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“No African Americans take to the streets in protest to demand Whites to love us more. We demand a behavior change!” Rev. George C. Gilbert, Jr.

May 2021

NEWSLETTER

WE CELEBRATE THE MOMENT BUT WE ARE STILL FOCUSED ON THE MOVEMENT

We celebrate the guilty verdict of Derek Chauvin in the murder of George Floyd. While we celebrate the moment, we remain in the movement and realize that there is still work to do. Even throughout the trial over George Floyd’s murder, killings by police have mounted throughout America. Since the trial began, more than three people a day have died at the hands of law enforcement. At least 66 people have died at the hands of law enforcement nationwide, with Black and Brown people representing more than half of the deceased.

Rev. George Gilbert and The Center for Racial Equity and Justice is calling for action. On May 6, the Thursday before Mother’s Day, we are calling for 1,000 Mothers and Grandmothers to meet us to answer George Floyd’s cry for “Momma!” and to demand for the President, Congress, and Senate to swiftly address policing in America.



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THE EDUCATION QUESTION?

Recently I was invited to watch a panel discussion on YouTube involving several African American professional workers. These professional men and women all relatively successful in their field of endeavor talked about the keys to their success in the



workplace and in life. When asked, what was the key to their success by the moderators of the panel discussion, they essentially noted two key factors, (1) their focus on working hard and (2) their educational achievement. Clearly both of these factors are noteworthy

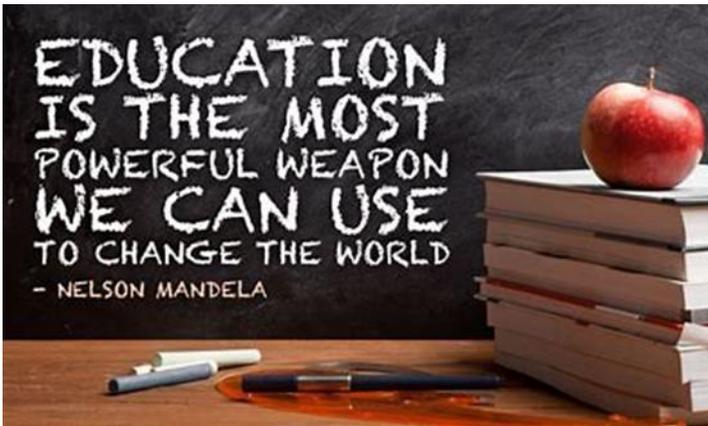
and essentially a key to individual success in America as dictated by the powers that be in America. However, their discussion on the criticality of education to their career success caused me to ponder, “is this really true for African Americans in America”? I noticed when the moderators asked the panelists to discuss their background each panelist noted the degree of education they had achieved. When answered each panelist cited that they had a bachelor’s degree and multiple graduate degrees (two or more). As each panelist discussed and noted the number of college degrees they had attained, it struck me as odd that their level of success in the workplace did not necessarily reflect or equate to the level of time and finances invested in achieving this additional education. When asked by the moderators why it was important to get this level of education each panelist noted that they believed it was good for their career advancement and job security. What I found odd about these answers is that not a single panelist noted that they desired this education to branch out and form their own business or that they needed it to assist / change the economic conditions for African Americans in



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this country. Each panelist was working hard in a White dominated system trying to advance and survive in this system and hoping that the White overlords of their workplace would acknowledge their greatness and advance them as loyal good employees. Clearly this intent is noble but, in my view, it should not be what the focus of education should be about for African Americans.



In listening to this group of highly degreed and great employee panelists none seem to be driven to go out and create their own world of opportunities. These panelists, seem to be driven not to be owners of the process and true power brokers but good team players needing acknowledgement from their mostly White bosses. Back to the education question. Now with all this supposedly good education

why would these panelists (all tremendous people) not think in this fashion? The answer to me appears to be that the education we African Americans receive is one that teaches and causes fear in us to shy away from the challenge of striving for power, true independence and development of the African American community. As I was listening to these panelists discuss their success and triumphs in the workplace it reminded me of something I heard many years ago from one of the great African American historians regarding education in America. This great historian noted that in America based upon the way African Americans and White Americans have been conditioned from birth you can actually have an African American student and White American student sit in the same college business class and yet these students can actually receive two different educations. The African American student walks away from the business class thinking he/she needs to get a good job while the White American student walks away saying I need to create my own business. The African American view is a worker / dependent one and the White



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American view is one that I must get and achieve power and be a power broker.

So, the question is “what is the purpose of education and why do we need it”? In my view, the purpose of education is to achieve power to control one’s destiny and to be able to manage it properly for the benefit of oneself, family and community. Considering the massive problems, the African American community is confronted with i.e., high unemployment, crime, bad schools for our kids, health care, mental care and a host of other issues way too numerous to mention it appears the more education we get the worst our situation gets. Clearly those of us that have all this college education are failing the test and for the most part wasting our time and resources so that we can be good workers and not strivers for power– unreal! Note, I include myself in this category of failing the test as I have two college degrees and for the most part have not accomplished any significant achievement that has been instrumental in changing the overall fortunes of African Americans in America.

Finally, this is the most important point, those in power make the decisions workers only follow them and those in power promote workers, workers get promoted. If we are going to get all this so-called good education let’s become power brokers and wielders of power where we can actually make a difference in our lives and the lives of African Americans. Let’s become destiny takers vice destiny waiting!



Jerome D. Davis is an Historian of African People and Graduate of Grambling State University with B.S. in Business Management. He also holds a Master of Science in Business Administration from Strayer University.



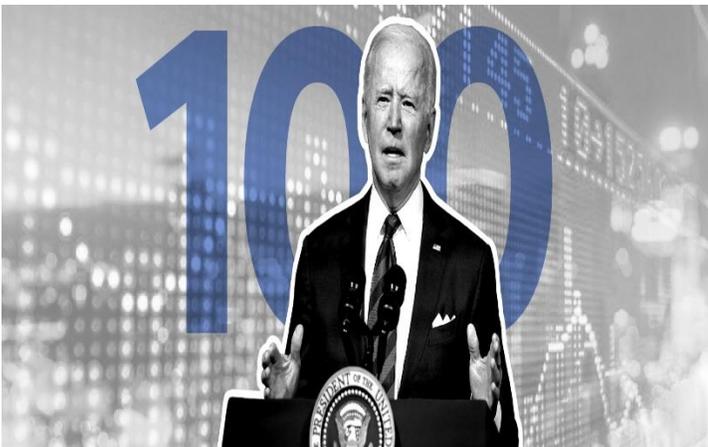
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Biden’s First 100 Days: Black America Largely Neglected Again

By
Natalie H. Rozzell

“And especially for those moments when this campaign was at its lowest — the African-American community stood up again for me. They always have my back, and I’ll have yours.” - President Joe Biden’s Victory Speech, November 2020



It has been over one hundred days since President Biden took office on January 20,

2021. Many promises were made to the American people and many executive orders have been signed, but not one specifically addresses the major issues that are plaguing Black America: the ever-widening Racial Wealth Gap and Police Brutality and Injustice.

Out of 61 promises to implement in the first 100 days, only 25 have been kept. Under one of Biden’s headers called Inequality, only one out of twelve promises have been implemented. Two specific promises that affect Black America - Begin criminal justice reform and Address systemic racism in U.S. institutions have been partially met, however the policies are milquetoast at best. The criminal justice reform order, which calls out prison conditions and the need for rehabilitation and access to a better life for prisoners who complete their time, has no information on how this should be accomplished. And the systemic racism executive order which addresses equity in government and U.S. institutions only outlines a study without specific steps forward. (ref: <https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-donald-trump-climate-iran-nuclear->



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Recently, the Senate passed a bill to combat anti-Asian hate crimes. In the bill, provisions and grants for the training of law enforcement to recognize hate against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as well as the introduction of anti-Asian hate public education campaigns are some of the policies outlined. This bill resoundingly passed 94 to 1, yet detailed legislation for Black American Descendants of Slavery is considered too controversial or incites “white resentment” according to Obama. Where was the uproar stemming from “white resentment” when the anti-Asian hate crime bill was being passed? Where were the excuses from others on why this bill could not be passed? Not only did it pass, but it passed in record time. The H.R. 40 bill that introduces a study on Reparations for Black Americans was originally proposed in 1989, but has yet to fully pass in 2021.

Regarding police brutality, there are many trials going on that are holding police



accountable for their actions. However, very few laws are being proposed to address the plight of the next George Floyd or Daunte Wright. Yes, setting precedence in court is crucial, but in order to save lives, policing in general needs to be reformed; starting with weeding out racism. The need to establish a



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Bad Actors database so officers will not just move on to another county’s police department after having offenses and incidents elsewhere. We need strong convictions, sentencing and remediation for those police that continue to mistreat and even kill without reprimand. We need to pass laws that enforce thorough background checks of police and military who have a history of violence and racism in their civilian lives.



When will lawmakers pass exact legislation for us to combat our issues? Thirty-one billion dollars have recently been dedicated to Native Americans with a fully fleshed out

implementation plan to accompany the funding. Yet often policies that may apply to Black Americans are coupled with those of other minorities and do not properly address the disadvantages, discrimination and inequity unique to Black American Descendants of Slavery. It is time for our people to vote for those Congressmen and women who will fight for us and our needs. Too often the Congressional Black Caucus has been silent when it comes to issues that plague us. The office of the President is included.

Black people not only secured the victory for Biden, but also were instrumental in flipping states like Georgia blue. Biden and the Democrats have refused to keep their promises too many times. At this juncture, the Black vote is essentially the only power we truly have in this country, as racism and economic disparities continue to confront us each day. Yet we give our votes away to those who promised us little and deliver on even less. Now they are methodically trying to water down and dissolve our voting rights and remove what little power we do have. Now is time to act to protect our communities and the



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people whose ancestors built this country. Reparations is the only answer to the host of issues that challenge us. Set asides, access to capital, land grants, specific protections under the law, low interest loans, free college or vocational education programs and cash payments are just a few of the proposals that need to be implemented to shrink the racial wealth gap and act as recompense for slavery and Jim Crow.

But how did we not know that Biden would largely ignore us in his first 100 days? How did we not know that the Congressional Black Caucus would be ineffective yet again? When you give your vote to someone who does not definitely and explicitly call out our agenda items, how did we not know they would not advocate for us? When we were pushed into “Vote Blue No Matter Who”, how does one hold the politician accountable? Applying pressure is the only thing that politicians will respond to, and the consequences of not meeting our demands should be a thorn in their side during every election cycle. If our needs are not met, they will not receive our vote. It is simply transactional.

This is not an ‘I told you so’. This is not a ‘Let’s wait and see’. This is not a ‘We’ll hope for the best’. This is not a ‘Maybe next time’. This is a point blank Call to Action. Now is the time to ensure our voices are heard.



Now is the time to make certain our votes are counted. We must put fire to the feet of our legislators and our President. We must demand specific laws, policies, and executive orders for Black American Descendants of Slavery. NOW!



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181 Black People Have Been Killed by Police Since George Floyd's Death

BY KATHERINE FUNG ON 4/20/21

Since George Floyd's death last May while in Minneapolis police custody, 181 Black people in the U.S. have been killed by the police, according to data from research group Mapping Police Violence. Of the 966 police killings reported since May 25, 2020, the database shows that Black people account for 18.7 percent, despite making up 13 percent of the U.S. population, according to the Census Bureau. Police killings of white victims made up 37 percent of the total deaths. White Americans are 76.3 percent of the population, the Census Bureau says. Mapping Police Violence's data also indicated that of the total police killings since Floyd's death, 11.7 percent were Hispanic victims, 1 percent were Native American, and another 1 percent were Asian

or Pacific Islander. The race of the victim was unknown in 359 deaths.

Last summer, Floyd's death ignited racial justice protests across the nation, with millions taking to the streets to demand police reform. Some also called on local governments to defund their police department by reinvesting in other community services as a way to address police violence against people of color. Despite the renewed push for law enforcement changes, data from Mapping Police Violence shows that police are still killing at rates similar to past years and that 319 people have been killed by police in 2021.

On Tuesday, a jury found former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin guilty of all charges, including murder, in Floyd's death. A video of the arrest shows Chauvin kneeling on the Black man's neck for over nine minutes while Floyd told officers he couldn't breathe. In the 1,127 police killings recorded in 2020, only 16 cases, or about 1.4 percent, resulted in a charge against the offending officer. Of the officers identified by Mapping Police Violence,



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at least 14 had shot or killed someone in the past.

Over time, police killings have decreased in cities. However, these deaths have been on the rise in suburban and rural areas. And while some cities have seen substantial reductions in police killings, like Chicago, other cities, like Denver, have not. Of the 181 police killings of Black people since Floyd's death, the highest number of killings occurred in Florida, with 19 victims, followed by California, where there were 17, and Texas and Georgia, which each recorded 13. Of the police killings documented in 2020, traffic stops were listed as the initial police encounter in 121 deaths. On April 11, a few miles away from the Chauvin trial, Daunte Wright, a Black man, was shot by police during a routine traffic stop in Brooklyn Center. Wright's death has once again reignited demands to end police brutality.

WASHINGTON — A fierce wind in Washington on Wednesday seemed to herald what could be a moment of change for the nation.

'Keep pushing forward!' | DC religious leaders offer next steps after guilty verdict in Chauvin trial

Author: Bruce Leshan

A rally called "Can You Hear The Cry" is pushing for the passage of George Floyd Justice in Policing Act before the anniversary of his death on May 25. On the steps of the East Washington Heights Baptist Church, more than a dozen ministers from across the region offered next steps after the guilty verdict for former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin in the murder of George Floyd.

"We've come because we want our land to be healed of the sickness of racism, Rev. Kip Banks said. It was an inter-religious call to catch the winds of change and keep moving forward. "Yes, we are here to celebrate this moment, but rest assured, this is just a moment in a movement," Rev. Keith Byrd Sr. of Zion Baptist Church said.



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This group of religious leaders is organizing a rally on Freedom Plaza on May 6, the Thursday before Mother's Day, for mothers, grandmothers, aunties, sisters and daughters all pushing the Senate to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. They say they want to see it passed before the May 25 anniversary of Floyd's death, which they said would be a lasting legacy to a martyr in the nation's long fight for racial justice. They're calling it the "The Hear The Cry Rally," echoing George Floyd's plea for his dead mother as he struggled to breathe under Chauvin's knee.

The ministers celebrated the jury, but also critiqued the prosecution's argument that Derek Chauvin was just a bad apple and not an example of why American policing needs an overhaul.

"How many of you would buy a plane ticket from Delta, Frontier, or Southwest, if they said only a few of our pilots are bad apples?" Rev. George Gilbert of Holy Trinity United Baptist Church asked. "How many of us will buy hamburgers from McDonald's, Wendy's, and

Burger King, if they said only a few of our burgers are rotten?"

Key Senate leaders from both parties say they plan to meet to see if they can craft a deal on police reform. Both Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) and Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) are working to find common ground. Both sides say they're sincere, but whether they can move forward in these deeply partisan times remains unclear.

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