimishi St. Julien

Our economic well being as a people depends more on our wealth than our paychecks. The history of economic growth in America has depended greatly on the strategy of wealth accumulation through home buying in promising neighborhoods and realizing equity growth in that home over time. That wealth from home equity is commonly used to purchase larger homes, borrowed on to pay for higher education or skill development, start a business or pass on a little ‘nest egg’ to the next generation. Over the past few years African-American homeowners have been under attack by various forms of wealth stripping schemes and/or events.

The weight of the recent mortgage meltdown fell heavier on minority and lower-income communities, in part because their wealth was concentrated in their homes. Wealth stripping has only increased during the economic crisis. “Since the onset of the Great Recession, Americans have lost \$7 trillion in equity in their homes”, reports Jim Carr of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition. The Federal Reserve estimates the median American family has lost nearly two decades of wealth, or almost 40 percent of their assets. In a separate report, the Pew Research Center estimates wealth losses by African Americans at 53 percent, compared to 13 percent for whites. Today African American homeownership is about 45% of African American households which is down to that of the 1980’s. These losses are largely due to home foreclosures and lost equity.

The chief cause of this lost of wealth was the mortgage meltdown due to predatory and subprime lending products marketed to our people over the last decade. These products were pushed primarily to feed massive Wall Street (unregulated) private label mortgage-back securities schemes that ultimately created a bubble of debt that was not properly secured by true property values. As confidence in mortgage-backed securities backed decreased among investors appraised-values on homes fell drastically and the home mortgage finance market froze. Millions of households that neither accessed a predatory loan product nor were foreclosed upon suffered lost equity because of large numbers of foreclosed properties in their neighborhoods. Millions of borrowers still hold mortgages that are valued at more than the price of their homes. Instead of taking action against the Wall Street schemers and predatory lenders, many Congressional leaders instead have blamed federal government involvement and the aspiring homeowners, the victims of the resulting mortgage meltdown.

The dominant political conversation today is about “defunding” the government which in effect thwarts



the ability to prevent such private sector abuses. "It is too much government regulation that kills the ability to create jobs"; they opine. "Government should not be involved in housing", they say.

History is the Best Teacher

While federal government participation in and regulation of the housing market is under attack and our leaders today are in full retreat, we can learn from history of the Great Depression. Malcolm X has taught us that history is our best teacher.

In the 1930's Depression Era the President and Congress had similar challenges of fixing the economy by stabilizing the banking system in addition to stimulating the economy. The banking industry was near total collapse and the economy was stagnant. Our leaders then, as our leaders today, knew that 'safety and soundness' in banking must be restored and the unregulated excesses eliminated first. They also realized that the housing sector is a leading indicator for economic growth and wealth building since it fosters spin-offs in consumer spending on furnishings, appliances and home improvements as well as produces wealth for the growing American immigrant driven population. Therefore governmental action during the Great Depression to stimulate home buying became a strategic necessity.

So to correct the banking industry three key banking rules were created to secure the first goal of 'safety and soundness. The first was to limit bank investment lending to not more than 80% participation in any loan (i.e., requiring 20% investment from the homebuyer); secondly, limited bank lending to regulated percentages of its deposits (i.e., forcing banks to raise capital in order to make loans and therefore revenue); and thirdly, to maintain a regulated amount of funds in reserve to cover loan losses cause by defaulting loans.

After these key 'safety and soundness' rules were implemented in the banking industry, Congress created a government insurance company, called FHA (1934), to assist the homebuyer to purchase homes by acquiring an insurance policy at a monthly mortgage premium to cover a large percentage of the required down payment (until recently, 17%), since most homebuyers could not afford the full 20% down payment to purchase a home. Secondly, the President and Congress created Fannie Mae (1938) to purchase loans out of banks' loan portfolios to free up their capital to make more loans, since bank lending was (and still is) only restricted to a percentage of its deposits.

The results were not only that more home lending could be made but home mortgage interest rates were nationalized, since before the creation of Fannie Mae the amount of deposits in a bank and the respective mortgage interest rates charged on the available lending pool depended solely on the strength of the local economy. So instead of regional or local interest rates (i.e., high mortgage rates if deposits were small in weak local economies and lower mortgage rates if deposits were higher in stronger local economies) Thirdly, Congress authorized and funded the regulatory agencies to monitor bank activities to insure compliance with the 'safety and soundness' rules.

The actions of Congress after the Great Depression not only stabilized the banking industry with effective ‘safety and soundness’ standards, restoring public confidence, but it stimulated the economy by promoting the American Dream of homeownership by creating mechanisms to insure affordable down payments (FHA in 1934), accessible financing at stable mortgage interest rates (Fannie Mae in 1938). These actions helped the growing population of Americans (like today, significantly fed by immigrants) gain wealth through homeownership and stimulate broad economic growth in the country. Many African-American households were beneficiaries of this government-sponsored policy to promote homeownership and realize the potential of wealth building.

Wealth Stripping Disease of Foreclosure

The Obama Administration has realized some successes in Congress in spite of the incessant sabotage of the ‘defunders’. The recent establishment of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) should help in eradicating much of the predatory lending that occurred prior to the Great Recession. Unfortunately, the CFPB is not empowered to address the fallout from the ongoing financial crisis today. Complete elimination of Fannie Mae and its sibling, Freddie Mac, without a viable substitute to promote ‘affordability’ may leave affordable home mortgage finance in the hands of those only driven by profit. Dealing with that aftermath is essential to avoid further substantial wealth stripping as we climb out of the recession’s bubble.

In an article for the journal, *Democracy (Fall, 2012)*, James H. Carr expertly summarizes the negative impact on wealth of the predatory loan product and the ongoing foreclosure crisis.

“Of course, the most damaging and predatory loan product of all was the subprime mortgage that triggered the ongoing foreclosure crisis. The loss of wealth from foreclosures has been unnecessarily compounded by our inability to respond adequately to the crisis and the continued failures of the federal foreclosure-prevention programs. The higher numbers of foreclosures among minority households related to predatory loan products has been extensively documented. Prince George’s County in Maryland is the highest-income majority African-American county in the nation and, ironically, also the foreclosure capital of the state. In a recent study on foreclosure in that community, high-income borrowers in African-American neighborhoods were 42 percent more likely to go into foreclosure than typical borrowers in white neighborhoods.

In addition to this direct loss of wealth, neighboring residents in the communities in which foreclosures have been concentrated have also suffered. Distressed home sales drag down adjacent home prices, and improperly maintained vacant and abandoned properties can cause home prices in a community to collapse. (Not all neighborhoods are treated the same by the mortgage servicers who are responsible for the maintenance of their foreclosed properties: A recent investigation by the National Fair Housing Alliance found that foreclosed properties in communities of color were more than 80 percent more likely than those in white areas to have broken or boarded-up windows and other visible maintenance de-



iciencies.) Failure to prevent foreclosure and maintain vacant and abandoned properties has contributed to wealth stripping, particularly in minority communities. Research by the Woodstock Institute found that African-American and Latino communities in the Chicago area are likely to experience twice the amount of negative home equity (that is, when the value of a mortgage exceeds the value of a home) as non-Hispanic white communities.

Foreclosures have other harmful impacts on community. One consequence is a decrease in property tax revenue as a result of falling property values, which can harm local schools and other essential social services. Large numbers of foreclosures can also cause loss in community cohesion and stability as families that have lost their homes relocate out of the neighborhood. And large numbers of foreclosures can lead to increasing crime that accompanies vacant and abandoned properties.”

Is the Grass Really Greener on the Other Side?

While the out-migration of the African-American working class from the urban centers, called “Black Flight”, seems to be a continuing, yet fledgling, wealth building strategy, the millennial generation has decided to move back from the suburb to reclaim the city. The result has been an urban ‘gentrification’ that is changing the physical and social landscape of the central cities but also is displacing poorer African American residents, forcing them in many cases to relocate to the near suburbs.

Those suburban communities look inviting with their well funded schools, superior infrastructure and convenient retail, but as time goes on many African Americans realize that the millennial generation has grown up and the people who financially supported those suburban schools are now retirees with different agendas. The result is that the quality of the schools are not maintained as well as they were before, the cost of transportation to work and basic services are higher because automobile costs are increasing and local taxes and fees for the cost of public infrastructure and services continues to rise as the federal government continues to “defund” itself. The value and resulting equity of the suburban homes therefore decreases.

Well the millennial generation realizes that while they may have to acquire an old foreclosed home in a depressed neighborhood, that home is near a public transportation line or a school that they are committed to use to enhance neighborhood value, or a medical facility that will provide valued service and economic opportunity in the neighborhood. When you add these important elements to their entrepreneurial spirit, the elements of ‘gentrification’ and wealth building through homeownership are in place. The overall impact determines the condition of transportation lines, schools, economic generators and entrepreneurial energy. How many of African American working class will choose to remain in the urban centers and work to rebuild these neighborhoods and preserve as much of our culture and institutions as we can?

Here in New Orleans our culture is a key foundation of our economy, identity and quality of life. After the Federal Flood of 2005 (a.k.a. Katrina Hurricane) gentrifiers rushed in to transform the damaged city into an oasis for transplants, much to the chagrin of locals. In *Gentrification and Its Discontents: Notes from New*

Orleans, Richard Campanella describes the cultural changes caused by gentrification.

“Many predicted that the 2005 deluge would wash away New Orleans’ sui generis character. Paradoxically, post-Katrina gentrifiers are simultaneously distinguishing and homogenizing local culture vis-à-vis American norms, depending on how one defines culture. By the humanist’s notion, the newcomers are actually breathing new life into local customs and traditions. Transplants arrive endeavoring to be a part of the epic adventure of living here; thus, through the process of self-selection, they tend to be Orleanophilic “super-natives.” They embrace Mardi Gras enthusiastically, going so far as to form their own krewes and walking clubs (though always with irony, winking in gentle mockery at old-line uptown krewes). They celebrate the city’s culinary legacy, though their tastes generally run away from fried okra and toward “house-made beet ravioli w/ goat cheese ricotta mint stuffing” (I’m citing a chalkboard menu at a new Bywater restaurant, revealingly named Suis Generis, “Fine Dining for the People;” see Figure 2). And they are universally enamored with local music and public festivity, to the point of enrolling in second-line dancing classes and taking it upon themselves to organize jazz funerals whenever a local icon dies.

By the anthropologist’s notion, however, transplants are definitely changing New Orleans culture. They are much more secular, less fertile, more liberal, and less parochial than native-born New Orleanians. They see local conservatism as a problem calling for enlightenment rather than an opinion to be respected, and view the importation of national and global values as imperative to a sustainable and equitable recovery. Indeed, the entire scene in the new Bywater eateries—from the artisanal food on the menus to the statement art on the walls to the progressive worldview of the patrons—can be picked up and dropped seamlessly into Austin, Burlington, Portland, or Brooklyn.”

WE WILL WIN BY ORGANIZING FROM WITHIN

Is it greener on the other side? Or does building wealth may have more to do with staking our claim to what is ours and applying our own energies in our indigenous neighborhoods around those key elements of development and wealth building, i.e. transportation lines, schools, economic generators and entrepreneurial energy?

During the Kwanzaa season (Dec. 26-jan. 1st), and hopefully each day, we reinforce our African inspired energies needed to reconstruct and rebuild our neighborhoods through the principles of the Nguzo Saba, or seven principles .We must especially note the importance of Ujamaa, Nia and Kuumba in our strategies of wealth building through neighborhood development.

Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) - to build and maintain our own stores, shops and businesses and to profit from them together.



Nia (Purpose) - to make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

Kuumba (Creativity) - to do always as much as we can, in the way that we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than when we inherited it.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

1. Access to bankruptcy protection should be instituted in order to maintain homes. Right now, the family home is the only asset that cannot be restructured in bankruptcy proceedings, though outstanding debt on a luxury yacht, vacation home or investment property can be modified. Restructuring could prevent many from losing their homes
2. Credit reports should distinguish whether poor credit repayment behavior was a result of a mainstream or a predatory financial product;
3. As Fannie and Freddie are reevaluated, the primary mission of promoting affordable lending must be reinforced and secured in a new or restructured financial institutions
4. Reinforce the need for government review and regulation, if necessary, over financial institutions not only to insure safety and soundness but to promote affordability of home mortgage financing.
5. Develop Housing land trusts and inclusionary zoning in potential gentrifying areas to secure areas and or housing units dedicated to affordable housing

The State of Black Education in the New Millennium

Dr. Joyce King and Latoya Russell

Devastating educational “reforms” ushered in by corporate elites, lobbyists, and politicians are undermining public education, particularly for Black students. Indoctrinating the public with cultural deficit ideology and well-financed popular movies like “Waiting for Superman” and the “parent-trigger” film, “Won’t Back Down,” these neoliberal tactics—from high-stakes testing to zero-tolerance discipline policies—also include the transfer of public funds to for-profit companies, school closings, mass firings of experienced Black educators, and ultimately contribute to mass incarceration. Chicago’s recent closure of 50 schools, the largest wave of public school closings in history, exemplifies the trend toward privatization of schools in the nation’s largest districts—allowing private managers to run public schools. Privatization measures initiated in Philadelphia in 2002 were soon followed by the New Orleans “reform” experiment after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 when the mass firing of the city’s veteran public school educators included their replacement by many “alternatively” certified, inexperienced teachers and an eruption of charter schools (Buras, 2013).

Communities and educators are mobilizing resistance. Striking union teachers in Chicago resisted contract concessions in 2012 and communities—parents, students, and teachers—mobilized to resist school closures. Recently, Philadelphia parents and school cafeteria workers—joined by politicians and supporters from other cities—protested massive layoffs and school budget cuts (no arts, sports, or instrumental music programs, no assistant principals, counselors, social workers, secretaries, or cafeteria aides) with a hunger strike. Parents in rural Alabama counties are asking the federal courts to block a new state “School Choice” law that permits parents to transfer public school funding from “failing schools” to private schools via tax credits. In 2013 thirteen states created or expanded private-school-choice policies (Elliott, 2013).

A Plethora of Dismal Statistics

The Children’s Defense Fund reports that nationally, 1 in 3 Black and 1 in 6 Latino boys born in 2001 are at risk of imprisonment during their lifetime. While boys are five times as likely to be incarcerated as girls, a significant number of girls are also in the juvenile justice system. This rate of incarceration is endangering children at younger ages.

Retention, Suspension, Expulsions, and Corporal Punishment

States spend about three times as much money per prisoner as per public school pupil. (Except where noted, see CDF, *Cradle to Prison Pipeline*, 2013, for the statistics reported here.)

- Black children were 16 percent of sixth through eighth graders but 42 percent of students in those



grades who were held back a year in 2009.

- Although Black students comprised only 18 percent of students in public schools in 2009, they represented:
- 40 percent of all students who experienced corporal punishment;
- 35 percent of all students who received one out-of-school suspension;
- 46 percent of all students who received multiple out-of-school suspensions;
- 39 percent of all students expelled.

Achievement Disparities and Opportunity Gaps

Black student performance in reading, math, and science in elementary schools lag behind other groups not because impoverishment or a legacy of slavery produced cultural deficits as many educators believe (King, 1991, 1992) but as a result of opportunity gaps (Milner, 2013). Black students fall further behind as they progress through school and nearly half of all Black children who begin kindergarten do not graduate from high school (Lomax, 2013).

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/Reading/achieveall.asp>.)

- In fourth grade 84 percent of Black public school students cannot read at grade level and 83 percent cannot do math at grade level.
- In eighth grade 86 percent of Black public school students cannot read at grade level and 87 percent cannot do math at grade level.
- Black students score the lowest of any racial/ethnic student group on the ACT and SAT college entrance exams.
- Inadequate guidance and academic rigor in high school have resulted in Black students' overrepresentation at community colleges and in online universities rather than at top-tier institutions (Toldson, 2013).

Teacher Experience and School Curriculum

- Fifteen percent of teachers in schools with the most Black and Hispanic students are in their first or second year of teaching compared to 8 percent of teachers in schools serving the fewest Black and Hispanic students.
- Black children are 19 percent of students in districts offering gifted and talented education programs but

only 10 percent of students enrolled in those programs.

- Sixty-two percent of high schools serving the most Black and Hispanic students offer Algebra II compared to 82 percent of schools serving the fewest of this population.

High School Dropouts and College or Prison?

- Sixty-four percent of Black students graduate from high school within four years of starting ninth grade compared to 82 percent of White students.

- Thirty-five percent of the nation's Black students in 2008 attended one of the 1,700 "dropout factories," high schools where less than 60 percent of the freshman class graduate in four years; only 8 percent of the nation's White students attended such schools.

- The 2008 Schott Foundation Report, "Given Half A Chance: The 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males," documents the travesty of Black male high school dropout rates: Detroit: 80%, Baltimore and Buffalo: 69%, New York City and Milwaukee: 68%.

- Thirty-eight percent of Black young adults 18 to 24 were enrolled in institutions of higher education in 2010, compared to 43 percent of White young adults.

- Black males age 18 and over in 2008 represented only 5 percent of the total college student population, but 36 percent of the total prison population.

21st Century Racism/Cultural Domination or Cultural Well Being and Belonging?

Post-Brown v. Board, one cost of integration has been to separate Black children from their African cultural heritage as well as their failed assimilation into mainstream White America. As Hilliard (1978) noted in "Straight Talk About School Desegregation Problems," however: "It must be remembered that the present day push for 'integrated education' had its roots in the general belief that the education white children got was quality education, and that if only Afro-American and other cultural groups could be present when this quality education was offered, they would be better off than under segregation" (p. 100).

Accordingly, integration as it was implemented was based in the belief that Black culture had nothing to offer and in fact was a threat to the school system and to America. Meanwhile dominant white elites have preserved their power and hegemonic control while subjecting less powerful middle class and poorer Whites to "integration," which they in turn have experienced as downward social mobility (Alexander, 2010).

Asa Hilliard and Barbara Sizemore argued in the NABSE Task Force Report (1984) that academic excellence for African American students cannot be achieved without cultural excellence:



African American children must be given the opportunity to experience an appropriate cultural education which gives them an intimate knowledge of and which honors and respects the history and culture of our people. . . [This means] preparing students for self-knowledge and to become a contributing problem-solving member of his or her own community and in the wider world as well. No child can be ignorant of or lack respect for his or her own unique cultural group and meet others in the world on an equal footing. (NABSE, 1984, p. 23)

Producing countless students who are said to have “achieved” but do not have any sense of communal identity or the knowledge or ability to transform their own communities has been disastrous. The U.S. education system is a classic example of how people of European descent build institutions and status distinctions that enable dominant racial groups and maintain an aura of superiority while inoculating racial minorities with inferiority complexes – a must for their continued oppression (Stanfield, 2011). Since the historic Brown decision, followed by decades of “integration,” urban schools have become more racially concentrated and more oppressive for Black students (Murrell, 1997).

In a truly integrated culturally democratic system every student group’s culture and heritage would be recognized and respected allowing them to form a positive (informed) self-perspective and sense of group belonging. However, the Euro-centric worldview that dominates in schools takes precedence over any other group’s racial/ethnic identity and consciousness (Lewis, 2003; Swartz, 2007).

No policy approach better illustrates this worldview than the “standards movement,” which Asa Hilliard identified as a “decoy” rather than an effective tool for quality control and accountability for equity—because, as noted by the National Black Education Agenda, common core standards “ignore the history of and ongoing reality of structural racism and white supremacist educational practices” and exclude any focus on “education for cultural democracy” (Smith & Anderson, n.d.).

Rethinking Black Student Success in the New Millennium

Numerous examples of Black students’ achievements never make the news and few scholars focus on what accounts for the brilliance of Black youth like chess champion James Black Jr. of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, for example, or those who are exceptionally successful in their academic and creative accomplishments like Khadijah Williams, a young Black scholar who overcame homelessness to receive a full academic scholarship to Harvard University, and Stephen Stafford Jr., a classical pianist from Decatur, Georgia who enrolled in Morehouse College at 13 years of age.

However, we must also note that these students’ cultural needs would be better served by a culturally informed curriculum as research on gifted Black students suggests: “a curriculum that integrates ethnic content and a focus on social action would assist the gifted black students and allow them to overcome obstacles relating to their giftedness and racial identities” (Scott, 2012).

In its current state, the U.S. education system encourages “successful” Black students to dissociate from other Black students and the Black community achieving only on an individual level versus the group achievement that cultural excellence can make possible. In many cases, even when Black students ascend to the highest plateau of Euro-educational attainment, they fail to achieve any type of self-determination or community empowerment (Tucker et al., 2010; Uwah et al., 2008; Wiggan, 2008).

This assessment of the State of Black Education follows from the work of Carter G. Woodson (1933) whose book, *The Miseducation of the Negro*, called for curricula designed to educate all American children within a knowledge base that is not grounded solely in Eurocentric ideals. As Hilliard noted “Going to school to get a job is not enough. Getting a job so that the nation can regain its competitive edge is not enough. I would like for many of our children to come to feel that our welfare as a group and our traditional values should fall into their formulation of a purpose” (Hilliard, 1995, p.133).

African-American students should be taught and evaluated by standards that serve to empower them as individuals with the knowledge, skills and freedom to choose to uplift the Black community. Thus, the purpose of education for Black children should be social justice and freedom (King, Akua, & Russell, 2013). However, the importance of cultural excellence in education has been ignored as corporate-led and government “reforms” such as the “Race to the Top” funding initiative foster increasingly privatized schooling. A new report from the Center for Research on Education Outcomes examining test results of students in charter schools compared to those in public schools is an example of the lack of attention to cultural excellence (Rich, 2013). While experienced and effective Black teachers and principals are being pushed out of the school system, scholars fail to consider cultural excellence as a standard embracing instead “culture of poverty” deficit theories and multicultural viewpoints that amount to “subtractive schooling”.

In conclusion, the National Black Education Agenda issued a “Declaration of Academic and Cultural Excellence for All Black Children, Families and Communities,” which states:

“We charge that we are being oppressed by Educational and Cultural Genocide: the institutionalized system of white supremacy that, given the uniqueness of our historical experience, has left us without a heritage language and a sense of home and renders our children and families culturally and emotionally debilitated, threatening the future of our communities” (NBEA, 2012).

Comparative transformative research is needed that embraces the education, survival, and advancement of African descent peoples in the U.S. and other Diaspora contexts. A research and action agenda endorsed by the American Educational Research Association includes: assessing the impact of African language, culture, and heritage study in motivating student effort and engagement as well as teacher knowledge; using culture as an asset in the design of learning environments for students and teachers; research on teacher development that is powerful enough to change teachers’ habits of mind; authentic assessments for academic and cultural excellence and, given the evidence of the importance of parental racial socialization for Black students academic success and cultural well-being, visionary culturally in-



formed parent education (King, 2005).

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What's Health Got To Do With It?: African American Health Since MOW.

Dr. Wanda M. Franklin

The 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington has brought on a reflection of the status of African American on human, civil, political and social rights. There is a contemplation of how or if African American have progressed in giving inalienable rights in the last fifty years. What about our health? Isn't there an inalienable right to quality health care? Have we overcome? How have we progressed in health over the last fifty years? What factors influence the health and healthcare status of African Americans? Let's take a look.

Before 1964, the healthcare institutions of the United States were entrenched in the discriminatory policies and practices of the greater society. While the Civil Rights Act of 1964 changed a landscape of a healthcare system that was openly allocated for whites only, discriminatory behaviors continue to be seen in the treatment, care, and policies provided for the poor and African Americans (Charatz-Litt, 1992).

Racial and ethnic disparities in health are quite significant. Minority groups get sick more often, get ill sooner, have more severe and serious illness and die younger than other groups. The overall view of today's health care system includes well known historical experiences of segregation, traumatic personal incidences, and inferior to nonexistent healthcare treatment within the African American community. African Americans and other minority groups suffer more statistically and personally from successfully treated and controlled illnesses in other groups (Charatz-Litt, 1992; Cuffee et al, 2013; Edwards, 2011; Peterson, J., & Sterling, Y. M. 1999; Porter, C. P., & Villarruel, A. M 1993; Savitt, T. L., 1982; Shavers-Hornaday, V. L., & Lynch, C. F., 1997; Spigner, C., 1994).

A component of health care disparities is access to affordable health care. Access to care includes cost of treatment, office visit, and medications, transportation, quality of care, availability of health care work force, location and number of health care providers clinics and offices and most predictive, health insurance coverage (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012).

The most important factor in the poorer quality of care is lack of health insurance. Americans without health insurance were more likely to have poorer health status, suffer more serious disease and less likely to gain access to health care and participate in health promotion and disease prevention recommendations, such as cancer screenings, dental care, vaccinations, and health education about chronic disease (NHQR, 2011). African Americans even less likely to even seek health care because of the difficulty related to receiving care, knowing where or getting access to sites that provide the care they need, and having issues gaining entry into the health care delivery system, and finding culturally competent and compassionate care they can trust (USDHSS, 2014).

Healthcare insurance coverage status predicts the quantity and quality of healthcare services available to individuals and families (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). AA are more likely to be without health insurance when compared to whites, and Asian Americans (CDC, 2011).

Over 50% of African American adults 18-64 at or below the 400% of poverty line had no health insurance coverage (CDC, 2012). Therefore, African Americans may wait until the illness has become serious then use the emergency department or totally forego seeking health care altogether (Charatz-Litt,1992).

In the past 4-5 decades the rate of death among African American and white Americans has steadily declined, but the overall disparity between African American and white mortality rates have stayed just about the same (Satcher, et al, 2005; Williams, 2009). The differences in death rates of infants and black males have increased, while a decrease in the death rates is demonstrated in African American women (Satcher et al, 2005). Homicide does not demonstrate to be a significant factor in the mortality rate of African Americans. Suicide and respiratory disease, e.g. pneumonia and influenza do not contribute to the health disparities found in African American health. In 2013, heart disease, cancer and stroke remain the major causes of death in the African American community (CDC, 2013).

In a comparison of mortality rates in heart disease, cancer and stroke, African Americans die at a substantially higher rate 959.9/100,000 vs. 745.2/100,000. Even at this high rate, mortality rates in African American related to heart disease have declined in the past 50 years (NCHS, 2013). In 2010, the death rate declined to 28% higher in African Americans. See Table 1.

Williams and Jackson (2005) suggest that for the 1950–2002 time period homicide, heart disease, and cancer are significant in the creation of health disparities between black and white populations while respiratory, and suicide show virtually no disparities.

Table 1. Mortality Rate by Cause of Death in 2007 (ACS, 2011)*

Cause of Death	African Americans	White Americans
Heart Disease	247.7	186.4
Cancer	216.3	177.1
Stroke	60.4	40.1

*per 100,000

<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/@epidemiologysurveillance/documents/document/acspc-027765.pdf>

The disparities of life expectancy between Blacks and whites were also determined by the higher death rates of the major causes of death, heart disease, cancer and stroke, and the higher death rates of homicide, diabetes, and death around birth. (NCHS 2013).

The overall life expectancy for all Americans has increased from 70.8 to 78.7 in the past 40 years. For African Americans, life expectancy has grown from 64.1 to 75.1 years during the same time period (NCHS 2013).



A disparity of almost 4 years between blacks and whites continues in the death rate between 1960 and 2000 was 4 percent lower in 2000 (Satchler and et al, 2005). White males live 4.7 years longer than black males. White women live 3.3 years longer than African American women (NCHS, 2013). A larger disparity would be realized without the buffering effect of suicide, unintentional injuries, and chronic liver disease death rates being lower in African American community (NCHS. 2013).

Infant mortality is generally used as a indicator of the overall health of a community (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). Infant mortality is considerably higher in the AA community. In addition, a significantly higher risk for infant mortality among African American children has persisted since the end of Jim Crow (Kregier, Chen, Coulli, Waterman, & Beckfield, 2013). African American infant deaths have declined substantially from 44.3 per 1000 in 1960 to 14.1 per 1,000 in 2000; however, African America infants die at a rate 2.3 times higher. (CDC, 2013; Satcher et al, 2005).

Infant mortality can be associated to pre-term birth. Preterm infants born to AA women die at a rate 59 % higher than White women (CDC, 2011). Another issue associated with infant mortality is inter-pregnancy intervals. The interval between pregnancies in African American women can be linked to preterm births. Women waiting only 6 to 11 months between pregnancies increased the risk of pre-term birth by 25% compared to an interval of 18 to 23 months (Hogue, Menon, Dunlop, & Kramer, 2011). Preterm babies are more likely to have low birth weight. Four times more babies die from complications related to low birth weight compared to white babies. Many more African American women wait until their 3rd trimester to seek pre natal care if at all (USDHHS, 2013; Office of Minority Health, 2014).

Education and income have been reported as indicators of health (Peek, Coward, Henretta, Duncan, & Doughery, 1997; Williams, 2009). Mortality rates are lower in groups with higher income (Hadden & Rockswold, 2008). Mortality rates related to education status in 1960 in African Americans were not available to this author. However from 1986, in mortality rates have declined in those African Americans with more education (Hadden & Rockswold, 2008). When compared to white mortality rates, mortality rates are significantly lower in African Americans regardless of education achievement (Hadden & Rockswold, 2008). Poverty and income rates have substantially changed in the last 50 years. In 1960, the poverty rate of African Americans was 41.8% (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, Smith (2011) and the rate was 27.6% in 2011 (U.S. Cenus, 2011). Poor African Americans are sicker than poor whites (Williams, 2009).

A lifetime of less than optimal health behaviors and environmental factors cannot be overlooked. Unhealthy behaviors such as consuming poor quality foods, high sodium and fat diet, smoking, and lack of exercise accumulate and lead to deterioration in health status. External factors such crowded or inadequate housing, unsafe neighborhoods, and toxic environments, and stress also contribute to the health disparities in African American health (CDC, 2011; Peek, Coward, Henretta, Duncan, & Doughery, 1997; Williams, 2009).

Fifty-four percent of African American women are considered to be obese and the most obese ethnic/racial group in the United States (CDC, 2014; HRSA, 2014). African Americans eat a diet detrimental to

their health more than any other group. African Americans have little or no access to supermarkets in their neighborhoods where they can purchase healthy fresh fruits and vegetables. However, access is easy and readily available for African American to purchase lower quality foods and cheap junk foods such as unhealthy processed foods. And fast food restaurants are found in abundance in African American neighborhoods (Williams, 2009; Khan, 2003).

Twenty percent of adult African Americans smoke (CDC, 2013). Currently only 4.3% of current African American smokers are successful with smoking cessation. This is four times the number of African Americans who tried to quit smoking 50 years ago. Although smoking cessation has increased substantially in the past 50 years, it continues to be the most important and effective single action for improving the health of all African-Americans (Benowitz, 2002; Gilpin & Pierce, 2002). While in recent years there has been a downward trend in new smokers, today more African Americans place their health and lives at risk by continuing to smoke (Eck, Logan, Kleges, & Slawson, 1997).

Today about 17 % of African American women currently smoke compared to 15 % nationwide (CDC, 2013). Moreover, the method of smoking adopted by African Americans place them at higher risk for smoking-related disease. (Ludman, Grothaus, Curry, Graham, & Stout, 2002) African Americans smoke cigarettes that are often higher in nicotine, carbon monoxide, and tar content. They tend to take deeper and more frequent puffs or inhalations on each cigarette and retain smoke in the lungs for longer periods (Ahijevych & Gillespie, 1997; Ahijevych, Gillespie, DeMirici, & Jagadeesh, 1996; Ahijevych & Wewers, 1993; Ahluwalia, 1996; Benowitz, 2002; Cooley & Jennings-Dozier, 1998; Eck et al., 1997; Gulick & Escobar-Florez, 1995; Manfredi et al., 1992; Muscat, Richie, & Stillman, 2002; Perez-Stable, Herrera, Jacob, & Benowitz, 1998; Royce, Hymowitz, Corbett, Hartwell, & Orlandi, 1993). About ninety percent of African Americans use menthol cigarettes, which may be perceived to be less irritating and taste better than unmentholated cigarettes; yet mentholated cigarettes often promote greater absorption and diffusion of tobacco smoke constituents (Ahijevych & Wewers, 1993; American Lung Association, 2014; Benowitz, 2002; Carabello et al., 1998; Cooley & Jennings-Dozier, 1998; Perez-Stable, Herrera, Jacob, & Benowitz, 1998; USDHHS, 1998, 2003).

Neighborhood quality has been associated with health disparities in African Americans (Khan, 2003; Williams, 2009). Health issues have been linked to housing inequality. African Americans are more likely to live in segregated and poor neighborhoods that have higher levels of litter, broken sidewalks, and abandoned buildings (Austin, 2013; Khan, 2003; Williams, 2009). African Americans are more at risk for respiratory illness. The neighborhoods are more likely to be located in or close to environmentally toxic and polluted areas, such as garbage dumps, sanitation facilities and industrial sites. These neighborhoods lack access to quality safety and fire protection services (Khan, 2003; Williams, 2009). Many African Americans neighborhoods do not offer accessibility to safe, open areas, after school programs, parks or recreation centers for exercise and play.

Crime is reported as an obstacle to exercise and play outside in the African American neighborhood (Khan, 2013). Crime is also listed as a component of the levels of stress in African Americans. Low employment,



gang activity, noise, family issues and racial discrimination are listed as components of stress. Stress has been associated with illness for some time. The three major causes of death in African Americans: heart disease, cancer, and stroke are associated with stress (Segerstrom & O'Connor, 2012). Stress along with racial discrimination has been widely reported as component of health disparities in African Americans (Williams, 2009; Williams, 2012; Kaplan, Madden, Mijanovich & Pucaro, 2013; Szanton et al, 2012; Avey, 2002). Williams and Mohammed (2009) suggest that racism and discrimination may in the future be categorized as a risk factor for disease. While most stress research is dispersed around various diseases or illnesses, stress - centered and funded studies focusing on the effect of stress in racial discrimination and human health risks are warranted (Avey, 2002, Williams, 2012).

As a nation, we must intentionally and decisively develop effective and evidence based interventions and policies to address racial and ethnic disparities (Williams, 2009).

Establishment of trust among African Americans in the health care system may be the first obstacle to overcome. Racial discrimination was reported to decrease treatment adherence while trust in the care provider was reported to increase treatment adherence (Cuffee et al, 2013). This author cites numerous studies that show a relationship among mistrust in care providers, poor adherence to treatment, inadequate treatment from physicians and poor health outcomes (Cuffee et al, 2013).

The US Department of Health and Human Services has initiated specific plans to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities in all groups. The USDHHS has developed an action plan to address the social, economic and environmental issues that influence health called the Nation Free of Disparities in Health and Health Care (NFDHH). The comprehensive plan included input from a collaboration of community-based, private, and public stakeholders and the local, state, and national agencies to generate efficacious initiatives to the reduce health disparities classified by race and ethnicity.

The NFDHH plan contains fourteen indicators to determine the effectiveness of these initiatives to reduce disparities. They include 1) transforming health care settings, 2) increasing and strengthening the health-care infrastructure and health care providers, and 3) advancing the health, safety and well-being. The NFDHHS expands provisions in the Affordable Care Act and other national health care programs. A list of these proposed endeavors can be found in Appendix A, B and C online at file:///F:/a%20my%20research/state%20of%20black%20america/HHS_Plan_complete.pdf.

National Partnership for Action to End Health Disparities is another approach developed through the USHHS. Its goal and mission are to increase the effectiveness of health disparity elimination programs through awareness, leadership, cultural competency, and evidence based outcomes. More information can be found at <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/npa/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=1&lvlid=11#sphp>

To reduce health disparities in African Americans in the top three causes of death we must increase awareness, education, treatment and adherence to treatment (CDC, 2013). Education about nutrition and healthier ways to prepare meals that are lower in calories, fat and sodium and higher in fiber and dense nutrients are needed (Khan, 2003). Various researchers suggest that a faith based approach would be ben-

eficial to reach African Americans for health education, knowledge sharing and counsel about negative health behaviors (Boutain, 2009; Gonnerman, Lutz, Yehieli, & Meisinger, 2008). Reduce errors in Health care/medical textbooks about African Americans Sheets, et al (2011).

Many more community based health promotion and prevention programs such as “Challenge”, Prime Time Sister Circles, “Sisters Together: Move More, Eat Better,” (Dingfelder, 2013) are needed to address the educational components of health in African Americans. The Office of Minority Health available at <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/> has many sources available and the CDC’s REACH: Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) available at <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/reach/>.

African Americans suffer from inequity in health in the three major causes of death in Americans. These health disparities mirror the social and economic disparities in racial and ethnic groups (Williams, 2009). Not a lot has changed in the health and socioeconomic status of African Americans in the last 50 years. Health disparities are linked to access to health care. Access to health care is limited in the African American community related to poverty, lack health insurance coverage and health education. Racial discrimination is now considered a factor in the composition of health disparities. The federal government and local entities are developing culturally competent programs to eradicate the problem.

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Forty Acres and a Mule Revisited: A Viable Future For Black Farmers and Landowners.

Gary Grant, Willie Wright, and Dr. Spencer Wood

The State of Black Landownership

The statistics have been stated and written time and time again. They illustrate that by 1910, some four plus decades following the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation; Blacks in the south had purchased between 16-19 million acres of farm land while today they own less than 7 million acres. At the same time they have declined from roughly 1 million in 1920 to around 30,000 today. By 1920 two key factors in the decline of Black farmers came together, Jim Crow and agricultural modernization. While the emphasis on productivity and rise of modern agricultural technology favored large farms and was race neutral, Jim Crow, of course, was not.

So while all small farms felt the impact of federal policy that favored larger economies of scale, promoted a cheap food policy domestically, and used agriculture as a key tool to establish and maintain global power, Black farms also had to navigate and endure protracted racism. With these twists came a change in agricultural landownership. Small farms began declining, farm size increased, and Black farms declined disproportionately (Wood and Gilbert 2000). In fact, Black farms declined rapidly, losing roughly 50 percent of their numbers every 10 years between 1950 and 1970, the height of the civil rights movement (Wood and Gilbert 2002; Daniel 2013).

It is well-known among movement scholars and activists that Black property owners played important roles across the South during the voter registration and desegregation efforts of the second half of the century. They regularly used their land for the establishment of churches, meeting houses, community centers, and, not least, collateral for posting bond when activists were arrested (de Jong 2000; Wood 2006; Daniel 2007; and Daniel 2013). By the 1960s Blacks had lost nearly three quarters of their land. In 1964 there were roughly 270,000 Black farmers who owned approximately 5 million acres according to the 1964 Census of Agriculture.

Still, the worst had yet to come. Exacerbating the non-economic factors of racism and reprisal during the 1960s, the “go big or go home” agro-economic policies embraced by then Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz, caused Black farmers, like most small farmers, to lose even more land. Economic policies favoring conventional and large-scale agriculture combined with a racially hostile environment to destroy the remnants of a Black rural wealth base (USCCR, 1967; USCCR, 1982; and Woods, 1998).



A recent study of privately owned land, estimated that Blacks owned 7.8 million acres of agricultural land, representing less than 1% of the total agricultural land in the country (Gilbert, Wood, and Sharp, 2002). This massive decline in landownership is key because landowners often represented the middle-class of rural counties. Their children were more likely to attend university and their income often contributed to the construction of local schools and churches.

Furthermore, during the antebellum era, in areas surrounding the Kentucky Borderlands, free Black communities comprised of enterprising Black landowners were instrumental to the development and the maintenance of the Underground Railroad (Hudson, 2011). Throughout the 20th Century, Black landowners continued to build and lead their communities. They had higher high school graduate numbers, sent their children to college and worked as middle class people do everywhere, to expand opportunities for their children as they pursued upward mobility and the “American Dream.

Scholars and activists have identified many of the key contributors to land loss, including the vulnerability and pressured selling of heir property, urban migrations of the early 20th century, unscrupulous lending practices by traditional lenders (i.e. banks, credit unions, etc.), failure of absentee heirs to pay property taxes, and rampant and unrestrained racism within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Prophetically, in 1974 researchers wrote,

“The black farmer in the United States has nearly disappeared and the black population in rural farm areas may soon follow... Prospects for the revival of black farming are very slight. In retrospect it appears that World War II and the social and technological changes that came with it sounded the knell for the small farmer. Among these the black is simply the first to go. (Wadley & Lee, 1974: 238)

What the authors could not foresee was the filing of the largest class action, civil rights settlement in US history between Black farmers and the USDA (Pigford v. Glickman 1997). Adding to the confusion around the lawsuit, there were ultimately two versions of the settlement known as Pigford I and II.

Both stemmed from the same basic case, but the second settlement had to do with admitting late filers to the settlement. Pigford successfully demonstrated that employees of the USDA discriminated against Black farmers who were applying for operating and land acquisition loans. While largely inadequate, Pigford helped raise awareness of the role African Americans in agriculture and coincided with a resurgence of the small farmers in and near cities all across the country and throughout the world.

**Black-Operated Farms: U.S. and Southern States
1982-1997**

	1997	1992	1987	1982	% Change 1982-1997
United States	18,451	18,816	22,954	33,250	-44.5
Alabama	1,467	1,381	1,828	2,759	-46.8
Arkansas	679	658	784	1,249	-45.6
Florida	643	612	708	835	-23.0
Georgia	1,175	1,080	1,253	2,068	-43.2
Kentucky	523	590	673	935	-44.1
Louisiana	1,045	1,097	1,198	1,888	-44.7
Maryland	201	253	371	551	-63.5
Mississippi	2,145	2,480	3,016	4,802	-55.3
Missouri	155	160	193	238	-34.9
North Carolina	1,515	1,866	2,640	4,413	-65.7
Oklahoma	722	556	648	795	-9.2
South Carolina	1,412	1,765	2,015	3,147	-55.1
Tennessee	893	938	1,202	1,598	-44.1
Texas	3,462	2,861	3,211	3,292	5.2
Virginia	1,127	1,298	1,692	2,728	-58.7
Total – 15 States	17,164	17,595	21,432	31,298	-45.2
Region Total as % of All U.S. Black Farms	93.0	93.5	93.4	94.1	--

Sources: 1992 Census of Agriculture: Geographic Series 1B, CD-ROM
 1997 Census of Agriculture: Geographic Series 1B, CD-ROM
 Table originally published in Wood and Gilbert, 2002.

Today, these traditional Black farmers and urban producers are at the center of larger social movements that link health, hunger, and independence in one broad vision for social justice. Their work builds on a longer tradition linking economic development, health, and environmental stewardship well established by Black landowners.



2013: Where are We Now?

Despite the Pigford settlement little has changed for rural Black landowners. Many still struggle to keep their land out of foreclosure and keep their equipment from the auction block. Even more are still awaiting their settlement payments stemming from their involvement in Pigford. Adding insult to injury, a conservative Congress has led the charge, though largely unsubstantiated, in stalling the Pigford II settlement through assertions of impropriety among the claimants and the process. The key actors in this struggle have been Black rural landowners and they have been under attack.

As a consequence they have been forced to devote a considerable amount of time and resources to protecting their land from the local white power structure. These actions and responses all culminate in one image of the Black farmer – that of the aging, perpetually embattled rural Black landowner whose entire existence is caught up in exposing institutional injustice.

The second image is the urban Black farmer, the city cousin of rural Black landowners, including Will Allen (Growing Power, Inc.), Malik Yakini (Detroit Community Food Security Network), LaDonna Redmond (Chicago), and Ron Finley (South Central, LA). They are enterprising, challenging, and receive recognition and support, worldwide. Importantly, they are a central part of the growth of urban agriculture which emphasizes local and sustainable food production.

Unlike much of this movement in the US, however, these Black leaders also emphasize food justice. In fact, globally, the linkage of urban food production and issues of social equality come together among small land holders of color. It is their vision of the control of one's food as a fundamental human right that unites a new massive global social movement to end suffering, promote health, and liberate oppressed peoples. Black urban farmers are at the center of this revolution in our food system. As southern rural school districts drop agricultural curriculums, how ironic is it that the Northern and Westward descendants of Southern farm migrants are now the face of Black agriculture.

BFAA applauds our city cousins for taking matters in their own hands and producing sustenance from concrete. We stand with them in our concern that many of these amazing initiatives are developing on land borrowed from city governments or rented from various landlords. Rarely, are they owners and consequently are hindered in their ability to facilitate the development of the form of entrenched political power, social, religious, and economic stability that owning property brings to families and communities. We remain in need of universal rights for access to land among landless people.

Where Do We Go From Here

"You don't have to farm, but purchase you some land," is our resounding advice to Black people be they in the South, North, East, or West. Land is more than a contributor to wealth. It is the foundation for a stable Black community, political enfranchisement, self-defense, and the transfer of one's culture and history to Black youth. Perhaps, more than money, what has been lost through the decline of Black owned land is



a loss of its significance to the maintenance and growth of the Black community. Archie Hart of the NC Department of Agriculture's Office of Small Farms Policy summed up these assertions as he stated "though relevant to North Carolina but not exclusive ...how is the 70% loss of farms, 67% loss of land-nearly 300,000 acres or 1.2 billion dollars of lost assets to the African American community to be offset?" And that is just between 1981 and 1996. Land ownership is different than work. It is not a job that pays wages.

Rather, it contributes to wealth, and wealth development stands as central today in our struggle for equality and independence as it did during the civil rights movement (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006). To develop our wealth, it is important that we country and city cousins reconnect, be aware and supportive of one another's shared struggles, particularly those of us involved in battles around food and environmental justice.

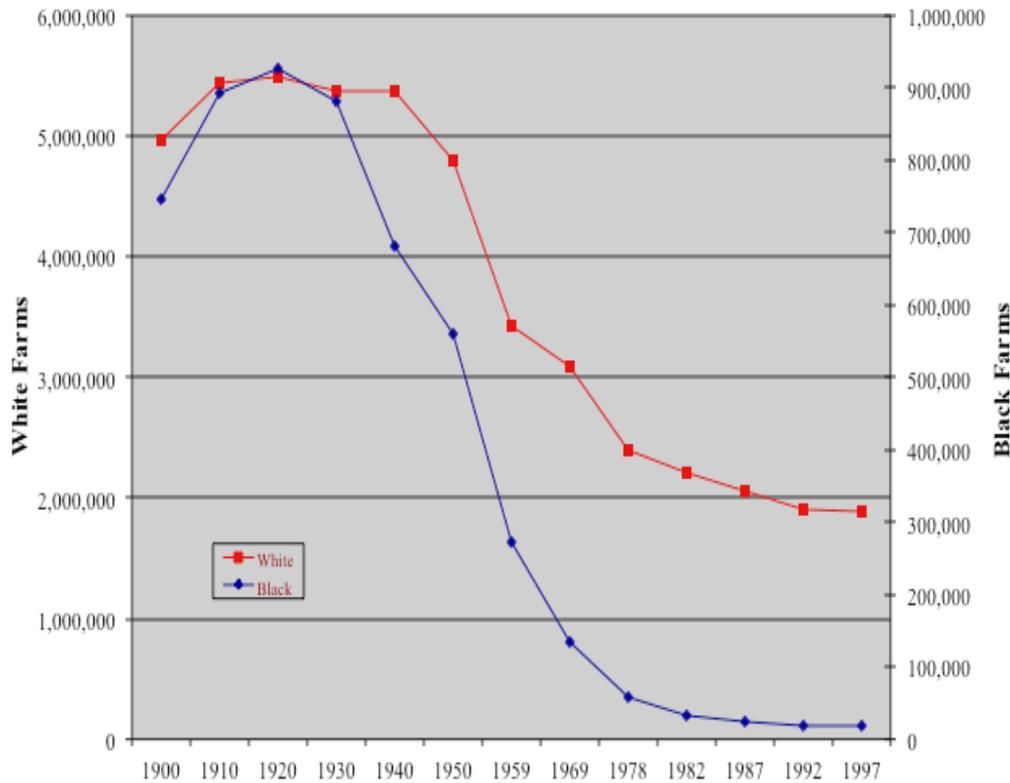
So, where we go from here is back – back to landowning, trade/craft learning, and back to building stable, secure Black communities from the ground up. Integral to this movement are the contributions of young adults from rural communities who were fortunate enough to earn college degrees. Many of these degreed [wo]men take their experiences and skills to urban cities rather than the communities in which they were raised – communities that are in most need of their assistance, their skills, and their understanding.

This rural brain drain further hampers the ability of rural Black communities to grow residentially, economically, and politically. Second, re-introducing agriculture into the classroom could help develop a greater appreciation for landownership and agriculture by students of rural and urban communities. Though A number of these youth may not become farmers or even landowners, it is likely they will become adults conscious of agricultural issues such as food and environmental safety as well as allies to farmers; the state of Black landownership is imbedded in the state of the entire Black community.

Thus, as we reflect on the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington, let us be reminded that this march was one for jobs and economic justice, two things Black farmers remain determined to gain.



U.S. Farms Operated by Blacks and Whites, 1900-1997



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The Black Family Since the March on Washington

Dr. Angela James

As I consider the question of the Black family in the fifty years since the March on Washington, have a hard time starting there. Like Martin Luther King Jr. in his "I Have a Dream Speech", my mind starts with the promise of emancipation, which was proffered in the form of a proclamation by President Lincoln, now, 150 years ago. I think of this picture



of an African American Union soldier, his wife and daughters. The picture illustrates two things: 1) that many African Americans celebrated the proclamation, and later, their freedom, by doing what slavery did not allow, formalizing their relationships with marriage; and 2). Perhaps the most important direct effect of the proclamation was to allow those who would be liberated to participate directly as liberators.

That the proclamation itself did nothing to ensure freedom for most held in bondage is another important point of contemplation, as is the undeniable fact that it indeed, gave moral recognition towards that end. Similarly, the March on Washington represents a pivotal moment of promise, rather than of fulfillment. In 2013, that lack of fulfillment remains.

"The Family" is perhaps the area of social life at once difficult and most illustrative of the complicated



struggle toward freedom undertaken by African Americans. Of course, relationships, love, family feeling certainly existed during the period of enslavement. However, the “sanctity” of family was not allowed to compete with that of private property. Key to this structural arrangement was ideas. Slaveholders argued against the very existence of emotional family ties as a way of dehumanizing those whom they hoped to continue to hold as property. In like fashion, abolitionists argued the immorality of slavery by vividly recounting wrenching tales of family relationships broken by slavery. The idea of family, therefore, has been a central frame for arguments both for and against African American freedom and inclusion as full-fledged citizens since the time of their enslavement.

The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom represents another pivotal and illustrative moment in the struggle for social justice. The march itself was created to advance the cause of the Civil Rights struggle being waged in the American south, and as well address the economic and social isolation experienced by African Americans north and south. In rural areas of the Mississippi delta, and urban ghettos as well, African Americans were dehumanized by a combination of legal, social, and economic conditions. In response, African Americans engaged in a full on battle for their own liberation. As James Farmer is quoted as saying, the protests will not stop “till the dogs stop biting us in the south and the rats stop biting us in the North (Branch, 1988).

Central, to the march, was a full slate of economic, as well as social and civil rights concerns. The passage of the Civil Rights Act was never a sole goal of the March. According to A. Philip Randolph, one of the central organizers, “real freedom requires changing political, social philosophies and institutions”. And so, changing laws, ideas and structures were at the center of the “emancipation” hoped for in the aftermath of the march.

Marriage continues to be a “celebratory act”. As such, the dramatic changes in African American marriage and family behavior should serve as an indicator of the degree to which “the dream” of Martin and the March’s organizers, remain unfulfilled. Additionally, as it was during the time of enslavement, marriage and family continue to be pivotal components of competing efforts to dehumanize or liberate African Americans.

At the time of the March on Washington, approximately 70% of African American children lived in two parent households, today; only 33% do so (Current Population Survey, 2012). In the 60’s, as well as today, the relatively high proportion (relative to whites) of children living in single parent households has been linked to a range of poor outcomes. In fact, in the 60’s many scholars linked the disproportionate levels of single parent households led by women as the source of high rates of criminality, poor educational outcomes, as well as poverty (Moynihan, 1965). Many of the social problems of poor Black communities were linked dysfunctional cultural responses to poverty.

The “tangle of pathology” which was thought to plague Black ghettos in the 60’s was specifically linked to the inability of African Americans to form stable marriages, which in turn was connected with the less stable work prospects available to African American men. This problem was portrayed as a “Black problem”;

linked inexorably to race, culture, and history. In the early 60's over 20% of Black children were born to unmarried parents, while only 3% of white children were born to unmarried parents.

Today, about a third of white children are born to unmarried mothers, and marriage has become less pervasive among all groups in American society. So, at precisely the time of the March on Washington, the general American population was at the precipice of a revolution in marriage and family related behavior (Furstenburg, 2005). This revolution had at its vanguard, African Americans.

Today, many of the problems highlighted by scholars during the era of the 1960's have worsened for African Americans. The unemployment, rates of imprisonment, poverty, social isolation that marked urban Black communities in the 60's and prompted Dr. King's description of them as "lonely islands of poverty", has become less lonely. Today, these conditions create similar hardship for Hispanic and white children. Structural conditions of poverty, rather than Black culture, make it difficult to form and maintain marriages.

As well, a broad array of social changes has prompted sweeping changes in marriage and family such that race no longer appears as a singular factor (Coontz, 2005). However, race continues to significantly shape social life and structural conditions. For example, at the time of the March on Washington, Black male unemployment was 10%, while that of white men was half the rate, at 5%.

At this writing, the unemployment rate of African American men is 14.5% compared to 6.5% among white men. In other words, the racial disparities in employment have grown significantly. While contemporary research acknowledges the important role that male economic characteristics and outlooks are to establishing and maintaining marriage, the conditions of poverty continue to be disproportionate by race. As a result, the differences in marriage and family behavior observed in the early 60's have continued. In terms of a range of indicators, conditions of Black family life associated with social dislocations have become more profound.

The dream of erasing racial differences and racism has not been realized. The continuing "dream" of young African Americans to enter into traditional marriage and family life are thwarted by conditions, which hamper, disproportionately, the economic outlooks of young Black men. These conditions include the devastating impact of the War on Drugs in terms of imprisonment and continuing disparities in employment and unemployment, particularly among those with lower levels of education. Concern over family changes must be translated into actions to secure economic opportunities for Black men. That is the single most important factor driving declines as well as racial disparities. Additionally, inasmuch as family change has occurred across racial lines, policy-makers must create policy in line with this reality. The presumption that children have varying levels of access and resources from their parents must be both acknowledged and accommodated.



The Black Church In the United States Since The March on Washington

Dr. Alton Pollard

“The Black church” is analytical shorthand for the vast network of racial-ethnic communities of Christian faith, worship, and life born out of and informed by the historic and present day experiences of people of African descent in the United States.

Among its many functions, the Black church is a sacred and social movement, representing communities of commitment and, sometimes, arenas of change. In oppressions affecting Black children, women, and men, Black churches have access to liberative and holistic resources and reconciling potentiality, to restoring the ancient ancestral wisdom and the distilled wisdom found in texts – and contexts – which uphold the agency of Black humanity. When and where the Black church upholds and models its own virtues of love, justice, freedom, community, equality, dignity, self-worth and more, it bears magnificent witness to a just and humanizing world.

In the last fifty years the African American community has undergone momentous and convoluted change. By the middle of the twentieth century, a largely Southern agrarian population had become predominately urban as Blacks “voted with their feet” against Jim Crow segregation and repressive white brutality for the “promised land” of the urban and mostly Northern and Western industrial cities.

The ramifications for Black churches during this decades-long migration proved considerable. Between the First and Second World Wars, Black religious leadership frequently avoided even the most modest forms of social critique, giving way to a near exclusive emphasis on individual care and transformation in the midst of the white American maelstrom. Much of the radical hope of the Black religious faithful had to operate outside traditional institutions, as African Americans raised troubling new questions about the spiritual malaise of Black churches and their seeming preoccupation with inimical white Christian values.

Out of the emerging ecclesial schizophrenia emerged important new religious movements from Holiness and Pentecostalism to the Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam. Such leaders of note as Rosa A. Horn, Ida B. Robinson, Master Wali Fard and Elijah Muhammad represented some of the most innovative changes, subversive expressions and transcendent hopes of Black people as they sought to create agency, equality, dignity and empowerment in their lives.

The Black-led freedom movement of the 1950’s and beyond was an intense evocation of powerful and prolonged experiences that for the better part of three hundred years had sought to dismantle the institutional mantle of racism. The scope and magnitude of these militant new protests were of a scale previously unknown and firmly identified with the ethos of the Black church – the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King,

Jr., the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Ella Baker and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee among others.

Religion scholar C. Eric Lincoln identified the 1960's as the watershed years when the "Negro Church" died and was reborn in the form of the "Black Church." Black churches joined spiritual imperatives with Black sociopolitical objectives in intermittent fashion, at times spectacularly so but not always, as Black clergy and laity determined to embrace the clarion call to resistance, liberation, and social justice as part of their spiritual inheritance. In the aged presence of racism Black churches bore witness to the empowering presence of the divine resident in the souls of Black folk and others of the disinherited.

In the years since the Civil Rights and Black Consciousness Movements, Black and Womanist Theologies have provided Black churches with critical tools of analysis and advocacy in the struggles against Apartheid, the HIV/AIDS Epidemic, Mass Incarceration, and Human Trafficking, and for Gender Equality, Gay Equality, Environmentalism, Health Care Equity, Reproductive Freedoms, Africa and the Diaspora, Immigration, Globalization, Living Wages, and so much more. The partnering work has only just begun.

A pervasive political myth in the United States is that the nation is now comprised of a common citizenry living in a post-racial and inclusive society. In truth, the oppressive legacies of the past are not so easily eradicated or dismissed. Disparity and death, violence and abuse, stigma and structural unemployment, food deserts and educational malfeasance, the War on Drugs and mass incarceration, racial profiling and anti-immigration legislation, and "stand your ground" vigilantism all function as contemporary forms of hegemonic social control.

Bi-partisan obstructionism and market forces dictate the new racial reality. Race-relations management forged in civic and corporate spaces masquerades as principled public policy. Intersections between race and other socially contested realities – gender, generation, sexuality and class among others – are denied critical nuance, coalescent recognition, and emancipating capacity. Injustice comes in new and myriad forms. The nation's crisis of confidence in democratic freedoms continues unabated. Racism, America's original sin, lives on.

The state of affairs in African American churches are as unsettled as those of larger society. Among Black mainline denominations meaning, mission, money and memberships are in disrepair. Non-denominationalism and non-affiliation are the new growth sectors. The litmus test for inclusion in the household of faith grows weary and unsteady in the face of a host of contested values ranging from gender and sexuality to ethnicity and social class. The largest reservoir of the Black un-churched are those who were once potential members, but who finally despaired of finding spiritual, moral and holistic fulfillment in extant Black religious institutions. In point of fact, Black churches mirror the same levels of mistrust and territorialism as the African American community and United States society writ large.

Today Black churches are at a crossroads. They are the fault line between many progressives and traditionalists, women and men, young and old, same and both gender loving, the haves and have nots, wherever



communities of African descent in the United States are to be found. The African American estate awaits the “good news” that leads to the moral, personal, familial, social, economic, political, and cultural transformation of our time. However, Black churches by and large have yet to seriously conclude that tackling the root problems of Black America will require a far more organized and intentional structural witness than is currently the case.

Martin Luther King, Jr. reminds us:

Any religion that professes to be concerned with the souls of men (and women) and is not concerned with the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a dry-as-dust religion (Stride Toward Freedom, 1958).

Fifty years after the March on Washington, many African Americans continue to suffer the indignity of social pathologies not of their making. A culture of death, disprivilege, and disparity continues to be visited upon those who are Black, brown, poor, young and female. Policymakers eager to legislate libertarian and limited (federal) government philosophies as a means to social and political control are oblivious to the gritty trauma that marks Black neighborhoods and streets.

Black churches must direct their still formidable resources to public policy advocacy and education, engaging the complex underlying structural and systemic forces that work against community building. The negative distribution of goods and services in Black communities everywhere is one major social policy trend awaiting proactive and concerted response from Black churches.

The wholesale shift of economic and health activity away from Black urban and rural centers, with tragic consequences for the poor, is yet another. The “Moral Monday” Movement gaining strength in North Carolina demonstrates the power of churches joined in coalition for insurgent political advocacy.

Finally, it is important to identify and address what causes so many Black churches – and Black organizations as a whole – to focus with such passion on their own institutional and entrepreneurial interests, to the neglect and detriment of the wider community.

The work of social transformation and community empowerment requires far more resources than what the institutional Black church alone can hope to accomplish. It is a truth that far too few believers, advocates, critics and scholars understand even now. African America has a broad array of organizations and enterprises that have to be called upon to be accountable to one another and the whole. The time to empower the entire Black estate is now.

The above observation does not in the least relieve Black churches of their social and spiritual responsibility. Megachurches, storefront churches, and every form of church in between must commit to establishing a more liberative ethos and presence in the wider community. Tragically, for too many churches



the recognition that there was a shift in the political terrain over the last fifty years, that the struggle for freedom principally moved from the steps of the courthouse and city hall and into the hallowed chambers of legislative assemblies, corporate boardrooms, executive suites, and social media platforms never seems to have occurred.

Now as never before a learned, strong, prophetic and resourceful Black church must be joined with the best social and political thought and practice at our community's disposal. As we move well into the twenty-first century, as the racial lessons of the recent past fade from the collective memory only to be confronted by the specter of a New Jim Crow at home and imperialist impulses abroad, pressing questions remain: How well will the Black church community respond to the erosion of our freedoms? What spiritual sensibilities will be brought to bear in the everyday affairs of life? What theological and ethical resources will Black America employ in light of our ceaseless struggles? What public policy and civic commitments will we radically engage in spirit and in truth?

Having come this far by faith, with a renewed dedication to prophetic action and critique, Black churches are poised on the edge of a future, too full of the provincial still, but also pregnant with possibilities for insurgent renewal and change.



Justice or Just Us: Fifty Years of the Criminal Punishment System

Nkechi Taifa, Esq.

In reflecting on the past 50 years of the U.S. criminal punishment system, the question I wish to explore is, has it been justice, or “just us”?

In 1963 Commissioner of Public Safety Bull Conner used fire hoses and police dogs to control Black demonstrators. That same year saw a hung jury in the trial of the person who viciously gunned down civil rights leader Medgar Evers in his own driveway. It was also the year four little Black girls were blown to bits in Sunday school. Fifty years ago, the police and the klan worked hand and hand. Racism was overt, direct, and “in your face.”

Today, 50 years later, the United States has moved from overt racist lynchings and explicitly blatant discrimination as the order of the day to mass incarceration as its punishment of choice. Indeed, prior to the advent of the civil rights laws of the 1960’s, mass incarceration was not a factor. Why focus on a prison system or due process of law, when there was a fully functional system of lynching?

In unabashedly provocative terms, a bird’s eye view of the past five decades reveals a seismic shift toward symptoms of genocide, as the system of mass incarceration decimates not only individuals and families, but generations of Black people as well. Year after year, decade after decade and century after century, although the players change and the scene shifts, the script irrefutably remains the same – unequal justice. It does not matter whether the issue is vigilantism or police brutality, prosecutorial abuse or unjust sentencing -- as a race, Blacks have been subjected to a double standard of justice. The names, groups, and events spanning the decades are legion ---- the Scottsboro Boys, Fannie Lou Hamer, Emmett Till, Black Panther Party, RNA-11, Wilmington 10, Angela Davis, the Attica rebellion, Eleanor Bumpers, Rodney King, Michael Stewart, Amadou Diallo, Abner Louima, Johnny Gammage, Kemba Smith, Tulia Texas, Jena Six, Troy Davis, Scott Sisters, Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin --- is it justice, or “just-us”?

The United States holds the dubious distinction today of having the highest incarceration rate in the world with over two million people behind bars, a 500% increase over the past 30 years. A primary driver of this shameful and destructive statistic is the disproportionate representation and unequal treatment faced by Blacks at each stage of the criminal punishment continuum, including:

- stops and arrests based on racially discriminatory profiling;
- police misconduct and brutality;

- abuse of prosecutorial discretion in charging decisions;
- a skewed system of plea bargaining;
- lack of diversity in jury pools;
- improper use of peremptory challenges to remove Blacks from juries;
- harsh, rigid and unconscionably lengthy mandatory minimum sentences;
- racial application of the death penalty;
- legalized discriminatory treatment in employment, education, housing, public benefits and the franchise, based on one's former felony status.

And this represents just the tip of the iceberg as the military industrial complex of yesterday has morphed into a lucrative and disturbingly profitable prison industrial complex today, where the deprivation of liberty is powered in large part by a money motive. The private prison industry has economic interests in keeping sentences long and, egregiously, may seek to maintain high prison occupancy rates even in the absence of need. There is speculative prison building based on the test scores of Black boys in the third grade. And the out-of-control growth of the federal prison population is forcing cuts in education, job training and other social services – the very programs which address the root causes of crime.

So it is not surprising that after the civil rights era we see the advent of more and more punitive criminal punishment laws which have caused the rate of incarceration of Blacks to astronomically rise. Although the laws today are facially neutral and do not intentionally discriminate, disparate treatment is often ingrained within the structural fabric of social institutions, allowing discrimination to occur without the need for action by a specific person. Today's racism is subtle and structurally embedded in many police departments, prosecutor offices, and courtrooms. It is found in laws that look fair, but nevertheless have a racially discriminatory impact.

Flashing through the decades reveal harsh realities. The 1970s produced the Supreme Court ruling that the death penalty was constitutional, reinstating states' ability to execute. The 1980s shepherded in the War on Drugs, which in reality was a war on Black communities. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act grossly differentiated between crack and powder cocaine in sentencing and instituted broad conspiracy provisions which caused more and more low level people and increasingly women to be subject to these laws. And it was during the 1980s that the prison population exceeded the one million mark.

The 1990s brought even more draconian measures, in particular, the Crime Bill of 1994, which included the largest expansion of the death penalty in modern times, the proliferation of scores of mandatory minimum sentences, institution of the federal three strikes law, the trying of 13-year-olds as adults, a refusal to address the infamous crack/powder cocaine disparity, and money to states to build more and more prisons in exchange for adoption of measures that keep people in prison for longer and longer periods of time. And the end of the decade ushered in a proliferation of metal detectors and school resource officers in educational institutions, the first step down the slippery school to prison pipeline slope.

The turn of the century saw the prison population rise to 1.4 million people incarcerated. The new century



also saw massive numbers who were sentenced to unconscionably long mandatory minimum sentences during the 1980s beginning to be released from prison after serving 10, 15, 20 years and more behind bars. Many were first time non-violent offenders, who now found themselves confronted with a plethora of obstacles and discriminatory barriers to successful reentry into society, negatively impacting employment, housing, education, public benefits and voting, solely as a result of their prior felony status.

Today there are over 2 million people behind bars. It is past time that we confront the disastrous policies of the past half century. This country's mammoth experiment in mass incarceration has been an abysmal failure, producing conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of a race. Kudos to Michelle Alexander for popularizing the analogy of today's system of mass incarceration with earlier systems of social control such as Jim Crow. However, although enlightening, we must not get too comfortable with the Jim Crow analogy to mass incarceration, as it may be too limiting.

We must push the envelope to illuminate even further the severity of the problem facing Black communities. Although there is alarm about the reformulation of a racial caste system in America, there is also alarm that current policies may lead to the possible extermination of a race as well. Just a peek at the internationally-accepted definition of genocide and the juxtaposition of that definition against the impact of the new Jim Crow in the criminal punishment system is powerful.

The definition includes not only "killing members of a group" and "causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a group," it also includes "inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about their destruction in whole or in part." Perhaps the heightened nomenclature of genocide will shock the public into sparking a real revolution in criminal justice policies and practice as opposed to settling into yet another shift in focus to a still newer system of control.

Thankfully there is light at the end of this dismal tunnel. In 2013, the fifth decade of the March on Washington, the top law enforcement official in the country, Attorney General Eric Holder, delivered a pivotal speech which has reinvigorated the policy discussion around widespread incarceration and the importance of reducing the flaws of a system that sends too many people of color to prison. Holder envisions that the policies outlined in his speech will recalibrate the federal criminal justice system by correcting obstacles, inefficiencies and inequities and transform law enforcement strategies so they alleviate, rather than exacerbate, harsh punishment. He has vowed to rethink mandatory minimum sentences, confront the school to prison pipeline, intensify indigent defense services, expand compassionate release, enhance diversion programs, review unnecessary collateral consequences, increase victim services, and put the federal focus on major serious lawbreakers rather than bit players.

While those among us who are the scholars, academicians, judges, legislators, prosecutors and defenders debate the intricacies of the Attorney General's speech and determine what could and should be part of this comprehensive recalibration, somebody needs to break all this down to the community, who ultimately will be impacted, in everyday language. Somebody needs to connect the dots. Somebody needs to organize the movement that will take the words from the ivory tower esoteric to the everyday practical.



Perhaps that somebody is the Institute of the Black World 21st Century. Perhaps it is its partner group, the Black Family Summit.

Perhaps it is incumbent upon all of us to build a focused Justice Movement that will seize the revolutionary moment we are in right now. It is time that we as scholars, advocates and activists raise the ante and have the audacity to advance creative solutions to break the criminal punishment continuum once and for all, and fashion new systems of justice based on prevention rather than punishment, and compassion rather than criminalization. The mass incarceration, the mass criminalization, and the institutionalized genocide of Black people must end. What we need is justice, not "just-us."



Where Do We Stand?: Black Workers and Organized Labor Since 1963

Bill Fletcher

The commemoration of the 1963 March on Washington brought with it a reconsideration of the actual history. Central to that history--as well as myths associated with the March--was the question of the Black worker. The myths associated with the March included the idea that it was conceived by Dr. King and was, in essence, an initiative of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The iconic moment of Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech seems to have settled the question for many people.

The reality of the March was quite different. As explored recently by William Jones in his book *The March on Washington: Jobs, Freedom and the Forgotten History of Civil Rights* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013), central to the conceptualization and organization of the March was Black labor. In particular, the Negro American Labor Council, a movement-wide caucus of Black workers under the leadership of the noted President of the Brotherhood of

Sleeping Car Porters, A. Philip Randolph, had initiated discussions regarding the need for such a march in late 1962/early 1963. This discussion was a result of a conclusion to which they came regarding the need to speak to the jobs crisis facing Black America, a crisis that was all but ignored in the context of the larger Civil Rights Movement. It was only after initial planning for a march on Washington--a march inspired by the 1941 threatened March on Washington demanding the desegregation of the war industry--to be held in October 1963 that the SCLC engaged in discussions with the NALC about combining efforts. The result was the historic August 1963 March.

Although Black workers participated in unions and/or union-like formations dating from the time of the Civil War (and certainly slave insurrectionist groups prior to Emancipation), a qualitative change in the relationship between Black workers and organized labor took place in the context of the renewal of the labor movement associated with the emergence and growth of the Committee on Industrial Organization/Congress of Industrial Organizations in the 1930s. It was the commitment of CIO-affiliated unions to organizing the mass production industries, e.g., steel, auto, rubber, that put before the movement the question of the Black worker. Newly formed unions that were attempting to make a breakthrough were compelled to organize Black workers. In cases where the unionizing efforts were led by leftists, Black workers were generally recognized to be of strategic importance and critical to organize. This increasingly diverse Left undertook efforts at organizing nationally and in many cases achieved political leadership in these various unions. This resulted in an unanticipated achievement with the emergence of Black working class leadership, a leadership echelon who would in many cases go on to play an important role in community and electoral struggles over the coming decades.

But in 1963...

Despite the introduction of thousands of Black workers in organized labor beginning during the 1930s, the late 1940s brought with it a complicated situation, the legacy of which we live with today. The initiation of the Cold War by the United States and Britain was translated into domestic repression. Organized labor was targeted by the political Right and many liberals remained silent while the unions were searched for “reds”. Anti-communism was used as a charge against unions that were considered threatening by the establishment. The CIO underwent a purge in the late 1940s, catalyzed by the Taft-Hartley Act, that resulted in the elimination of unions representing more than a million workers. Many of the unions purged were those with the strongest records in opposing racist oppression. By 1955 a weakened CIO merged with the American Federation of Labor to found the AFL-CIO. With regard to matters of race, the practical commitment of the new federation--despite its rhetoric--was quite weak.

Black workers began organizing as it became clearer that much of organized labor was falling down on the job of addressing the question of racist discrimination. The National Negro Labor Council (1951-55), and later the Negro American Labor Council, were two examples of efforts within Black labor to challenge the larger movement and its direction on matters including but not limited to race.

In and around the time of the March on Washington other Black worker initiatives were beginning. A major struggle to desegregate the building and construction trades industry was starting to unfold led by organizations such as the Congress on Race Equality (CORE), the Harlem Fightback, and over time an assortment of other worker-based/community groups. These efforts ranged from law suits to direct confrontations, and placed a challenge at the very heart of organized labor. There were building trades unions that, till 1964, had racially exclusive clauses in their constitutions. Even after the 1964 Civil Rights Act, many of these unions refused to admit Black workers as full members. The blatant racism of this sector of organized labor became a major front in the struggle for social and economic justice. (see, for example, David Goldbert & Trevor Griffey, editors, *Black Power at Work: Community Control, Affirmative Action, and the Construction Industry* (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 2010).)

The combination of the Civil Rights and Black Power phases of the Black Freedom Movement encouraged insurgencies by Black workers in the labor movement beyond the building trades industry. Often accompanied by lawsuits, Black workers engaged in challenges to employer hiring and workplace practices. In these struggles the unions were sometimes defendants; occasionally plaintiffs (or at least supporters); and in other cases neutral. Rarely were the unions themselves leading the challenges against racist employment practices. There were exceptions, particularly where the Left was in leadership, e.g., the United Packinghouse Workers of America.

The insurgencies within organized labor reached a high-point with the caucus movement, with the most significant force probably having been the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which united caucuses in many auto plants. These caucuses were a combination of reform initiatives and revolutionary organizations.



And then came the 1970s...

Black worker insurgency ran into a brick wall in the mid 1970s with the dramatic shift in the economy. The economic tendencies that the NALC had identified in the early 1960s regarding Black job loss had intensified. In the late 1950s and early 1960s this job loss was directly tied to automation and suburbanization. By the mid 1970s, the global restructuring of capitalism was underway and with it the elimination and/or relocation of jobs. This had a devastating impact on Black America generally and the Black worker in particular.

While Black workers were being displaced in manufacturing employment, their numbers in the public sector had increased, in part as a result of social struggles for equality. Those struggles, illustrated by the famous Memphis, TN sanitation workers strike of 1968 (where Dr. King was murdered), involved not only the demand for jobs but the demands for jobs with justice. Black workers played a critical role, nationally, in the efforts to fully unionize the public sector, at the federal, state, county and municipal levels.

The combination of the larger social justice struggles for Black Freedom as well as the insurgencies within the ranks of organized labor resulted in an increase in Black labor leaders and, in many cases, organizations. Yet the economic catastrophe that we reference today as “neo-liberal globalization” represented a major setback. Major points of unionized manufacturing were lost and with that Black working class organization in the workplaces. Even where facilities did not close, layoffs and lengthy periods of no hiring meant that a generational divide emerged in the Black working class with the veterans of struggles not being replaced with new fighters.

The economic reorganization was not limited to the attack on manufacturing. The public sector came under assault beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The assault, in the name of cutting costs and removing obstacles to entrepreneurialism, was combined with a racialization of both the workforce and the serviced population. In order to make the public sector more vulnerable to cuts, it had to be first “made” black and brown. And, despite the fact that whites use the public sector, the recipients of various governmental assistance were also painted with various ‘colors.’

Thus, the attack on labor coincided with the downturn in the Black Freedom Movement. Black labor, which had been an active component of the Black Freedom Movement, however, found itself in contention with other segments of the Black Freedom Movement. The paradox of the situation was that with the successful rise of African Americans to political office in many cities and counties, they found themselves at odds with Black labor as they--Black elected officials and their business allies--attempted to embark on economic directions that were frequently at odds with the needs of the Black working class. This tension was not reflected only in the public sector. Black entrepreneurs of various sorts had no use for Black labor and tended not to even look at Black labor as allies by the latter part of the 1970s.

In the early 1970s the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists was formed as an independent organization of and for Black labor. Distinguished from the A. Philip Randolph Institute--formed in the late 1960s as an

arm of the AFL-CIO targeted at the Black community--CBTU attempted to rally Black trade unionists to pursue struggles within their unions for equality and justice, as well as to promote trade unionism within the larger Black Freedom Movement. The CBTU became involved in many issues including the movement in solidarity with the South African anti-apartheid struggle. Yet over time the CBTU became trapped in something akin to a generational labyrinth. Its core membership aged and the organization seemed almost incapable of addressing the changes underway within the Black working class including, but not limited to, the growth of the structurally unemployed workforce as well as the decrease percentage of workers represented by labor unions.

The battering that organized labor took in the 1980s and 1990s did not result in the transformation of labor unionism in order to meet the challenge. Though there were significant changes that emerged, including growing diversity within the ranks, at least for a time, when unions started to face a new wave of vicious assaults in the early 2000s, along with the immense difficulties faced by workers trying to form or join unions (in non-union situations), the bulk of the union movement began to turn in on itself. Opportunities that might have once existed to gain a major leadership or staff position began to evaporate as unions merged, laid-off personnel, or, in effect, froze in position.

So, where is Black labor?

Black activists within the labor movement (defined broadly) have, as a result of the factors previously mentioned, been confronted with a very difficult situation. Waves of Black labor activists entered organized labor beginning in the 1930s. In the 1960s and early to mid-1970s another wave entered the movement as either rank and file activists or in staff positions. Many of these individuals were products of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements, while others were activists who became involved through issues at work. When the economy began its ominous restructuring, many of the routes into organized labor began to wither if not shut down altogether.

Compounding this was an ideological challenge. The waves of activists who entered organized labor from the 1930s through the 1970s saw in the labor union movement a possible means to advance both the Black Freedom agenda as well as the agenda of workers more generally. With the early 1970s suppression of radical and progressive activism along with the ideological assault brought on by neo-liberalism, the idea of collective action was discouraged. Younger generations of African American activists did not necessarily look to organized labor as the terrain in which to engage injustice. Those interested in the plight of the Black working class tended to be drawn into alternative approaches to activism which has included worker centers or other forms of community-based organization. The paradox, of course, is that African Americans remain the most unionized of any demographic in the USA. Furthermore, African Americans are immensely pro-union and tend to be at the center of union organizing and mobilizing efforts. This has not necessarily translated, however, into an expansion of leadership positions for African Americans. It has also not translated into a major strategic commitment on the part of organized labor toward the organizing of Black workers.



With increased immigration organized labor has correctly recognized that it must step up to the plate and make a commitment to organize migrant workers. Immigration, whether documented or undocumented, is always used to undercut the living standard of the existing workforce unless the migrant workforce is organized into labor unions. As a result, several unions have made commitments to the organizing of migrant workers.

A similar such commitment has not been made to the Black worker. At a point where it is clear that the failure to unionize the South has resulted in the rise of extremely reactionary political regimes in that region, the AFL-CIO is at least beginning to make motions--again--toward a Southern organizing effort. Yet, such an effort will only succeed if Black workers are at its core. This means, to borrow from the words of Rev. Jesse Jackson during his 1988 Presidential campaign, in the South there must be a voting card in one hand, and a union card in the other. In other words, organizing the South is a political and economic task. Black workers, whether in the public sector, auto production or healthcare, can be at the core of a movement that would not only change the politics of the South, but would change the USA.

The commitment should not just be about the South, however. Organized labor must commit to an "urban program," which means, as was demonstrated in the late 1990s in Stamford, CT, of making unionization an economic development strategy. When thought of that way, building unions for Black America becomes a task not only for Black workers in workplaces, but becomes a community undertaking.

Still Too Small To Matter: Black-Owned Financial Services Firms 50 Years Later.

Dr. David T. Reese

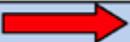
From 1865 through 1965, the 'talented tenth' of Black America devoted much of its time, talents and treasure to create and build Black institutions to serve Black America. One of the tragic unintended consequences of the end of 'de jure' segregation in the 1960's has been the diversion of much of the time, talents and treasuries of du Bois' 'talented tenth' to increasing the assets, revenues and profits of predominantly White-owned corporations and institutions. Thus, many institutions of Black America still in their organizational infancy were left to struggle for survival without the care and attention of the black middle class.

This is clearly the case for the financial services firms of Black America. As indicated earlier, an unintended consequences of the Civil Rights movement and its successes has been the abandonment of the financial services firms of Black America by its middle class. With few exceptions, middle- and upper-middle class Black Americans neither patronize nor work for the financial services firms of Black America. In the fifty years that have passed since the 1963 March Washington and the subsequent passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, relatively speaking, Black financial services firms have made no gains compared with their White-owned peers.

In 1963, Black financial services firms controlled less than one-tenth of one percent of the assets controlled by White-owned U.S. financial services firms. And, in 2010, Black financial services firms still controlled less than one-tenth of one percent of the assets controlled by White-owned U.S. financial services firms.

During the forty year period from 1963 through 2002, the percentage of all assets controlled by Black-owned insurance companies fell relative to those held by white-owned insurance companies. In 1963, there were approximately 50 black-owned life insurance companies with \$ 1 million or more in assets. To be sure, there were scores of small burial societies scattered around the country in the 1960's as well; however, collectively the assets of all of these societies total less than \$ 1 million. Walker. (Walker 1998). See Table 1

**Table 1: Total Assets of U.S. Insurance Companies by Race**

Year 	1963	1976	2002
Ownership	Total Assets (\$ millions)	Total Assets (\$ millions)	Total Assets (\$ millions)
Black	\$ 311	\$ 590	\$ 552
White	\$ 135,000	\$ 289,000	\$ 3,335,000
Black Holdings as a % of White Holdings	0.2%	0.2%	0.02%

1963 data source: (Walker 1998)

1976 data source: (Walker 1998)

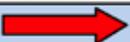
2002 data source for Black Insurance Cos.: (Black Enterprise Magazine 2003)

2002 data source for all U.S. Life Insurance Cos. : (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve 2013)

By 2002, there were only ten Black-owned insurance companies with assets greater than \$1 million. By 2005, **Black Enterprise** Magazine ceased listing the top black-owned insurance companies after the number of firms with assets in excess of \$ 1 million fell to four.

The assets controlled by Black-owned banks have followed a similar downward trajectory over the forty-eight years from 1963 through 2010. In 1963, there were thirteen black-owned commercial banks with combined total assets of \$ 77 million. (Walker 1998)

Table 2: Total Assets of U.S. Banks

Year 	1963	2010
Ownership	Total Assets (\$ millions)	Total Assets (\$ millions)
Black	\$ 77	\$ 5,706
White	\$ 364,000	\$ 11,294,500
Black Holdings as a % of White Holdings	0.02%	0.05%

1963 data source: (Walker 1998)

1976 data source: (Walker 1998)

2010 data source: (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve 2013)

At this point, most readers must be asking themselves: 'How did this happen?'

In the wake of the dismantling of 'de jure' segregation in the 1960's, the leakages that accompanied the wider participation of blacks in the socio-economic life of the United States exceeded the injections into the economy of Black America. Simply put, the vast majority of meager assets held by Black Americans have trickled out of Black-owned financial institutions and into White-owned financial institutions.

Since the end of the U.S. Civil War, leakages out of the economy of Black America always exceeded injections into that economy by the white Americans. That said, 'de jure' segregation limited the opportunities for leakages of Black America's disposable income to white America by banning Blacks from patronage most hotels, restaurants, financial institutions, barber shops, beauty salon, mortuaries, education institutions and religious institutions. While unintended, 'de jure' segregation demanded that Black America primarily patronize black-owned service providers, thus, preventing the dollars spent on those services from leaking out the Black American economy into the White American Economy. And, many of those black-owned service providers patronize black-owned financial institutions.

One commonplace example of the leakages of Black America's disposable income to White America is the money spent by Blacks at McDonald's. In 2012, it is estimated that Black generated approximately 18% of MacDonald's revenues. In other words, Blacks spent a little over \$8.9 billion at McDonald's (or approximately \$4.42 every week from every black person in the U.S.) And, very little of that \$8.9 billion passed through black-owned banks. Before 1964, substantially all of the money that Blacks spent at restaurants, café and diners would have been spent at Black-owned establishments.

While attending the National Bankers Association 2013 annual conference, Joseph Haskins, Jr, co-founder, President and CEO of Harbor Bank of Maryland, summarizes the predicament of Black-owned banks as follows:

"Part of the problem that developed with Black banks is that they were too narrowly focused in communities that had changed radically. And many Black banks who failed . . . were disproportionately serving those who were less capable of meeting the requirements of paying loans and other responsible aspects of banking." (Prince 2013)

Ultimately, the leakages of Black America's disposable income and assets to White America have limited the resources available to support Black-owned financial services firms. As a result, individually and collectively, the black-owned banks, credit unions and insurance companies that constitute the black financial services sector are best characterized as "too small to matter" as presently constituted. That said, it would be a tragedy for these institutions to disappear because most black communities still remained underserved by white-owned financial services firms. Some action must be taken before it is too late. Ultimately, the potential of the Black-owned financial services firm to foster economic development in Black America is too powerful to ignore.

However, the African American community must decide to grow and expand its financial sector by intentionally re-directing its assets t these institutions. We must organize ourselves to protect and expand fragile institutions which are critically important to furthering our economic interests such as wealth formation and job creation. In addition, we must devise public policy strategies to capture our legitimate share of the nation's wealth and resources to benefit our undeveloped communities. The state of emergency in Black America must include the threat of financial obsolescence and black business extinction as central components of community revitalization and national reconstruction if Black America is to survive. The



check continues to bounce.

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Equality Before the Law: The Voting Rights Act and Black Politics Since MOW.

Dr. Michael Fauntroy

The most important change in Black politics following the March was the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. The law changed the landscape of Black political participation, particularly in the South, by outlawing these mechanisms that had effectively locked African Americans out of the voting process for generations. The VRA also, literally, changed the face of American government. It created an environment whereby White America became accustomed to seeing Black candidates on ballots around the nation.

The VRA has been an unparalleled success: 1.3 million new Black voters were registered in the south in the first two years of its existence and continued efforts since leave African Americans near parity with Whites in terms of voter registration rates. Which led led to more Black elected officials. In 1965, approximately 70 African Americans held elected office in the eleven southern states; that number grew to 248 by 1968, 1,397 by 1974, and 2,535 by 1981. But the Act's success is not limited to the South. Now, more than 10,500 African Americans serve as elected officials around the nation. While African Americans are still under-represented among the nation's elected officials, this incredible growth could not have happened without the VRA. Furthermore, today we have 45 Black Congresspersons, 1 Governor, 1 Lt. Governor, 1 Senator, numerous appointed officials, state legislators and mayors and of course the president of the United States ...Barack Obama.

Numerical progress has been made; however the issue is whether such quantitative change translates into legislative and policy outcomes. Taken in total, the progress is clear as is the fact that increasing the number of Black elected officials does not necessarily translate to Black political and policy making power or influence. The ongoing problems of the dark ghettos in housing, jobs, education, incarceration, wealth gaps etc. have not been resolved despite this enormous growth in the number of black elected officials.

One cannot understand the current landscape of Black electoral politics without examining two phenomenon: 1) the presence of the first Black President, Barack Obama and 2) the persistence of the opposition to Black electoral participation and progress. America's fixation on "post racial" era has stymied the necessary policy targeting needed to address the problems of the dark ghetto. The conservative push back and challenges to voting rights has also complicated the future of Black voting rights. We must continue to build grass roots movements to advance and protect our voting rights and the policies needed to alleviate the suffering of the black masses. Otherwise, black politics itself will become marginal as a symbol without substance.



Black Intergenerational Economics and America's Continuing Racial Wealth Gap

George Fraser

How America's Racial Wealth Gap Perpetuates Itself

Even though Blacks make more money than ever and more are obtaining higher forms of education, in 2010, Black households still had barely one-tenth the net worth of white households, according to a National Urban League report, *The State Of Black America: "There is a Wealth Gap Between Black America and White America."* A 2009 survey showed that the median white family in America had twenty times more wealth than the median Black family. How can this be, so many years after the civil rights movement? But this fascinating and comprehensive study on the racial wealth gap by Brandeis University's Institute on Assets and Social Policy finds that home ownership is the single largest factor in driving racial wealth inequality.

The study followed 1,700 families for 25 years, starting in 1984. During that time, "the total wealth gap between white and African-American families nearly triples, increasing from \$85,000 in 1984 to \$236,500 in 2009." The contributing factors to this wealth gap were as follows: Among households with positive wealth growth during the 25 year study period, as shown in Figure 1, the number of years of homeownership accounts for 27 percent of the difference in relative wealth growth between white and African-American families, the largest portion of the growing wealth gap. The second largest share of the increase, accounting for 20 percent, is average family income.

Highly educated households correlate strongly with larger wealth portfolios, but similar college degrees produce more wealth for whites, contributing five percent of the proportional increase in the racial wealth gap. Inheritance and financial support from family combine for another five percent of the increasing gap. How much wealth a family started out with in 1984 also predicts a portion (three percent) of family wealth 25 years later.

Black people tend to buy houses later in life; therefore, their houses do not increase in value as much. They also tend to live in Black neighborhoods, where real estate values are lower, since white people don't want to buy there. Black people inherit far less money, and they are not able to build wealth through marriage as easily as white people. This much, by itself, adds up to a self-perpetuating system in which whites steadily increase their own wealth, while Black families mostly cannot. Add in poorer education,

and fewer employment opportunities, and institutional racism, and you have a very, very steep hole for Black families collectively to climb out of.

And it will take a very massive public investment to change it, as well as a paradigm shift and new money management habits among Black people in America. We now have to come together, taking those lessons learned. The difference between Black and white wealth has always been extremely apparent and historic. James Diffley of Global Insight, a Philadelphia-based economic research firm, analyzed a broad range of government statistics comparing the life quality for Blacks and whites in dozens of categories related to economics, health, education, civic participation and social justice. The report produced a measure of the overall well-being of African Americans as barely three-fourths that of whites.

- Blacks have more than double the unemployment rate of whites.
- Less than half of Blacks own homes, compared with more than three-fourths of whites.
- Black youth are more likely than whites to have poorly trained teachers, live in poverty and not have health insurance.

Overall well-being: Unchanged

Unfortunately, the economic fortunes of today's Black households are still tied to the explicitly racist economic institutions in America's past—especially those that existed during key phases of wealth redistribution. According to a 2011 report by the Pew Research Center, the Great Recession in 2009 caused the average white household's wealth to become twenty times that of the average Black household. How did this happen?

Owning a home is a large part of the American dream. For Blacks especially, owning a home equates wealth. Homes are the largest asset of most households in any race. In Black families, homes make up 59% of their net worth compared to 44% among white families. What happens to the remaining 41%? The 2009 housing "bubble-burst" made wealth inequity more severe; coupled with a virtually unchanged median net worth of Black households for more than a decade compared with white households. Despite this, there is something we could have managed better with the 41%; despite the significant loss; despite the un-fair inequality.

Because of the 2009 recession, Black households lost a far greater share of their wealth (a significant drop) than did white households—those households that typically hold more of other types of assets like stocks and IRA accounts. Mortgage brokers and lenders had been disproportionately marketing sub-prime mortgages (high-interest loans that are supposed to increase access to home financing for risky borrowers) to Black households. Too many Black Americans fell into the trap of the American dream, only to wake up to a nightmare.

According to Target Market News (www.Targetmarketnews.com), a website and publishing company that



tracks Black consumer spending, Blacks spend an excessive amount of money on depreciable goods, such as clothes, cars, jewelry and other things that lose value the minute after you purchase it. “We live in a consumer society where sport shopping is the way we live. We feel good, we buy. We feel bad, we buy,” points out economist and author Julianne Malveaux, former President of Bennett College. “When we deal with the African American psyche: We come from a culture of lack. We have not had access, opportunity, or equality. Some of us think we can bridge the equality gap in spending.

In spite of disproportionate Black poverty, African-Americans have patiently built a critical mass of intellectual and financial resources from which they can leverage to close the gap. It includes trillions of dollars of intellectual and human capital and a \$920 billion-plus annual economic base, which is growing at about 5 percent a year. It also includes having built a work force in which over 60 percent of its members are in executive, managerial, supervisory, sales, administrative, vocational, technical and business ownership positions.

W.E.B. Du Bois would be proud that nearly 18 percent of African-Americans have at least a four-year-College degree or better, surpassing his vision of the “Talented Tenth.” But the long road to success is never straight. We have witnessed this in our 250-year fight for freedom and our 100-year fight for civil rights, voting rights and public access. The next 100-year imperative is our need to focus on economic development and the intergenerational transfer of our wealth.

We can start by:

- 1. Educating yourself about money.** Economic illiteracy runs high in Black America. The Black boomer generation has redefined Uncle Sam’s promise of “40 acres and a mule” to “40 acres and a Benz.” Many are house poor and car poor. With the help of a large network of Black professionals trained in banking, finance and investments, we are coming out of our confusion of believing that wealth is what you spend, not what you accumulate. Today, most major African-American social, civic and religious organizations have an economic development component to their 21st-century agenda. Some of the more progressive Black churches, such as Rev. Floyd Flake’s Allen AME Church in Queens, NY. are engaged in small business ventures. Also, there no shortage of good books that address money management: African-American experts such as Kelvin Boston, Cheryl Broussard and Brooke Stephens have written best-sellers.
- 2. Paying less interest.** Those who understand interest collect it, those who don’t pay it. While the overuse of credit cards zaps disposable income, the biggest culprit is the 30-year mortgage. “By now, pay later” was an American home-financing mantra that made home ownership affordable to the Black working and middle classes of the ‘60s and ‘70s. Our parents and many boomers have paid for their homes at least three times. The banks and mortgage companies go rich, built skyscrapers and employed millions from home mortgage profits, but few of these companies were owned by people of color. The billions that today’s nearly 4.5 million Black home-owners pay in mortgage interest must be reduced and channeled into business start-ups and the capital markets. With discipline, it is possible to become a millionaire while paying off a 30-year mortgage.

- 3. Performing Plastic Surgery.** Many boomers and Gen Xers are at their peak earning years and they've learned that revolving credit card debt is disastrous to their financial well-being. What many do don't understand and what helps keep them poor is that credit cards and other forms of consumer credit do not provide additional income but rather place a mortgage – an expensive one – on future income. Fred Waddell, author of *Money Matters in Just Minutes a Day* (Dearborn Press), concludes that reliance on credit cards and other forms of credit can mean paying nearly and additional 20 percent to live. I recommend that we all perform plastic surgery: Cut up all but one, two at the most, to reduce the temptation to use them. Yes, you need at least one credit card in the United States to pledge your allegiance to democratic capitalism. It also helps when you travel or handle emergencies. If you're just starting out (i.e., college students) or recovering from bad credit, get a card with a low limit. Spend no more than you can comfortably pay each month and pay it faithfully. Your goal is always to reduce the amount of interest you pay each year. Finally, find an issuer that contributes a small percent of its profits to a Black cause. Though the gap closed slightly between 1993 and 1996, it remains huge today. Poor education, weak skills and one-parent families were reasons cited.
- 4. Investing in capital markets.** An editorial in *The New York Times* raised the issue of the income and wealth gap between Blacks and whites in America. Though the gap closed slightly between 1993 and 1996, it remains huge. Poor education, weak skills and one-parent families were reasons cited. Although the typical white family earned \$47,000 in 1996, twice that of Blacks, the \$4,500 net worth of Black households, was only one-tenth of White households. We know that some of these financial discrepancies are due, also, to historical discrimination in job opportunity and mortgage lending, but a key factor is in the saving and investment patterns of Black people. The *Times* editorial noted that while white house-holds loaded up on stocks, doubling the equity share of their savings since 1996 – 90 percent of Black families own no stocks or pension funds, thus virtually having no part in the '90s stock boom.
- 5. Live below your means.** Living above your means is spending more than you earn. Living within your means also means you spend everything you earn. Both strategies are part of national culture of upscale spending in which Americans aspire to the life styles of the wealthiest 20 percent, according to Harvard professor Juliet B. Scholz in her book, *The Overspent American*.
- 6. Get a greater return on your intellectual capital network.** If you calculated the total number of hours of formal education and professional training for Black baby boomers through 2010 (50 years) it would be in excess of 500 billion hours. Place a value of \$10 for each hour of education and training on it, and conservatively it would amount to \$5 trillion of intellectual capital for just my generation. But we must now focus on diverting more of this precious resource to help build our own businesses and brands, and help those who are stuck in the cycle of poverty.
- 7. Supporting Black-owned businesses and brands.** The number of Black-owned businesses is skyrocketing and has grown from 424,165 in 1987, to 1.9 million in 2007, which far surpassed the growth rate 26 percent for minority businesses overall. That's the good news. The bad news is that most are one-person shops. Only 6% of Black-owned business had employees. We must continue to start and grow new businesses, but not just from scratch. David H. Swinton, economist and president of Benedict College in Columbia, SC, says, "Our people must think more in terms of acquisition; without starting from scratch and going through elaborate learning curves." Thinking "outside the box" is im-



portant: Think globally; think about servicing markets other than African-Americans; think growth through strategic alliance, joint ventures and partnerships. The key point here is to create more jobs and train Black people.

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Invisible Journalism: The Disappearing State of Black Journalism Since 1963.

George Curry

BLACK PRESS KNEW SIGNIFICANCE OF MARCH

Of course, the Black Press, as usual, understood the significance of 250,000 people assembling at the footsteps of the Lincoln Memorial to petition the federal government for jobs and the fair treatment of African-Americans. The Baltimore-based Afro Newspapers assigned 20 reporters to the March, including super star journalists Moses Newsome and Lacy Banks.

The 1963 March on Washington was covered extensively by the Black Press while the few African-Americans working for the White-owned media had to pressure their supervisors to assign them to what is now a sea-changing event for civil rights. Today, 50 years later, a handful of Blacks have ascended to the upper rungs of management but their ranks and the level of reporters and editors below them are thinning as the news industry –newspapers, magazines, radio stations, TV stations and cable networks – constricts from rapid consolidation and the emergence of alternative digital platforms. In 1963, reporters who later rose to national prominence were struggling to be taken seriously. Not only were they not taken seriously prior to the urban rebellions of the mid-1960s, the march itself wasn't taken seriously.

As much as the newspaper industry has declined in the last fifty years, the magazine industry has fared worse than the newspaper industry. Most Black magazines are celebrity or music driven. The top-selling Johnson Publishing Co. magazines –Ebony and Jet – along with Black Enterprise are Black-owned and operated and are reinventing themselves to be competitive in today's market. After steep circulation declines, Ebony's numbers are now trending upward. However, because of declining circulation and ad revenues, Jet was switched from being published weekly to every three weeks.

The Black Press can be properly defined as media targeted to African-Americans that is Black-owned and operated. The most serious threat to Black media today is that so-called mainstream media companies, facing a shrinking base of White subscribers and viewers, are buying up Black media outlets, often diluting Black expression.

Fortunately, Black owned-media are also active in cyberspace. The most credible are BlackPressUSA.com, the site I edit along with the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service (NNPA), Tom Joyner's BlackAmericaWeb and Politics360. Sites associated with Black Enterprise, Essence and Jet and Ebony are also very good. BlackPressUSA.com features a combination of stories published in NNPA-mem-



ber newspapers and links to other stories about Blacks. Because BlackPressUSA.com is able to draw on the content and resources of approximately 200 Black newspapers, it has unlimited potential. That was demonstrated during the Trayvon Martin trial.

The Florida Courier, which had reporter James Harper inside the courtroom, provided lead coverage that was augmented by the NNPA News Service in Washington and other NNPA newspapers. All of the stories were distributed on the NNPA wire. Although the sites that target African-Americans are Black operated, in the end, owners have the final say because, as A. J. Liebling pointed out, they own the company.

Whether they want to or not, some Black-owned media companies may need to either merge or take on a White media partner in order to stay afloat in the new media landscape. There are already signs of that happening. Real Times Media, for example, is a Black company that owns a chain of newspapers, including the New Pittsburgh Courier, the Chicago Defender, the Michigan Chronicle, the Tri-State Defender and the Atlanta Daily World, among other properties. Individual newspapers have expanded their audiences by adding e-editions. The Afro, Philadelphia Tribune, New Pittsburgh Courier and the Chicago Defender are among the most prolific producers of e-editions. While expanding their reach on the Internet, Black newspapers have also cut cost by reducing the size of their papers. Many that carried 28 to 32 pages are now down to 16 to 20, according to industry studies.

Like Black newspapers, Black radio is fighting for its very existence. "We are witnessing the very serious decline of Black radio in general and Black owned radio in particular. This is happening at a time when Blacks can ill afford to be without voice in the marketplace of ideas," Bob Law wrote in an article last May in the Final Call headlined, "The Assault on Black Radio: It is a Question of Leadership." He continued, "With the hateful indifference to Blacks that dominates so much of what is considered mainstream media, Blacks must have access to social, political, esthetic and cultural expressions that are born of the Black experience in the world." But that access is quickly vanishing.

Many people cite the passage of the 1996 Telecommunications Act as urban radio's critical turning point, because the act allowed for the corporatization of radio and the spread of syndication. This changed advertising strategies; ads once sold to individual stations were suddenly packaged for big companies that would air them on all of their stations, according to New York's WBAI Public Radio. This accelerated the demise of many small, black-owned stations because, despite high ratings, they could not sustain profits," Kelundra Smith wrote in the Post and Courier in Charleston, S.C.

Data from the National Association of Black Broadcasters shows that black people make up 14 percent of the U.S. population, but have only 2 percent of broadcast licenses. The U.S. has more than 6,000 commercial radio stations, but fewer than 100 black commercial radio station owners, according to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration." Understanding there is strength in numbers, the two largest radio networks, Radio One's Syndication One Urban lineup and Reach Media, merged in January 2013. Syndication One expanded its ownership of Reach Media from 53 percent to 80 percent. That means that Tom Joyner, Russ Parr, Rickey Smiley, D. L. Hughley and Al Sharpton will now be under the

same umbrella.

Like radio, the television industry is also undergoing a shakeup. No group watches television more than African-Americans. Almost seven out of 10 (69 percent) said they watched television “yesterday,” according to a May 2012 Pew Research Center study. By comparison, 56 percent of non-Hispanic Whites fell into that category and 43 percent of Hispanics. “Despite these figures, black-oriented television news programs are rare and few last more than a few seasons,” according to *The State of the New Media 2013*, a report by the Pew Research Center’s Project on Excellence in Journalism. “Instead, African American programming tends to center on music, culture and other subject areas that have had more lasting power.”

The report also observed, “TV One has more news content than any other cable channels geared toward a black audience and is also part of the same company that produces the News One website, which provides news stories geared toward an African American audience. “TV One paid special attention to the political conventions in 2012. For the first time, it joined with NBC News to air coverage of the last nights of both the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, with correspondents from TV One, NBC News and the Grio on air. The channel also provided live coverage of election night in November, also in partnership with NBC News. “The channel also provided coverage of President Barack Obama’s second inauguration in January 2013, including coverage of the swearing-in and the Inaugural Address, anchored by Roland Martin.

The executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus, Angela Rye, as well as Dr. Chris Metzler, a political scientist at Georgetown University, provided commentary. “TV One’s public affairs program is Washington Watch With Roland Martin, which debuted in September 2009 and provides a traditional Sunday morning talk program from the African American point of view. Martin also hosts occasional primetime editions of the show covering specific issues and topics. “TV One also airs Black Enterprise Business Report, a show affiliated with Black Enterprise magazine. The show includes ‘Powerplayer’ interviews with black businesspeople, personal finance tips, highlights of successful small-business owners and lifestyle trends.”

CEO Debra Lee echoed a complaint lodged by many Black media executives: “Our audience always says they want this kind of programming, but they don’t show up.” Oprah Winfrey showed up with her cable channel OWN in Jan. 2011. The Oprah Winfrey Network received its biggest boost with an exclusive interview with Lance Armstrong in which he finally admitted using performance-enhancing drugs. More than 3.2 million viewers tuned in. She also drew impressive ratings with her interview with Rihanna about her relationship with Chris Brown. But Oprah has yet to prove she can transfer her enormous popularity – she was averaging 7 million viewers a day in 2007 – to her own cable network. The new partnership with movie and media mogul Tyler Perry may prove to help deliver this popularity provided their prior individual popularity can translate into collective influence of a African American target population that faces a multitude of social and cultural challenges.

NEW CABLE CHANNELS



African Americans will have more cable TV options soon. That's the good news. The bad news is that we may be in for more of the same. As a result of the agreement that allowed Comcast to purchase NBCUniversal, two new African American cable networks will emerge. Aspire, headed by former NBA star Magic Johnson, was launched in June 2012 and focuses on culture.

The second network, Revolt, is a music channel expected to make its debut late 2013 or early 2014. Because of advances in technology, African Americans will have other viewing options. "With the move to digital transmission, stations that previously carried only one analog signal have the ability to air multiple channels through the same bandwidth, a system termed multicasting," noted The State of the News Media 2013. "This means broadcasters can lease those subchannels to others who can air programming targeted to a niche audience, instead of vying for distribution on tightly packed (though more lucrative) cable channel lineups.

"African American audiences have been among the populations served in this new realm. '[African American channels] don't need coverage in 100% of the country, they just need to have substantial coverage in the markets that make up the majority of the black audience in the U.S.," Bill Carroll, the vice president and director of programming for Katz Television Media Group, a media representation company and a subsidiary of Clear Channel Communications, told Multichannel News." Bounce TV, formed by a business group that includes Former United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young and Martin Luther King, III, was launched in Sept, 2011. It offers entertainment and sports from the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (CIAA). With the announcement that Univision will begin carrying the channel, Bounce's TV will be available in 86 percent of Black homes and 68 percent of total U.S. households.

The operative word is ownership. We have seen ownership of Essence magazine shift from Blacks to Whites hands in the form of Time Warner, the media giant. There has been a noticeable shift in content, a switch to more fluff and celebrity-driven coverage. Black Entertainment Television (BET) has been roundly criticized by its heavy dosage of music videos. But even with its rump-shaking reputation, at one point BET was producing a news program; "Lead Story with Ed Gordon," a reporters round table; "Teen Summit" and "BET Tonight," first hosted by Gordon. In addition, it had a magazine division that included Emerge: Black America's Newsmagazine, which I edited from 1993-2000, and YSB magazine. But if some deep-pocket African-American would exemplify some patience, it would be rewarded handsomely. White companies are also seeking a larger share of the Black market by establishing separate Internet sites. The Root, for example, is owned by the Washington Post. And the Grio, another popular social media site, is owned by NBC.

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“The Civil Rights Movement and Africa.”

Dr. Jemedari Kamara

The 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas Supreme Court ruling is commonly said to be the landmark decision that launched the contemporary civil rights movement. However, we know that much occurred prior to this time setting the stage for this momentous Supreme Court decision. The movement sought the fair and just implementation of federal law throughout the land. The Montgomery bus boycott which lasted for more than one year began the first major campaign to draw national attention to these issues. It fostered the development of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

However, parallel to the dynamics occurring in the United States, African countries were emerging from the cloud of more than a century of European colonization. Nationalist movements had developed sophisticated strategies in conjunction with labor unions and traditional leaders to confront the colonial powers. Some of these strategies required direct confrontation others used more tradition electoral transition. In 1957 Algeria led the first post World War II, revolutionary movement opposing French colonialism in Africa. This became the first successful movement to gain independence in Africa since World War II joining Liberia and Ethiopia as Africa’s only independent states. It is from his experiences during this engagement as a psychiatrist that Franz Fanon would pen his important works, **Black Skin, White Masks** and the **Wretched of the Earth**.

Simultaneously, movements were emerging in Sub-Saharan Africa that would challenge Belgium, the French, British, and Portuguese rule in their colonized territories. Under the leadership of men like Leopold Senghor, Patrice Lumumba, Felix Houphouet-Boigny, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, Amilcar Cabral, Augustino Neto and Eduardo Mondlane, these movements would bring many African countries to independence during and after the height of the period that the civil rights movement was being waged in the United States. In fact it was in 1958 that Martin Luther King, Jr. would make his first trip to Africa with his wife, Coretta, at the invitation of Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana, to attend their independence celebration from Great Britain. Nkrumah, who attended Lincoln University (Pa.), invited Dr. King who would remark on the experience while he was there:

“The moment I knew I was coming to Ghana I had a very deep emotional feeling. It symbolized the fact that a new order was coming into being ...”

“...the old order of colonialism is passing away and the new order of freedom and human dignity is coming into being.... Not only have we seen the old order in its international dimensions, we have seen it in our own nation in the form of slavery and racial segregation.”

During his trip he would visit Ghana and Nigeria. He was able to see the links between the various movements for independence seeking basic human rights. He spoke of a world “two thirds people of color” and their undeniable thirst for freedom, social justice and human equality.

In 1960 thirteen countries would receive their “independence” from France after a regional plebiscite and join the greater French community of states. Only one former French colony would chose to become totally independent, Guinea, under the leadership of former trade unionist, Sekou Toure. Guinea would be punished through economic and political isolation for years for daring to exhibit their right to autonomy. However, their example of stalwart indignation against the abuses that had been exacted upon them during French colonial rule would later draw the attention of youth in the Civil Rights Movement.

At the 1963 **March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom** tensions emerged around the content of the speech to be presented on behalf of the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) by John Lewis, the organization’s president. While revisions to the speech were made that day to appease A. Philip Randolph and to “keep the peace”, the divisions that would undermine the strategic approach to the movement’s future were apparent.

The youth of SNCC forged ahead and organized the “Mississippi Freedom Summer” Campaign, a massive voter registration effort that brought black and white students from all over the country to Mississippi to aid in voter education and registration. This campaign helped to expand the development of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) in local communities. A delegation from the MFDP challenged the all white Democratic Party delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City.

The historic passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 set the stage for this organizing and the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. While the latter act was passed with “sunset” terms, we have recently seen the evidence that the price of protecting certain rights in this country is “eternal vigilance”.

In the fall of 1964, SNCC sent a delegation of 11 young leaders to Africa facilitated by Harry Belafonte. Here they would be hosted by President Toure in Guinea and they would meet with other distinguished African dignitaries and leaders, becoming better informed about the African liberation movements. Two members of the delegation would continue on to several other countries, including Kenya, where they by chance encountered Malcolm X who was on his multi-country pilgrimage to the continent. Their discussions with him, about his intention to raise the case of the African American before the General Assembly of the United Nations and hold the United States accountable for violating the Human Rights Charter, as well as his intention to create the Organization of African American Unity (O.A.A.U.), influenced their thinking and recommendations. This meeting and the response of African leaders to Malcolm also influenced their ideas about the direction of the U.S. movement. Upon the group’s return they submitted a report to SNCC with four proposals:



1. That SNCC establish an international wing—specifically, an African Bureau or Secretariat
2. That the function of the African Bureau or Secretariat be to maintain and increase SNCC's contacts with Africa specifically, but also with any other countries or groups of people in other countries who can be helpful to us and the Cause.
3. That the African Bureau or Secretariat should be closely tied to or linked with the present communications department of SNCC.
4. That at least two people be assigned to work full-time with the African bureau or secretariat and that one of these two persons be available to travel between Atlanta, Washington, and New York.

This synergistic impact of ideas and interaction influenced the future development of SNCC and the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. Soon the ideas that emerged from the nationalist community would shape the foundation of the new concept called "Black Power". It would challenge the traditional ideology and methodology of the civil rights movement. Assassination, state manipulation and internal weaknesses would cause the demise of this movement. However, the course of the U.S. based movement would forever be changed. The influence of this Black Power movement would cause the rise of similar movements in the Caribbean and the "Black Consciousness" movement in Southern Africa. Elements of these movements would also participate in the Black Power Conferences that were held in the U.S. during the late 1960' and early 1970's.

Conclusion

The day before the **March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom**, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois would transition to be among the ancestors in Accra, Ghana. Having moved to Accra at the request of Kwame Nkrumah to work on the **Encyclopedia Africana**, Dr. DuBois would encounter many young African intellectuals prior to his death. The historical timing of his transition uniquely marks the end of an era and the new stage of engagement that would result between African Americans and the African world. It is somehow fitting that DuBois, who at the turn of the twentieth century said that America's most pressing issue was "the problem of the color line", would on the eve of one of the movement's most glorious moments, transition to be with the ancestors. His life, as arguably the century's most brilliant African American scholar, was also marked by his activism. From stimulating dialogue that led to the formation of the Niagara Movement, later becoming the NAACP, to his advocacy for peace and freedom that would get his books removed from libraries and his passport revoked, DuBois symbolized the necessary link between scholarship and activism from which change emanates. That tradition was being continued by the organizers of the March on Washington. I'm sure he looked down with other ancestors and said indeed, "the struggle continues."

The March on Washington and its Impact on Modern Caribbean History.

Don Rojas

In the Western Caribbean region, Washington had imposed an economic embargo on Cuba in early 1961 and later that same year the CIA and its anti-Castro minions, under orders from President Kennedy, organized an invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs designed to overthrow the revolutionary government of Fidel Castro. The invasion failed but the embargo is still in place to this day. Promptly after the Bay of Pigs debacle, Castro declared that Cuba would choose socialism as its path to development and self-determination.

Castro in the early 1960s and 20 years later Maurice Bishop in Grenada refused to accept Washington conventional doctrine that the Caribbean was “America’s back yard” and both opted for a path to nation building that was independent of Washington’s imperial interests in the region.

In Haiti at the time of the March on Washington, the US-backed dictatorship of “Papa Doc” Duvalier was ruthlessly exploiting and oppressing the proud people of that country, indeed, the first country in the Caribbean and Latin America to win its independence through armed struggle against the French colonialists in 1804.

In the Dominican Republic in the early 1960s, the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo held sway over the people of Haiti’s bordering country with the tacit support of Washington and in Puerto Rico the struggle for independence from US colonialism was beginning to stir.

1963 was also the year that Kenya gained its independence from Britain under the leadership of that great African freedom fighter, Jomo Kenyatta. One year before, the former British colonies of Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago had won their independence in August 1962, after many years of hard struggle.

Iconic images of the march and the bombing were seen by millions of Black people throughout Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. The sheer audacity of the march and the unmatched eloquence of Dr. King stirred countless minds and touched innumerable hearts. And, the barbarity of the church bombing struck a chord of righteous indignation across the Black world.

In the Caribbean at that time were young men and women, like Maurice Bishop in Grenada, Walter Rodney in Guyana, Ralph Gonsalves in St. Vincent, Tim Hector in Antigua and countless others who were developing a nascent anti-colonial consciousness and who had absorbed the images and lessons of the March on Washington and had schooled themselves in the civil rights and Black power struggles that emerged in



its wake. (Interesting historical factoid--Bishop grew up just a few miles from the village in Grenada where Malcolm X's mother was born).

Sixteen years later, Bishop and his New Jewel Movement, led a popular revolution that overthrew a dictatorship and began a process of developing the country along the lines of participatory democracy and anti-imperialist solidarity.

Dr. Walter Rodney graduated with honors from the University of the West Indies in 1963 and went on to become a revered scholar/activist whose speeches and books, in particular, "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa," were hugely influential in shaping the political ideas of activists throughout the United States, Africa and the Caribbean in the 1970s and '80s.

Dr. Ralph Gonsalves is now the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and a leading voice in the Caribbean community of nations (CARICOM) currently demanding reparations for centuries of slavery and colonial exploitation from Britain, France and the Netherlands--the former colonial powers in the region.

As Maurice Bishop's former press secretary and speechwriter, I can attest to him referring frequently to the examples of both Martin Luther King and Malcolm X in several of his speeches. One quote from Dr. King that Bishop was particularly fond of was "the Black revolution is much more than a struggle for the rights of Negroes. It is inter-related---racism, poverty, militarism and imperialism; evils that are deeply rooted in the whole structure of society."

In 1963, all of the English-speaking Caribbean countries, with the exception of Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago, were still British colonies. It took more than a decade later for the rest of the countries to become independent. And it was during those years that pro-independence forces in the region systematically studied and adopted both the language and the organizing tactics of the civil rights and Black power movements in the United States.

The early years of the civil rights movement prior to the 1963 march were also closely observed by Norman Washington Manley, Jamaica's first premier (father of Michael Manley), by Dr. Eric Williams, Trinidad & Tobago's first prime minister who authored the classic historical studies "Capitalism and Slavery" and "From Columbus to Castro" and also by Guyana's two towering political leaders at the time, Cheddi Jagan and Forbes Burnham.

There is a long and rich history of Caribbean-born political leaders who have played pivotal roles in the African-American freedom struggles throughout the 20th Century. From Jamaican-born Marcus Mosiah Garvey, whose Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) grew from its Harlem base into the largest mass movement of black people in the 1920s and '30s with active chapters across the US, the Caribbean (including Cuba) and Central America, to Trinidad-born C.L.R. James, one of the towering intellectual figures of the 20th Century who organized Black workers in Detroit and debated the "Black question" with Leon Trotsky, to Trinidad-born Stokeley Carmichael (later re-named Kwame Ture) who became chairman

of SNCC in 1966, taking over from John Lewis who later became a US Congressman.

Three years after the March on Washington, on June 20th, 1965 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. set foot on Jamaican soil to address the graduating class of some 400 students at the University of the West Indies and also to speak to large crowds at Jamaica's national stadium. King's speech to the graduates was titled "Facing the Challenge of a New Age" in which he spoke of the passing of the colonial order and the need for nations to work together and fight for justice, as the world was increasingly becoming interdependent.

Dr. King had come to a young, newly independent nation that for the first time was led by people of African origin, the descendants of former slaves, who three years before had become the masters of their own destinies. He is quoted as saying during his visit that, "in Jamaica, I feel like a human being" and also as being "proud to be among brothers and sisters."

Dr. King also visited the Bahamas on several occasions in the 1960s and it is said that two of his famous speeches were written during his time in Bimini, one of the many islands that make up that Caribbean nation. Lamentably, King did not live to see the Bahamas become independent from Britain in July, 1973, nor did he witness the creation of CARICOM, the community of Caribbean nations, in the same year. However, In 2012 Dr. King's son Martin Luther King III, attended the unveiling of a MLK bust placed in the mangroves of Bimini where the great civil rights leader had enjoyed his relaxing visits.

The struggles for full equal rights and equal opportunities for Black people in the US and the struggles for full independence and self-determination in the Caribbean region continue to foment as we move into the second decade of the 21st Century. Young African-American men are still being killed with impunity by racist white vigilantes while several islands in the Caribbean remain colonies, or as the French euphemistically call their island wards of Martinique (the birth place of Franz Fanon) and Guadeloupe their Antillean "departments". Puerto Rico continues to be burdened with its ignominious status as a semi-colony of the US, without representation in the US Congress, while Aruba and Curacao, Montserrat and Anguilla all continue to have their foreign relations determined by politicians in The Hague and in London.

Most of the English-speaking Caribbean countries that gained their independence in the 1960s and 1970s can be characterized today as neo-colonial states i.e. they possess the trappings and symbols of political sovereignty (flags, national anthems, democratic elections, independent judiciaries, diplomatic missions, membership in regional and global bodies etc.) but their economic development remains stymied by an inherited web of unequal and unjust economic relations with their former colonial masters; a sad and sorry arrangement that keeps them dependent and vulnerable to the exigencies of recurring crises in the developed capitalist countries. Their sovereign political power can do little to restructure these relations of economic dependency.

And so it becomes imperative 50 years after the March on Washington for the nations of the Caribbean to combine their respective sovereignties into a stronger, more politically integrated CARICOM unit that would give them leverage to demand reparations from the former European colonial powers as well as



negotiate new and fairer terms of trade with the EU, Canada and the USA. At the same time, a more integrated Caribbean region must actively seek to broaden and deepen economic ties with its Latin American neighbors.

And so the struggle will continue in the USA and in the Caribbean in 2013 and beyond, and 50 years after that great March on Washington, Martin King's dream is still a dream deferred for millions of Black people throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Conclusion:

African Americans and Public Policy: A 21st Century Analysis and Program

In the 21st century, public policy represents a crucial arena in the African-American struggle for freedom, justice, and equality. The findings and conclusions rendered by the authors herein point a clear way forward in terms of charting a progressive vision for a substantive engagement with policymakers and the general public.

Since the 1963 March on Washington, everyday folk as well as scholar-activists of the African-American freedom struggle have petitioned our nation for recognition as first class citizens, by way of the church, the legal arena, the contribution of scholarship, via the halls of Congress and in the streets, among other ways.

Moving forward, regardless of the make-up of Congress or the party in control of the Presidency in the White House, or the color or gender of the President, African Americans must construct an even more expansive and collaborative institutional effort to research, define, examine, construct, and evaluate social and public policy, specifically as it pertains to the areas identified in this document.

A pragmatic and constructive Black agenda should be based on a thorough and meticulous public understanding, dialogue, and collective engagement of issues linking both historical and contemporary dimensions of interconnected social problems. Towards that end, a concerted effort must be undertaken by members of academia, the policy world, and the activist community to enter into meaningful partnerships that culminate in shared cooperation toward the development of sustainable solutions to these and other pressing problems plaguing Black America.

Black Paper Policy Conclusions and Recommendations

A concerted effort must be made to merge the best of Black Studies scholarship with policy studies and lessons learned/best practices from grassroots activists to effectively examine the areas covered, measure ongoing progress, and comprehensively propose and implement workable sustainable solutions to address ongoing challenges.

Annual working conferences, bringing together a cross section of scholars, grassroots activists, policy advocates, policymakers, and the general public must be convened to explore one or more of each of these quality of life issues, with the intent of crafting workable solutions.

In the tradition of black studies scholar-activists, ongoing and consistent research must be conducted in each quality of life area. The IBW 21st Century Research Consortium will partner with other think tanks,



policy research institutes, churches, Black Studies departments and programs, and advocacy organizations, to conduct such research.

Public opinion must be mobilized around the ongoing evolution of these issues covered in this Black Paper to educate and galvanize the public around a more complete understanding and resolution to these long-standing challenges.

More African American think and action tanks must be created and more must work collaboratively. Collectively, in conjunction with Black Studies scholars and scholar-activists, they must play a more direct and influential role in understanding, researching, proposing, and measuring the condition of African Americans locally, nationally, and globally.

African American think tanks must address the following questions: How has policy research looked for African Americans over that period? Since the MOW, has the research of African American scholar-activists been utilized effectively in the manner of addressing long-standing social problems facing Black America?

Considering the fact that 50 years ago, we did not have a Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, TransAfrica, the original Institute of the Black World, HBCU think tanks, etc, what has been the role of think tanks in measuring and charting a course of direction for Black America in that interval? Also, what are the resource and organizational challenges facing African American progressive think tanks comparable to their conservative and progressive counterparts? What should be the role of African American think tanks in carving out a black agenda for progressive public policy development and social change in service to African American communities? Lastly, what needs to be done to ensure the viability and sustainability of think tanks, research organizations, and public policy institutes committed to researching, developing praxis models, and providing policy advocacy on behalf of Black America 50 years since MOW?

Research findings and policy recommendations must be consistently presented before a cross-section of the general public through legislative panels, workshops and seminars, public presentations, publications, and other means of outreach.

Using the IBW 21st Century Malcolm X/Martin Luther King Jr Community Revitalization Initiative, practical pilot projects must be implemented in each American city with the assistance of teams of scholar-activists, policymakers, professionals, and the general public to implement best practices from the Black Paper findings and recommendations.

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