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When Black Self-Help Goes Wrong...



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America's Hypocrisy On Black Self-Help

A CORRUPTED IDEOLOGY

While watching The O'Reilly Factor one evening, host Bill O'Reilly, speaking with his guest, comedian and political commentator Dennis Miller, said, "There are a lot of far left people in this country that want America to loose the war in Iraq", and that "They put their ideology ahead of the welfare of their country." Selah, and say Amen!

This comment immediately brought me to understand why America and many other countries in the world are so corrupt and without positive and proper human values. Without a guiding ideology, there are no restraining boundaries that must be followed in attempting to maintain the status quo, an appropriate social equilibrium or advance a cause.

If it's in the best interest of the welfare of the country to go into other countries uninvited and throw out governments that were once America's friend –i.e., a regime change- the O'Reilly's statement says that's fine; to lower gas prices leading up to and through elections and then immediately, thereafter, push them up is, again, OK, as long as all of this serves the welfare (i.e., interests) of the establishment –rich, white America and its Negro and newly “diversified” buffers.

It historically seems to be in the lopsided best interest of the Welfare of America, i.e., the establishment, to destroy, co-opt, suppress or contain every independent, self-help economic empowerment movement that Blacks have ever given birth to in this country since the dark days of slavery: the National Ex-slave Mutual Relief, Bounty and Pension Association (first Reparations Movement led by Cassie House), National Negro Business League (economic self-sufficiency through enterprise, founded by Booker T Washington); the Universal Negro Improvement Association (self-help economic nationalism, founded by Marcus Garvey), Nation of Islam (economic self-sufficiency, founded by Wallace Fard Muhammad), Black Wall Street of Tulsa, Oklahoma (organized entrepreneurship building business enterprises), Black Panther Party (social justice and community economic development, founded by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale), National Black United Fund (self-help through community venture philanthropy, as originally founded by Walter Bremond); and Black United fund of New York (a unique and proven model of applied venture philanthropy for self-help economic development and empowerment, founded by Kermit Eady). Thus far, the destroyers have prevailed in the maintenance of the plantation status quo.

In the growth and development of the Black united Fund of New York, the thickest

glue that BUFNY had was between Larry Barton and this writer, Kermit Eady, in the commitment to mission and the highest integrity. Regardless of any disagreements or shortcomings we may have had, personal integrity was always number one. Thou Shall Not Steal!

This fundamental principle against thievery –integral to the ideology- kept BUFNY always trying to exhibit high ethics, integrity and character, as our mission was always, first and foremost, to protect BUFNY and its constituency. It was our mission to break the chains of dependency forever. As we grew and tested the limits of BUFNY, as an economic development engine using payroll deductions contributions –(a voluntary self-tax), the biggest growth took place because we were teaching people and actually demonstrating that we could take our own internal (Black community) dollars and build towards economic self-sufficiency and independence, thereby breaking the status quo of dependency. This would mean a seismic shift in the basic structure of the American economic system, a fundamental change that had far reaching implications that the powers-that-be clearly recognized. It had to be stopped, as history has shown, by any means necessary.

BUFNY had established a new and proven development paradigm that would open the floodgates to independent economic empowerment for Black people in this country and around the world, and the white-power structure and its “loyal” Negro doorkeepers –the plantation status quo establishment- knew it.

As with any significant undertaking in the form of a socio-economic experiment in a hostile and oppressive environment, necessary risks had to be and were taken and, indeed, some setbacks were encountered and “honest” mistakes were made, but, most assuredly, nothing that could not be corrected and overcome. It’s the nature of the game when venturing into “uncharted waters”. Considering the restricted conditions under which we work, and the challenges encountered, the successful opening of public and private sector payroll deduction markets and pioneering economic

development accomplishments, so that Black people could give to and help themselves and not have to beg any other group, were, indeed, most significant achievements. This was self-help at its most effective best. It set the tone when others still preferred to maintain their comfortable ties –or chains- that held them in complete check on the plantation.

This opening of payroll deduction markets by BUFNY has now stretched across the country for white and other ethnic charities, yet here in New York, organized and independent Black charities are non-existent in this lucrative market place. This setback is thanks to the untruthful and unethical former Attorney General, now New York State Governor Eliot Spitzer, now self-proclaimed as “The F*#king Steamroller”. Even United Way of New York City has abandoned its long-time mission, as a purely financial “pass through” organization, and recently said that they too will stop giving grants and switch to a direct services delivery model, ironically including economic self-sufficiency! What are Black charities going to do now for funding? Sink or swim is the message, a challenge that must be met, once they are abandoned and kicked off the plantation. Even the National Urban League, the long-time safe and captive darling of corporate America, and the NAACP are moving to incorporate economic development, as a key component of their new-found missions. Is this an attempt to escape from the plantation? Careful now! Eliot “The Destroyer” Spitzer, as Attorney General, completely demolished the Urban League of Northeastern New York when it attempted to execute a well-received, significant large-scale economic development program involving commercial property. Thou shall not take the path of independence, without permission!

BUFNY, leveraging dollars raised almost exclusively from Black people, and working with Verizon Communications to install fiber optic cabling, developed over 100 “hi-tech ready” affordable housing units and another 300 well-constructed and managed units in Harlem and Brooklyn, NY; built two business information and technical services centers (modeled after the successful Kinko’s/FedEx franchise); saved Black-owned lands from the tax collectors in South Carolina; purchased a radio station to

broadcast programming designed to teach economic empowerment throughout the country; established the only Black Victim Relief Fund after the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks; and still managed to make grant payouts to non-profit, federation member organizations. BUFNY also managed the New York City Combined Federal Campaign, a jewel in the United Way stronghold by establishment tradition, breaking fundraising records for three consecutive years; established the Black United Fund of New York credit card -the only one of its kind in the country which was completely ruined by the gang ruling at the National Black United Fund; and BUFNY gave more than \$15 million in combined grants, technical assistance, and direct program services over its 25-year history. Was this something to be applauded or seen as a threat to the status quo?

The answer came with “The Destroyer”, Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, and his handpicked band of Negro puppets that included one Harlem and four Nassau County Republicans –all Black, of course. They decided, with the obedient and requisite silence of all the local Harlem establishment politicians (aka Black “leaders”), that it would be against the well-being of the status quo and the welfare of the state for Black people to truly practice and participate in the concepts and practices of self-help. We do not practice what we preach here! If this country had a truly positive ideological framework from which to work, we would have a far more humane and, indeed, progressive society benefiting all.

Our Black politicians are deeply entrapped in the white-power structure and a non-ideological state because they seek and are satisfied with the crumbs they get for themselves and, supposedly, their communities. When Spitzer destroyed BUFNY, our Black politicians were no where to be seen or heard from. They still aren't! As a matter of fact, then State Senator David Paterson boldly lied, just as Spitzer has done, in front of witnesses, "I am going to hold legislative hearing against Spitzer!" Paterson then proceeded to go to bed with The Destroyer and today he is Spitzer's Lieutenant Governor. Now was that a betrayal? Was it The Big Payoff, oops! “Tradeoff”? Just what was that? One thing for sure, Paterson is now silent as a lamb (and safe?) in the

den of a wolf!

When we look at definitions of Ideology, we see two which say: a systematic body of concepts, especially about human life or culture; and a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual group or culture. What are the characteristics of the American ideology? Does it operate within an established framework or does America make it up as it goes along? I submit it is manifested as the latter in ever-changing disguises, which simply means that although America has a body of laws founded falsely upon high moral values and ideals, we, as a nation, operate corruptly and attempt, but, ultimately, fail to show and prove that might makes right.

Unfortunately, that means that this country will always be in turmoil because it operates with no moral boundaries and is, through deceit, betrayal and arrogance, rapidly headed towards a repeat of the era of assumed Divine Rights of Kings, when terror was the chosen method of persuasion.

When a country operates without controls, it leaves open to the powerful, the right to change and make up new rules as it pleases, as long as it benefits the welfare of the rich, self-anointed oppressor class. A truly positive ideology would cause to be in place a set of humane and enlightened principles and values that signal what we do stand for, and here are the boundaries and that we will not cross them. However, without an Ideology, there will always be corruption, deceit, betrayal, arrogant power and eventual ruin.

Think about this Mr. O'Reilly, all Americans understand what the cost would be if American troops are withdrawn from Iraq after its shock and awe reign of terror; however, Americans are also wrestling with the corruption, lies and deceits of the American government in today's fabricated political climate of warfare. Will it ever stop? Yes, but surely not voluntarily by the perpetrators. America's true history is starting to catch up with her. In prophetic words "The chickens are coming home to roost"! The masses now see clearly that blowback is here! This is the dilemma for

most people in this country and, particularly, Black Americans. If we continue to cover up over and over again, then the laws will always be in favor of the establishment and they will change the laws at a whim, so long as it favors them and maintains the status quo. This is America's hypocrisy!

Bringing it down to the local level of terror, one can ask: how could a police department justify heinous murders by the firing of 41 bullets at Amadou Diallo and 50 at Sean Bell, et al –all unarmed? Easy! There is no positive or respectful ideology within the police department towards the lives of Black people. These police fiefdoms have self-protecting processes and mechanisms that, by design, do not work for Black people because the premises of the operating ideology are corrupted. Historically and culturally, America has inculcated in whites the belief that Blacks are inferior to them; therefore, the ever-present hatred exhibited by some whites –too many- against Blacks is as American as apple pie!

Our people are brainwashed to believe that a police officer's life has more value than that of an ordinary citizen. As Brother Alton Maddox reminds us: Remember Dred Scott! How ridiculous! The killing of an unarmed civilian should warrant the most thorough of “independent” investigations, with the direct involvement of the governor of the state. Where are you Govern “The Steamroller” Spitzer? You are, again, missing in action when it comes to supporting justice for Black people, but not their destruction. However, you are right there when the issues involve protecting the Jewish community.

Remember your disparate treatment of the World Jewish Congress compared to the Black United Fund of New York. It is classic prejudice or even racism out of the closet! It's there and has erupted. Please spare us the “anti-Semitism” card, if that is what you are even thinking about playing.

Then again, maybe your obvious protection of your own is not all bad. You and the Jewish community seem to have fared very well, but too often at our expense. The relationship is without reciprocity! The Black community should wake up and smell the aromas of its own power and do the same. They say “Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery”. God knows it may even up the game!

This writer submits that when most young men or woman seeks to become a police officer they do so first, to get a “good” job; and secondly, they feel some kind of acceptance in the club and even, perhaps, a powerful rush of excitement by having a real gun to replace the digital game shooter. The thought of stopping crime was not a high agenda item when they became an officer. Even the young Black officer is not very conscious vis-à-vis Black people; therefore, there is very little difference between the Black and white officers ideologically. The persons that choose to join the police force know exactly what they are getting into when they sign up. They knew that they may be shot at and possibly killed, and they are getting paid accordingly. Should some crimes be stopped or solved is a sometime by-product of why people become police officers. White cops will always be afraid in a Black community. You can't train and rectify that at the police academy. It is an ingrained problem within American society. A short-term experiment, with significant potential is offered, as a recommended way out of this morass: let experienced, conscience Black police officers take the primary and majority responsibility to patrol Black communities. Also the same for whites and their communities; but, they do that already.

Don't they? Let's remove the symbols of the white “occupation” forces that periodically unleash acts of terror and death, for which they are not punished and show no remorse due to the hypocritical corruption of “the system” of justice.

Don't misunderstand! This writer is concerned about all life, police and civilian, but to put more value on so-called “trained” police officers lives than on those of civilians

is again outrageous. The racial problem was not created by Black people; therefore we should stop saying there is racism on both sides, as Black folk have never had the freedom or power to be racist. Racism was created and institutionalized by the so-called "Founding Fathers" and perpetuated by generations of white power and privilege to this very day.

Some how, this society will have to adopt a just and spiritual ideological framework, if it is going to stop its headlong slide to self-destruction. Just maybe, however, that's what is needed to allow for the second coming of a "born again" America. Surely a new Black development fund is needed and can be resurrected and made real again. The know-how is here and ready, but is the spirit and will of the people to believe and make it so?

What say ye?

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