

**A Broad Three-Point Reparations Program for US Afrodescendants
Versus
CARICOM's 10-Point Program**

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Abstract

US Afrodescendants should welcome the Caribbean Community of Nations' (CARICOM) decision to play the role of David versus Goliath in demanding reparations from former European colonialist powers. However, inherent characteristics that define CARICOM Afrodescendants are quite different from those that define US Afrodescendants. Consequently, US Afrodescendants should eschew CARICOM's 10-point reparations program in favor of developing a reparations program of our own. In this article, we highlight key differences between CARICOM and US Afrodescendants, and we argue for a reparations program for US Afrodescendants that has nation formation as its central tenet. We suggest that a US Afrodescendant reparations program should reflect three broad points: Land, resources, and international support. While CARICOM's and US Afrodescendants' reparations programs should be dissimilar, when realized, both programs can produce similar freedom fruits.

I. Introduction

Recognizing the import of the 10-point reparations program that was adopted recently by Afrodescendants within the Caribbean Community of nations (CARICOM), certain US Afrodescendants have suggested that we adopt the same or a similar reparations strategy.¹ However, this suggestion suffers from the fallacy of composition. Yes, it is true that both groups are Afrodescendants. However, certain key underlying characteristics of CARICOM Afrodescendants are totally inconsistent with underlying characteristics of US Afrodescendants. Therefore, a valid 10-point program for CARICOM may very well not be appropriate for US Afrodescendants.

An important argument that illuminates the fallacy is that CARICOM Afrodescendants occupy their own independent territories, which serve as excellent incubators for growing seeds of change. Conversely, US Afrodescendants occupy territory within the US as a subgroup and cannot insulate ourselves effectively from the adverse forces imposed by the larger, mainly white population, which exhibits a pattern of discriminatory and, in some cases, outright racist behavior.

In this paper, we argue for a reparations program that will help insulate the US Afrodescendant population so that we can heal as a nation and plant and grow seeds of change that will be long-lasting. Specifically, we propose that as part of a broader long-term strategy US Afrodescendants build a reparations program with nation formation at its center. If and when this program is realized, then it may provide a real opportunity to achieve ultimate outcomes that are similar to those envisioned for CARICOM.

The paper is organized as follows. Part II explains why CARICOM's reparations plan is not appropriate for US Afrodescendants. In Part III we support the conclusion that US Afrodescendants should build a nation formation reparations program. In Part IV, we discuss a broad three-point reparations strategy for US Afrodescendants. We conclude in Part V.

II. Why CARICOM's Program is Not Appropriate for US Afrodescendants

It is laudable that CARICOM was the first group of nations in the Western Hemisphere to step out into new space and challenge European colonialists to begin righting historical wrongs through reparations. It is our understanding that CARICOM took great pains in developing its strategy to secure reparations, and used several rounds of dialogue to finalize a 10-point reparations program. Importantly, CARICOM is comprised of 15 mainly small Caribbean Island nations.²

It is a fact that the history of Caribbean people parallels the history of US Afrodescendants for certain periods, yet the former is quite unique. Slavery in British and French Caribbean colonies was abolished at least a decade before slavery was abolished in the US (Williams, 1970). Moreover, with the exception of Montserrat, which remains as a United Kingdom territory today,

¹ See CARICOM's (2014) press release: "CARICOM Leaders Accept Reparatory Justice Programme as Basis for Further Action on Reparations."

²CARICOM is comprised of: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

CARICOM nations are independent nations. They have their own land with which to shape their future. It is true that the last of CARICOM nations (excluding Montserrat) did not receive their independence until the early 1980s (Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 2014), but even before independence, CARICOM nations never experienced the type of European population domination that US Afrodescendants experienced. After the onset of slavery in the Caribbean, CARICOM Afrodescendants generally comprised the majority population in their territories.

In the US, European Americans always dominated the US Afrodescendant population; thereby creating an environment in which the “superiority” of white cultural and economic life were superimposed on the hearts and minds of US Afrodescendants—even until this very day. US Afrodescendants had, and have, no place to run from white power. As a group, we have no land of our own.

These are some of the defining features that differentiate US Afrodescendants from CARICOM Afrodescendants. Accordingly, it is logical that US Afrodescendants may require a different type of reparations plan than the one currently adopted by CARICOM.

To highlight distinct and practical differences between CARICOM and US Afrodescendants, consider Table 1, which features data on gross domestic product (GDP), population, GDP per capita, literacy rates, and life expectancy. These are just a few variables for which data are available that are intended to reflect important economic, educational, and health differences.

Table 1.—CARICOM and US Afrodescendants:
Economic, Educational, and Health Differences

Variables	CARICOM	US Afrodescendants
GDP (2013) in billions of USD	\$77.6	\$1,000.0
Population (mid-2014)	17,009,849	41,623,897
GDP Per Capita (2013) in USD*	\$4,560	\$24,024
Literacy rate (population weighted average for CARICOM) (Definition: > 15 years of age and attended school)**	73%	99.9%***
Life expectancy (2013, population weighted average for CARICOM) in years	67.0	75.3

*--Estimated as 2013 GDP divided by the mid-2014 population.

**--Estimated by author from CIA (2014) *World Factbook* data.

***--Given US laws on school attendance, this variable is assumed to approach 100%.

Sources: Statistics for CARICOM obtained from CIA (2014), *World Factbook*. Data for US Afrodescendants obtained from Nielsen (2013) (GDP); Census Bureau (2013) (population); and Hoyert and Xu (2012) (life expectancy).

The statistics presented in Table 1 make a clear distinction between Afrodescendants in CARICOM and those in the US. US Afrodescendants' GDP is over ten times that of CARICOM's. The US Afrodescendants' population more than doubles the population of CARICOM. US Afrodescendants' GDP per capita is nearly six times that of CARICOM's. US Afrodescendants' literacy rate is over 20 percentage points higher than that for CARICOM. Finally, US Afrodescendants' life expectancy nearly exceeds CARICOM's by a decade.

Mainly because of these statistical differences and differences in history, we take a point-by-point approach in arguing against US Afrodescendants' piggy-backing on CARICOM's 10-point reparations plan.

1. **“An official apology from slave trading nations.”** While a formal apology is appealing, quite frankly, it is not essential. History tells us that formal agreements and statements can be obliterated by actions. Ask Native Americans. It is common knowledge that their history is replete with broken peace and other types of treaties. Consequently, it does not seem critically important to have a formal apology as a point in a US Afrodescendant reparations program.
2. **“Support for repatriation programs for those desiring resettlement in Africa.”** What we know and what the American Colonization Society (ACS, Burin, 2008) taught us is that recolonizing back to Africa is a very expensive proposition, which may not yield much favorable fruit. As we will discuss later in the article, the African continent is undergoing its own crises at the moment, and it is highly unlikely that large portions of Western Hemisphere Afrodescendant populations will be invited to return to Africa and be incorporated successfully. Importantly, to our knowledge, there are no plans now on the anvil for creating a new African state for returning diaspora populations. Even if included, this is not a point that should carry much weight in a US Afrodescendant reparations program.
3. **“The creation of an indigenous peoples development program.”** As part of the US, Afrodescendants have had a bird's-eye view of the most expansive development process in world history. We know and comprehend the development process. In 2007, the latest year for which data are available, US Afrodescendants owned 1.9 million enterprises (Census Bureau, 2007). The problem is that our enterprises do not grow rapidly enough and they fail. Robinson (2014A) explains, in part, the reasons for this outcome in “22 Reasons Why Black American Business Fail.” The just mentioned essay highlights what is required for improved US Afrodescendant development, and it is not a “development program.” In this regard, what we need most are access to financial capital and an absence of racial discrimination (external and self-imposed).
4. **“Support for Caribbean cultural institutions such as museums and research centers.”** Fortunately for US Afrodescendants, there are numerous museums across the US that feature our history and culture.³ In fact, as we speak, a \$600 million plus National Museum of African-American History and Culture is being developed in Washington, DC. While, it is difficult to say how many is “enough,” we believe that US Afrodescendants have access to sufficient institutions to learn about our history and culture—both physically and virtually. At the same time, we agree that these institutions could be expanded.
5. **“The launching of public health programs to address the high rates of hypertension and type II diabetes.”** Randall's (2006) *Dying While Black* certainly highlights the disparity in white American and US Afrodescendants healthcare. What she reveals, however, is not that US Afrodescendants require a new or augmented healthcare program. What she uncovers is that healthcare providers discriminate. On the other hand, a significant aspect of poor health for US Afrodescendants is a lack of financial resources that result in poor diets, which lead to health complications. Therefore, the solution to the

³Writing for the Association of African American Museums, Hayward and Werner (2008) report that there are over 250 museums in the US that feature Afrodescendant history and culture.

health disparity in the US is more financial resources for US Afrodescendants and a halt to healthcare providers' discrimination, not a new public health program.

6. **“The mounting of illiteracy elimination programs.”** First, the illiteracy rate among US Afrodescendants is not atrocious. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2006), average adult US Afrodescendants perform at least 80% as well as their White counterparts in the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, which was last conducted in 2003. Second, essentially all US Afrodescendant youth attend elementary and secondary school. If we leave the US education system unable to read and write, or fail to read and write at a sufficient standard, then it is not because the education system is absent. Rather it is because there are inadequacies in the education system. US Afrodescendants do not need another education program necessarily. What we need is to adjust existing education programs so that they become more effective in ensuring high-level literacy.
7. **“The expansion of knowledge of Africa through school and cultural exchange programs.”** There is no inherent problem with the inclusion of this point in a US Afrodescendant reparations program. However, we would hazard a guess that those US Afrodescendants who wish to know more about African History and Culture have several avenues open to them. For example, GradSchool.com (2014) states that at least 44 campuses in the US have graduate studies programs in African American Studies. The Association of American Geographers (2014) reports that there are at least 36 African Studies programs in US colleges and universities. Numerous US colleges and universities have “Study Abroad” programs to African countries, and programs that invite African students to the US. US Afrodescendants students at colleges and universities have access to these academic programs and to African students. It is common knowledge that most of the major US Afrodescendant Christian Church denominations have operations of varying sizes in Africa. Let us not forget the 1960s and 1970s movements in the US, such as the Black Panther Party, that featured exposure to African Language, History, and Culture. Out of these movement came Kwanzaa (Karenga, 2014), which is a celebration of African rooted “family, community, and culture.” In other words, if there is one thing about which we seldom hear an outcry, it is that US Afrodescendants have insufficient opportunities to learn about African culture.
8. **“The development of rehabilitation programs to overcome the psychological trauma produced by enslavement and underdevelopment.”** Sometimes unknowingly, the psychological trauma that is actually perpetrated against US Afrodescendants comes through media exposure (Robinson 2009A; Martins and Harrison 2012; and Waytz, Hoffman, and Trawalter 2014). As long as one is in an environment that includes US media, one is subject to anti-US Afrodescendant images—and the resulting psychological trauma. Therefore, the key to healing from such psychological trauma is absence from the US media environment. For US Afrodescendants, this means the formation of a new environment (nation) through which we can control media images that are promulgated. Given that CARICOM Afrodescendants should, theoretically, be able to control the media that is presented in their countries, it seems reasonable that they can also recover, at least partially, from the psychological trauma that they have endured by simply reorienting the media images that they consume.
9. **“The transfer of knowledge of the latest technology and science into the training of Caribbean youth.”** We have no quarrel with this point of CARICOM’s reparations plan.

Later in this article, we will describe the need for US Afrodescendants to include a similar point in our reparations program.

10. **“The reduction of domestic debt and cancellation of international debt.”** Because US Afrodescendants are not officially a nation at this point, we have no “international debt.” The debt that US Afrodescendants have is with individual creditors, and it may be impractical to hope that this debt would be negotiated away one creditor at a time. On the other hand, there is good evidence that US Afrodescendants are often charged higher interest rates than are charged to European Americans (Getter, 2006 and Williams, 2008) and that debt relief is possible when it results from discrimination (US Department of Justice, 2011 and 2012). Consequently, debt relief could serve as a viable component of a US Afrodescendant reparations plan.

Only two-or-three points of CARICOM’s 10-point reparations program apply specifically to the US Afrodescendant experience and should probably be included in our reparations plan. Clearly, CARICOM and US Afrodescendants are different. These differences make apparent the need for US Afrodescendants to consider developing our own reparations plan—if and when we decide to operationalize a reparations strategy. However, as noted at the beginning of this section, the key factor that separates CARICOM and US Afrodescendants is the land factor. It is this factor that we turn to in the next section.

III. Reparations for Nation Formation

We live with the historical knowledge that, from the outset, many who wanted an early dissolution of slavery considered transporting Black American slaves to a variety of locations where they were expected to establish their own governance and economic systems. For example, the ACS, which began in 1820, played a major role in transporting freed slaves to Liberia and Sierra Leone, where some success was experienced in building livable conditions in a new and independent land.⁴ President Abraham Lincoln wanted to send freed slaves to territories that are now known as Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Costa Rica as part of what was called the Chiriqui Plan (Lusane, 2011). While that plan failed, some 400 US Afrodescendants were transported to an island off the coast of Haiti called Île à Vache under a modified plan. However, that adventure failed disastrously.⁵ Finally, the January 1865 Special Field Order No. 15, which was issued by General William Sherman, is well known (New Georgia Encyclopedia, 2014). Otherwise known as the plan that would have extended to certain former slaves “40 acres and a mule,” the order was revoked by President Andrew Johnson in the fall of 1865 before it could be fully operationalized. Here again, land was at the heart of the plan to address the US Afrodescendant problem in America. Given this history, and the fact that many US Afrodescendants—still today, 50 years beyond the Civil Rights Act of 1964—remain at the periphery of American society, it is logical that we should revisit early plans and consider seriously the option of forming our own new nation on our own land.

⁴ See Burin (2008), who indicates that the ACS was responsible for transmitting nearly 11 thousand Black Americans to Africa over the period 1820 – 1860. The book also discusses the development of the colony, and later independent nation of Liberia, and the role of the ACS in transmitting former slaves to Sierra Leone.

⁵ At least 35 of the emigrants died; the remainder returned from the island to the US after about one year. (Lusane 2011)

More recent calls for land for nation formation are apparent in Muhammad (1965), the Republic of New Africa (BlackPast.org, 2014), and Browne (1993). All three sources advocate for nation formation through reparations in the form of capital grants to address historical injuries inflicted upon US Afrodescendants. Each of these calls for land emphasize that the land in question should be located in North America.

As an impetus for nation formation, we should ask the following questions about living in America: Why should US Afrodescendants experience the deaths of Travon Martin, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and Tamir Rice in a 21st century world? If life is most important, then this is the worst side of America. Almost as bad, we should ask: Why is the US Afrodescendant unemployment rate usually at least twice the European American unemployment rate (Robinson 2009A)? Believe it or not, unemployment can lead to many adverse social and health outcomes—including death.⁶ While we are at it, we should keep asking why: (1) Why are over 27% of US Afrodescendants living below the poverty line (DeNavas-Walt and Proctor, 2014)? (2) Why is it that US Afrodescendants make up less than 14% of the nation's population, but over 36% of the prison population (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014A and 2014B)? and (3) Why does the median European American household have over 12 times more wealth than the median US Afrodescendant household (Moore, 2014)?⁷ Why are there only 23 US Afrodescendant-owned banks in the US (Federal Reserve Board, 2014)? Given that we are nearly 150 years after the Civil War and 50 years beyond the Civil Rights Act of 1964, we must ask: How long will US Afrodescendants endure these disparities. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1965), in his famous “Our God is Marching On” speech asked the question “How long?” and concluded “Not long.”⁸ But the aforementioned facts make transparent that, even after all of this time (nearly 50 years after his assassination), US Afrodescendants are still experiencing severe indignities and injustices in America.

Unfortunately, when one considers that the world of technology is hurtling along at breakneck speed, and that technology continues to replace human labor, there is good reason to project that US Afrodescendants will be marginalized increasingly in the future—especially those who fail to train in STEMAI (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and artificial intelligence) fields.

If this projection proves true, then not only can we expect to continue experiencing the aforementioned indignities, injustices, and disparities, we should expect worse. In fact, we have concluded that US Afrodescendants are engaged in an unfair economic game. European Americans possess the bulk of economic wealth and power, and they—expectedly—bias the economic game in their favor. Because the first law of nature is self-preservation, we should not

⁶ Abel and Bernanke (1992, p. 580) cite a 1982 study by Dr. Harvey Brenner who concluded that an increase in the unemployment rate of one percentage point maintained for six years is associated with 20,000 additional cardiovascular deaths, 920 suicides, and 650 homicides.

⁷ Moore (2014) provided by email message a special tabulation of net worth by race from the 2013 *Survey of Consumer Finances*.

⁸ The refrain “How long? Not long” was part of the speech that King delivered on the steps of the capitol in Montgomery after the successful Civil Rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama on March 25, 1965 (King, 1965).

expect them to relinquish economic control.⁹ However, we have one option, and it is probably the most realistic one: Opt out of the game and start one of our own.¹⁰ Specifically, US Afrodescendants should consider forming our own nation.

Starting a new nation is not such an extraordinary event. A check of nation formation statistics reveals that the trend is toward the formation of more nations. For example, over 50 years ago in 1964, the United Nations (UN) cited a membership of 115 nations. In 2014, the number of UN listed nations had grown to 193.¹¹ Since the turn of the millennium, the following are among the new nations that have formed: Timor-Leste and South Sudan. On the horizon is Palestine, which is being recognized as a nation increasingly around the world (Bilefsky and de la Baume, 2014). Indeed, with a population of 43 million plus (a nation within a nation), why should US Afrodescendants not extend the trend by initiating our own new nation?

At the same time, we must acknowledge that the top 60% of US Afrodescendant households are not faring poorly—at least with respect to incomes—and may wish to remain a part of the US.¹² However, improved outcomes for incomes do not automatically translate into improved outcomes for wealth. (As we highlighted above, the median European American household has over 12 times more wealth than the median US Afrodescendant household.) We also cannot forget the aforementioned fact that over 27% of US Afrodescendants live in poverty. Going forward, a decision by US Afrodescendants to opt for nation formation may hinge on whether the top 60% of households agree that it is important to not ignore the adverse conditions that the lower 40% of households are experiencing. If such a decision is taken, then nation formation could be an answer.

In the next section, we assume that US Afrodescendants opt for nation formation, and we highlight the components of a reparations plan that should be designed to achieve this outcome.

IV. A Broad Three-Point Reparations Program for US Afrodescendants

In our view, a reparations plan for US Afrodescendants should be part of a broader long-term strategic plan, and should be based on an approach that is akin to a three-legged stool: (1) Land; (2) resources; and (3) international support. In this section, we describe each of these three broad components.

Land

When considering land for a US Afrodescendant nation, it is important to consider: (1) The advantages that may be produced by such a venture; (2) the unlikelihood that US Afrodescendants will emigrate to Africa *en masse*; and (3) the most favorable location for this land. In addition, in this subsection, we raise the issue of organizing a leadership team to address these concerns.

⁹ In addition, the nature of a strategic game does not allow for European Americans to permit US Afrodescendants to experience an economic rise, which would place us in a position to do to them what they did to us (tit-for-tat) historically.

¹⁰ Both Hahn and Solow (1995) and Huch and Oechssler (1999) conclude that unfair behavior should be rejected in strategic games if stable equilibria are to be derived.

¹¹ These data are found on the UN's Internet Web site at <http://www.un.org/en/members/growth.shtml>.

¹² See Robinson (2014B), p. 2, footnote 3.

Which are the primary advantages and disadvantages of nation formation for US Afrodescendants? The acquisition of land for nation formation will enable US Afrodescendants to shape independently favorable governance, economic, and social systems. Given a proper design and strong control of the nation, we can control our destiny. Most importantly, although we may experience initially a quality of life that is somewhat subdued compared to the life styles that we have enjoyed in the US, we should be able to live lives in the new nation that are free of the indignities, injustices, and disparities that we have endured for nearly 400 years in America.

CARICOM's reparations plan calls for assistance with resettling interested parties on the African Continent. We believe that US Afrodescendants will reject such a location for our new nation. In our view, the continent is a vast historical distance away and somewhat irrelevant for US Afrodescendants for this purpose today. There is no doubt that a connection remains. However, most African countries are undergoing their own crises currently (addressing economic development, ethnic fractionalization, health-related epidemics, and their own battles to become financially independent from their old colonial masters who still maintain solid control of many of the African countries). Consequently, it does not appear to be a very favorable period for trying to reunite large diaspora populations with Africa, and it will, therefore, not likely be the location of a US Afrodescendant nation.

The looming questions concerning land are “where” and “how”? Robinson's (2009B, pp. 52-102) *Chosen: Black America's Calling*, includes an essay entitled “Point Zero Nation Formation.” The essay includes an analysis of how and where land for US Afrodescendant nation formation might be identified and secured. Given the limited space provided for this article, we do not repeat that analysis here. Suffice it to say that US Afrodescendants should consider forming a new nation on what is now US soil—assuming that such an arrangement can be negotiated. At least four guiding principles should govern the selection or acceptance of land to accommodate a new US Afrodescendant nation:

1. The land (square kilometers) per capita should be at least consistent with that existing for world nations that reflect a population size similar to US Afrodescendants' at the decision point, and should factor in potential population growth;
2. The land should embody water (cubic meters) per capita at least comparable to that existing for world nations that reflect a population size similar to US Afrodescendants' at the decision point, and should factor in potential population growth;
3. The land should include direct access to at least one (existing or potential) deep water seaport to facilitate trade; and
4. Climatologically, the land should be viewed as favorable under decision-point conditions and into the future when the effects of global warming are expected to materialize.

Although this abbreviated analysis presumes land for a new nation on a consolidated/contiguous basis, US Afrodescendants should not exclude from consideration forming a nation on a distributed land basis. That is, it may be favorable to form a nation based on US Afrodescendants occupying land at various locations. Keep in mind that Native Americans comprise a small but significant

group in the US by occupying “reservations” that are distributed across many states. US Afrodescendants may seek to follow suit, and form a nation by extending our occupation, and gaining ownership, of significant areas within major US cities and elsewhere.

We conclude this subsection by pointing out that the “land acquisition” problem can be addressed by a “planning technical working group” (PTWG). The PTWG should arise out of a broad effort to develop a long-term strategic plan for US Afrodescendants (including a reparations strategic plan), and should include the brightest minds that we have among us from all academic fields. The task of the PTWG is to entertain and resolve all key issues that are associated with nation formation. We will discuss the PTWG further in the next subsection.

Resources

The essential nature of reparations is the transmittal of resources to the injured party mainly in the form of capital grants. Therefore, it is expected that US Afrodescendants should request resources as part of any reparations program. But what types of resources should be requested? As opposed to citing amounts and specific, detailed resources, we use this space to highlight broad categories of resources that will be integral to US Afrodescendants’ efforts to form and develop a new nation.¹³ Generally, we address resources for the formation and operation of the PTWG, which was mentioned in the previous subsection, and we discuss resources required to achieve outcomes that the PTWG must shape, including: (1) Planning the development of the nation; (2) constructing infrastructure; (3) ensuring that the nation can feed itself; and (4) planning the nation’s broad economic framework.

If US Afrodescendants decide that reparations will be used to form a new nation, then one of the first requirements is to form a PTWG to plan and execute the nation formation process. An immediate task of the PTWG is to identify leadership that will bring the new nation into existence. Consequently, after organizing itself and attending to its own resource needs, the PTWG should design a plan for selecting US Afrodescendant national leadership and for obtaining monetary and other resource requirements for that leadership to fulfill its role.

The task of planning the development of the new nation will also fall to the PTWG. Specifically, we envision a phased 20-to-40 year process (or longer) over which US Afrodescendants will build and occupy the nation. The PTWG should plan the development of this new nation, detailing what will be constructed when, and who will be allowed to enter the new nation over time as it is developed. A core component of this development process is the availability of skills to conduct the development. Therefore, transmission of knowledge (mainly STEMAI) must be part of the reparations package. As noted in Part II, this is one point of CARICOM’s 10-point program (point 9) that is directly relevant for US Afrodescendants. Of course, resource requirements for development must be delineated by the PTWG or its charges.

Infrastructure formation will be a key component of the nation’s development process. It seems reasonable that reparations would or could include agreement on the part of the injuring party(ies) to provide materiel and equipment for infrastructure development. The PTWG can specify the

¹³ Some of the earliest research on reparations focused on estimating a monetary value that should be paid to US Afrodescendants. For example, see Simon and Neal (1974).

volume and value of materiel and equipment that should be made available to Afrodescendants to construct infrastructure for the new nation.

How will US Afrodescendants produce food for consumption in the new nation? The PTWG must assess the nature of the new nation's land and climate in order to determine the land's and climate's ability to produce food for the nation. While it may be possible to import food for consumption, it may be in the nation's strategic best interest to organize itself to produce food for itself—whatever the cost. Technology has made possible the production of high volumes of food stuffs without vast acreages of fertile soil. If warranted, then the PTWG must ensure that the nation has access to this technology to ensure that the nation can feed itself.¹⁴ Obtaining this technology will require resources.

Another area of concern that the PTWG must take up is the nature and framework of the new nation's economy. Today, we do not observe many US Afrodescendants in key leadership positions at important Federal Government institutions that plan the US economy; e.g., the Federal Reserve Board, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Therefore, the PTWG must organize provisions for the transmission of knowledge that is required to design and operate the macroeconomy. Clearly, this is a topic that the PTWG must address if the new nation's economy is to stand a chance at being organized to operate efficiently and effectively—from technical, economic, and dynamic perspectives.

International Support

As the third component of a US Afrodescendant reparations program, we envision a call for the injuring party(ies) to provide extensive international support. This support would entail clearing the way for recognition of the new US Afrodescendant nation in all important international organizations: The UN, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, etc. Thinking futuristically, such memberships should include guarantees of appropriate inclusion of the new nation in global space and marine exploration and colonization efforts. Access to, and full membership in international organizations should benefit the US Afrodescendant nation on a variety of fronts. Importantly, US Afrodescendants' unique world perspectives can serve as significant value added for these organization. Our perspectives may be sufficient to help these organizations innovate—adopting new approaches for solving old and new problems.

V. Conclusion

While the Reverend M. J. Divine, (aka Father Divine) was one of the first US Afrodescendants to demand “retroactive compensation” for American slavery (Divine, 1951), earnest talk of, and serious scholarship on, reparations for US Afrodescendants began in the 1970s. The 2001 Durban Conference on Racism brought reparations front and center for the gamut of African and Afrodescendant populations (United Nations 2001). Nevertheless, it took CARICOM to play the role of David in challenging Goliath (European colonialists). CARICOM has taken great pains in

¹⁴This assumes, of course, that we have not developed alternate means for sustaining populations—beyond traditional foods.

justifying its claim for reparations and in developing its reparations program. If CARICOM is successful in forcing European courts to rule in its favor, then it will be a major milestone, and it will open the reparations floodgates.

To be sure, US Afrodescendants should not stand by idly awaiting the court ruling, but should begin developing our reparations case and program now so that we can ride the reparations wave. In doing so, we should be careful to use whatever reparations are secured to achieve long-lasting change. Because reparations, in and of themselves, are a big step, it is appropriate that our reparations program represent a big step. Probably the biggest step that US Afrodescendants can take is to forge ahead with nation formation as the centerpiece of our reparations program.

Indeed, only through nation formation can US Afrodescendants separate ourselves from our oppressors and give ourselves a fighting chance to complete the uphill climb toward self-respect as a people. We do not yet realize the complete psychological and physical damage that have been inflicted upon us through slavery. What we know is that we are not whole. Reparations would be a fine gesture to initiate the healing process. Clearly, the best reparations program for US Afrodescendants is different from CARICOM's, and we should not fall victim to the fallacy of composition. Nevertheless, receipt of reparations resources and their use to acquire land and to construct a new nation will enable US Afrodescendants to enjoy some of the same delicious fruits of true freedom that CARICOM may come to enjoy.

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