



“Nation Formation: Part II”

We are reminded that June is the month for weddings, which is fortuitous because we seek to wed Black Americans to the “nation formation” concept. At the same time, it is important to remind Black Americans that we descend from ancient Kemet; i.e., by our very nature we are scientists—chemists. We may have many “trial and error” rounds as we attempt to find solutions; ultimately, however, we succeed.

The goal of Part II of this essay is to respond to the questions:

- Is Black American nation formation a viable alternative?
- What difficulties are likely to be encountered during such an effort?
- What are the downsides to nation formation?

The first question is just for completeness. The history of Black American efforts to establish a nation state that were highlighted in Part I of this essay constitute *prima facie* evidence that the concept is viable. To buttress the argument, consider the formation of East and West Pakistan and Israel in the second half of the 1940s; the independence won by the former Soviet Republics during the 1990s; and the founding of Timor Leste in 2002. What more do we need to confirm the rational nature of an effort to become independent.

Almost all, if not all, counselors and friends will advise an abused spouse to exit an abusive relationship. Do you consider Black Americans to be in an abusive relationship? Why is our unemployment rate generally twice that of White’s? Why is Black household net worth, on average, a very small fraction of White household net worth? Why do Black Americans comprise 40 percent of the prisoners in the U.S. when we account for less than 14 percent of the population? We could continue highlighting adverse statistics, which cannot be explained without factoring in racism and discrimination, but we believe that you get the picture. We are in an abusive relationship from which we need to exit.

We are likely to encounter the following types of difficulties as we seek to exit this relationship:

- The most important difficulty is identification of a location to establish our nation.
- Many Black American “haves” will attempt to prevent the exit because they benefit from serving as middle men between wealthy Whites and moderate income and poor Blacks.

- White leaders of the nation’s commercial sector will seek to prevent the exit because we are very important customers. The fact of the matter is that, without Black American consumers, many U.S. firms would not be profitable.
- Other firms for which we work at suppressed wages would be forced to pay higher wages and would be less profitable if we ceased supplying our labor. These firms would also oppose the exit.
- Black Americans on the dole are likely to oppose the exit because, as Malcolm X predicted, they will say: “We got it good with massa. We don’t have to work. We can stay home and watch TV all day—especially ‘Oprah’. We get food stamps. We love us some Kentucky Fried Chicken. Where we gonna get that kina chicken if we leave Merica?”

None of these difficulties should be sufficient to thwart nation formation efforts. We can identify and acquire land for the nation (see Essay 3, “Point Zero Nation Formation” in *Chosen: Black America’s Calling*, 2009); those who stand to lose by the absence of our consumption will learn that commerce involves risks; and those who want to remain with massa can—or they can learn to produce even better chicken in their own restaurants in a new nation.

If we adopt a short-term perspective, we may conclude that there will be serious downsides to nation formation. A longer-term view will reveal that the short-run view is erroneous. For example:

- Nation formation over an extended period will permit Black Americans to sell assets owned in the U.S.—without creating adverse shocks to markets—and to acquire new—probably higher-quality—assets in the new nation.
- The loss of position and pseudo power in the American context can be exchanged for positions of real power in the new nation.
- *A priori*, while it may appear that movement to a new nation that must be built creates great physical inconvenience, such inconveniences can be constrained to a minimum when the nation formation process is managed properly—i.e., staggered over a generation or more.
- As for leaving Asian, Hispanic, Native American, and, yes, White friends behind, they can visit with a passport. Depending on the nature of the constitution, they may even be permitted to join you in the new nation.

We hope that you will agree that, what at first appears daunting can often become quite manageable given sufficient thought.

In Part III, we’ll discuss the many benefits to nation formation.

Join us in exploring the possibilities.

By Dr. B.B. Robinson

Dr. Robinson is an economist and Director of BlackEconomics.org. (06/12/10)