

THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON @ 50

A Deposit Was Made But the Check Still Bounced!



An IBW BLACK PAPER
On the Last Half Century of Struggle

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Forward



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” imploring Africans in America, first and foremost, but equally important calling on 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 and marginalized, 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 and Production Editors and Don Rojas, Associate Editor have assembled a document which reflects the thinking of some of the country’s 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 grass roots organizers in formulating action agendas to address the crises in Black communities. We have seized on the occasion of the Commemoration to renew and 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.

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 is 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 scholars and 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 living in America. It is in that spirit that this Black Paper is intended to be a vital resource for Black empowerment! Let the revival begin!

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



ABOUT IBW's BLACK PAPER PROJECT

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.

CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEWS



AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE CONTEXT FOR THE IBW BLACK PAPER

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 WWI 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 lost 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 presidential 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.

Dr. Mtangulizi Sanyika, former Professor of African World Studies, Dillard University, former Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Texas Southern University and former Senior Fellow, Mickey Leland Center on World hunger and Peace.



QUALITY OF LIFE/SECTORAL CHANGES OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS

POLITICS

The most important change in Black politics following the March on Washington was the passage of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) in 1965. 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 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.ⁱ Now, more than 10,500 African-Americans serve as elected officials at every level of local and state government 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. Numerical progress has been made; however the issue today is whether such quantitative change translates into legislative and policy outcomes.

Unquestionably, progress has been made. However, 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.

The current landscape of Black electoral politics is affected by 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 a "post racial" era has stymied the necessary policy targeting needed to address the problems of the dark ghettos. The conservative push back and challenges to voting rights have also complicated the future of Black voting rights. We must continue to build grass roots movements to advance and protect voting rights and the policies needed to alleviate the marginality of the black majority. Otherwise, black politics itself will become marginal as "a symbol without substance."

Dr. Michael K. Fauntroy is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Howard University. He was previously Associate Professor in the Public Policy Institute of George Mason University.

ECONOMICS/WEALTH GAP

The overall economic well being of Black Americans has remained unchanged from a condition of severe challenge. Economic prospects of today's Black households are still inextricably linked to the history of racial inequality in the nation's economic institutions during key periods of national wealth redistribution. 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. A recent

study documented that white households held wealth assets that were 20 times greater than Black households. And, it will take a massive level of public investment to change it, as well as a paradigm shift and new money management habits among Black people in America.

George Fraser is the CEO of FraserNet--“What’s Next for Blacks in America? Intergenerational Wealth-The Final Frontier.”

HOUSING/HOMEOWNERSHIP

Today, African-American homeownership is about 45% of African-American households, which is down to the 1980 level. These losses are largely due to home foreclosures and lost equity. Fully 55% of African-American households, primarily lower income, marginal and poverty households have been unable to realize that part of the American dream over the last 30 + years.

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.

An additional complication today, not evident 50 years ago, is the phenomenon of Black suburbanization. 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 suburbs 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.

The foreclosure debacle, suburbanization, gentrification, reduction in affordability and the change in public housing to mixed-income housing are new problems in 2013 that were not evident 50 years ago. New creative strategies directed towards the Black community as well as toward public policy are absolutely and urgently required to secure this most basic of assets.

Atty. Mtumishi St.Julien is the Director of the Finance Authority of New Orleans, LA.

EDUCATION

Post-Brown/Post-integration corporate elites and politicians have ushered in devastating educational “reform” measures that are undermining public education, particularly for Black students. Indoctrinating the public with cultural deficit ideology, neoliberal policies—from mandatory high stakes testing to zero-tolerance discipline policies and the wholesale transfer of public monies to privatized education—have resulted in mass school closings in urban areas and mass firings of experienced Black educators and are contributing to the mass incarceration of Black children.

Their performance in reading, math, and science lags behind other groups and inadequate guidance and academic rigor in high school have resulted in Black students' overrepresentation at community colleges and online universities rather than top-tier institutions. However, producing students who are said to have "achieved," but who do not have the knowledge, orientation, or ability to participate in transforming their own communities has also been disastrous.

Black students need education for self-knowledge and to become contributing problem-solving members of their own community and the wider world, as well. This requires public policy that prioritizes recognizing Black students' culture and heritage in the curriculum and authentic assessment for academic and cultural excellence as well as visionary, culturally-informed parent education, given the proven role of parental racial socialization for student achievement and identity development.

Also, research is needed to assess the impact of African language, culture, and heritage study on student motivation and engagement and teacher development. "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."

Dr. Joyce King is the Benjamin E. Mays Endowed Chair Professor of Social Foundations of Education at Georgia State University. She was assisted by LaToya Russell, a doctoral student at Georgia State.

HEALTH CARE

The health of African-Americans today is much like the health of African-Americans 50 years ago. Many factors that influence the status of African-Americans have not changed significantly in the past five decades. Real and perceived discrimination based on race, age, education, income, and employment restrain access to quality health care. All traditional indicators document the disparities and inequalities in affordable health care, medical access, treatment and cures for African-American patients. The future of African-American health cannot be determined simply by a reduction in the social and economic disadvantages alone. Effective interventions that address the unhealthy lifestyle behaviors such as poor diets, high stress levels and lack of exercise are also warranted to elevate the health status of African-Americans.

Dr. Wanda Franklin is an Assistant Professor of Nursing at Ashland University.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Over the last 50 years, the United States has moved beyond overt racist lynchings as the order of the day to institutionalized mass incarceration as its "punishment of choice." The criminal justice condition of African-Americans encompasses not only the impact of mass incarceration, but also the War on Drugs, racial profiling, and the prison industrial complex. 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.

The U.S. holds the dubious distinction today of having the highest incarceration rate in the world with over two million people in prisons and jails, a 500% increase over the past 30 years. Blacks are disproportionately represented, and face unequal treatment, at each stage of the punishment process.

These points along the continuum include: **1)** stops and arrests based on racial profiling, **2)** police misconduct and brutality, **3)** abuse of prosecutorial discretion in decisions of charging and pretrial detention, **4)** the lack of diversity in jury pools and the improper use of peremptory challenges to remove Blacks from juries **5)** increasingly harsh, rigid and unconscionably lengthy sentences including three strikes laws and the crack/powder disparity, **6)** the racial application of the death penalty, **7)** and legalized discriminatory treatment based on one's former felony status in employment, education, housing, public benefits and the franchise. And that is just the tip of the iceberg as the military industrial complex of yesterday has morphed into the lucrative and disturbingly profitable prison industrial complex of today.

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 destruction. Our scholars, advocates and activists must raise the ante and have the audacity to advance creative solutions to break the criminal punishment continuum and fashion new systems based on prevention and human development, rather than punishment, and compassion rather than criminalization.

Attorney Nkechi Taifa is a Senior Policy Analyst for civil and criminal justice reform with the Open Society Foundations

LAND OWNERSHIP

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. 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.

Gary Grant is President of the Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association, along with Willie Wright, and Spencer Wood, PhD.

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES AND CONSTITUENCY CHANGES



WHITE COLLAR AND BLUE COLLAR EMPLOYMENT

Fifty years after the March on Washington, formidable barriers continue to stymie efforts to achieve employment equity. The dual forces of deindustrialization and globalization have severely impacted the occupational options for blacks as dramatic changes have occurred in local, national, and regional labor markets. De-industrialization has involved a massive decline in employment in the manufacturing sector along with a shift in jobs to the service sector. During the 1970s, de-industrialization resulted in the loss of between 32 and 38 million jobs. 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. The proportion of the workforce that is unionized has declined precipitously compared to representation rates in 1970.

Dr. James Stewart is Professor Emeritus of African American and Labor Studies and Immediate Past President of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

WOMEN AND FAMILIES

The 1963 March on Washington represents a pivotal moment of promise, rather than of fulfillment. In 2013, that *lack* of fulfillment remains. Then, approximately 70% of African American children lived in two parent households, today; only 33% do so. Many of the social problems of poor Black communities were linked to 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.

Today, many of the problems highlighted by scholars during the era of the 1960’s have worsened for African-Americans. The unemployment rate, rates of imprisonment, poverty, social isolation etc. that marked urban Black communities in the ‘60’s and prompted Dr. King’s description of them as “lonely islands of poverty”, have become less lonely. Today, these conditions create similar hardships 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. However, race continues to significantly shape social life and structural conditions.

Dr. Angela James is an Associate Professor of African-American Studies at Loyola Marymount University.

YOUTH AND STUDENTS

During the ‘60’s, African-American youth and students were challenged by de jure and de facto segregation and racial oppression. If fortunate enough, they were the future of the Black middle

class, but also became the heart and soul of the quest for freedom. Youth and students formed the backbone of SNCC, CORE, and the NAACP Youth council, and led the sit-ins and freedom rides.

Today's youth and students are challenged by a different set of social stresses rooted in structural and systemic racism and poverty. Various factors affect today's African-American youth and students including poor schools, high unemployment, high incarceration rates, especially for young black males, as well as high crime and homicide rates, and of course, stop and frisk policies and racial profiling.

Nearly 40% of all persons living below the poverty line are African American youth and students under 18 years. In addition, today's youth and students are facing the deadly HIV/AIDS epidemic that is disproportionately increasing in incidences among their age cohort at an alarming rate.

In 2007, Blacks including teens accounted for 51% of all new HIV cases, and 48% of persons living with HIV/AIDS. In the aggregate, Black youth and students face a challenging future, but as in previous generations must identify the challenge, accept their mission and take the responsibility to help shape the future of Black people in America.

Anastacia Scott is a 3rd year doctoral student at the Dept. of Africology at the U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Her research focuses on post-racial ideology and museum studies.



A young actress named Ruby Dee (center) and countless other lesser-known people of all colors and classes participated in the great March on Washington in 1963.

INSTITUTIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES



CHURCHES

Today, Black churches are at a crossroads. 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 witness than is currently the case. 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. Mega churches, 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. In this sense, the progressive Black Church collective, irrespective of denomination or non-denomination must get more involved in understanding and influencing the social and public policy process, no longer giving exclusive reign to right-wing evangelicals.

Dr. Alton Pollard is Dean of the Howard University School of Divinity and Professor of Religion and Culture.

MEDIA

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 seen as 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 as a result of rapid consolidation and the emergence of alternative digital platforms. Then, the accounts are numerous of the struggle of Black reporters to even cover the march if they didn't work for the Black Press, compared to today when they are trying to stay employed in a steadily shrinking market.

George Curry is the President & CEO of George Curry Media, LLC

THINK TANKS

To understand and address the dynamism of the March on Washington and the civil rights period, as well as the subsequent negative outcomes faced today, the role of think tanks and knowledge makers, then and now, must be analyzed, understood and reinterpreted. Together and with a view of our global positioning, we have the capacity to develop an alternative and transformative

narrative and action plan to effectively advance the interests of the African- American community beyond the opportunities for just a few exceptional achievers. No doubt, there were systemic changes and significant gains from the Civil Rights Movement. However, a 50-year retrospective view reveals that the majority of African-Americans did not equally benefit the same way that the black middle class did.

Dr. Iva Carruthers is the General Secretary of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference

FINANCIAL SERVICES

One of the unintended consequences of the Civil Rights movement and its successes is the abandonment of the financial services firms of Black America by the ‘talented tenth.’ With few exceptions, middle- and upper-middle class Black Americans neither patronize nor work for the financial services firms of Black America.

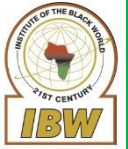
In the almost fifty years that have passed since the monumental March on Washington and the subsequent passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, relatively speaking, Black financial services firms have made no gains compared with their White-owned peers. In 1963, Black financial services firms controlled 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. Despite their marginality, these firms continue to serve underserved populations not served by white financial institutions. Thus, they continue to be relevant and needed by Black America. However, they require significant interventions and assistance to further the historical struggle for Black wealth creation and financial independence.

Dr.T. David Reese is an Associate Professor of Finance and Economics at the U. of Coastal Georgia.



CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES



PUBLIC POLICY

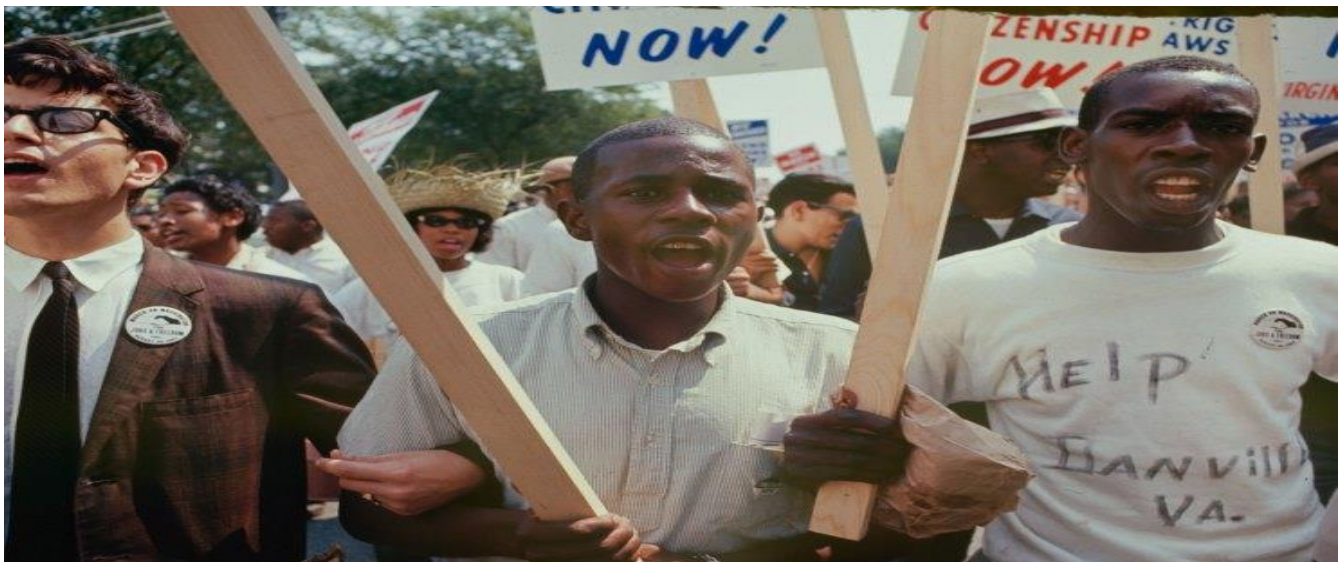
In the 21st century, public policy represents a crucial arena in the African-American struggle for freedom, justice, and equality. The findings and conclusions rendered by the authors herein point a clear way forward in terms of charting a progressive vision for a substantive engagement with policymakers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

Dr. Zachery Williams is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Akron.



The Civil Rights Movement and Africa

Parallel to the dynamics of the freedom struggle occurring in the United States during the '60's , 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.

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 addition, the structural linkages between South African apartheid and American apartheid (segregation), along with inventive socio-cultural and infra-political responses to such forms of human oppression, struck a comparable Pan-African connection among those on both sides of the Atlantic striving for the realization of human dignity, freedom, and self-determination.

Earlier, in 1958 Martin Luther King, Jr. made 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 see the linkages and remarked 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.”

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.

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.

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.

The day before the March on Washington, 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.

The Civil Rights and Black Power movements no doubt influenced and reaffirmed Africa’s quest for independence and self-determination. Simultaneously the freedom movements in the US were equally inspired and emboldened by Africa’s audacious proclamation of liberation and freedom for its citizens. This common liberation dynamic reunited Africans and African Americans into an unbroken Pan-African circle that continues to this day.

Jemadari Kamara, Ph.D. Director of Department of African, Caribbean, and Community Development at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

The movement’s impact on the modern Caribbean

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.

Iconic images of the 1963 March on Washington and the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church 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.

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 Stokely 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”.

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.

Don Rojas is the former press secretary of the late Prime Minister Maurice Bishop of Grenada. He is also the former communications director of the NAACP.



Dr. King addressed a large crowd in Jamaica in 1965 (top left) and visited with Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana in 1958 (top right). Nkrumah led Ghana to become the first former British colony in Africa to become independent. CP leader Roy Wilkins (front, left), march organizer A. Philip Randolph (front, center) and United Auto Workers president Walter Reuther (front, right) lead marchers down the street in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 28, 1963. National Archives and Records Administration

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS



RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS

- 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 findings 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 and 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

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZING

- IBW and other activists-organizers should initiate a collaborative effort to **re-ignite interest in a broad based social movement** among Black folks, and other progressive entities in the country today. The effort should include an analysis of what worked and did not work and why, in order to identify and document best practices. The Damu Smith Institute should be enlisted in this effort
- IBW should design analytical tools and information to **dispel the myth of a post-racial** America and launch educational campaigns that document the new racism of the 21st Century. Companion efforts must be made to re-interpret or eliminate the outdated understanding of race as a personal act alone in order to unravel and expose the relationship between **institutional behavior and structural racism**
- IBW should consider the convening of a **broad based gathering** of scholar-activists from diverse racial, and ethnic populations to identify common issues and opportunities for collaboration prior to the emergence of a crisis. The intent would be to form a network of intermediaries focused on the race-class issue across ethnic lines.

- IBW should initiate a **regular dialogue** with other African American organizations interested in determining the role of **self-determination strategies** in addressing the problems of the dark ghetto. Efforts should be especially made too connect to advocacy and community development groups that are presently disconnected from a social movement base.
- IBW should **widely disseminate the Black Paper** upon its completion and identify at least one program/project in each area of the document that can be implemented in conjunction with other groups. It is further recommended that IBW and its partners and allies develop and publish an **Annual Black Agenda**, and a **national policy Agenda** that informs the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and others of its interests.

Finally, it is recommended that IBW **convert the Black paper to a book**, initiate a lecture tour, public appearances, and develop a well-planned follow-up strategy to continue the work initiated by this project.



Dr. Martin Luther King waves to the crowd of over 250,000 who gathered from across the country in Washington, DC on August 28th, 1963 in the largest civil rights demonstration in the history of the United States. It was a march that triggered a movement and changed a country..

- NOTES -

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Institute of the Black World 21st Century's

BLACK PAPER FORUM

*A Deposit Was Made
But the Check Still Bounced!*

WATCH LIVE WEBCAST

THURSDAY AUGUST 22ND @7:30PM EST

FEATURING PRESENTATIONS BY CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Julianne Malveaux, Dr. Michael Fauntroy, George Curry, Atty. Nkechi Taiifa,
Jacqui Patterson, Dr. Zachary Williams, Dr. Mtangulizi Sanyika, Don Rojas

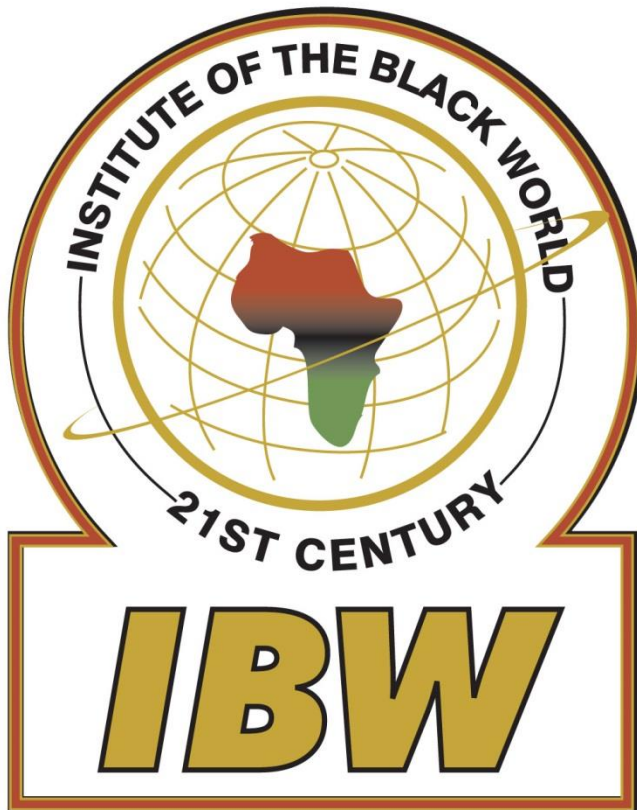
INVITED SPECIAL GUEST

Rev. Jesse Jackson

MODERATOR

Dr. Ron Daniels

WATCH AT IBW21.ORG



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"UNTIL THE STAND YOUR GROUND LAW IS ABOLISHED,
 I WILL NEVER PERFORM THERE AGAIN" - STEVIE WONDER

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