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“Focus”

There has been opposition, no doubt. But, after over 400 years in America, it seems that Black Americans should have achieved greater progress. Why do we continue to find ourselves to be the brunt of jokes and the victims of violence that goes unchecked and unavenged? Yes, “vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.” But the Lord is distant, and he endoweth us with the tools to use to look after ourselves as an adult people.

Why do we find ourselves in this predicament today? We place the matter squarely at the source: leadership. Yes, some Black American leaders have had good plans to move our cause forward. Others have not. In either case, the proof is in the pudding. We are where we are because our collective and individual leadership is found to be lacking. The leadership has been unscientific.

What would sound and scientific leadership prescribe? Keep it simple stupid; keep it focused!

What is our primary problem? We are hurt on all fronts because we are being abused. How should we respond to such hurt and abuse? Take every action to stop the hurt and abuse in the future. How do we accomplish this outcome? Separate, protect ourselves, and position ourselves to never be hurt or abused again.

As for the first proposed action, many argue that separation is not an option. While this is not correct categorically, let us assume for a moment that it is, and then move on to the second action—protect ourselves. How do we protect ourselves?

First, we recognize our world to be material with an operating system that is mainly financial or monetary. Therefore, our first and primary focus should be to control our own financial system. Why, because with monetary resources, one can usually acquire what is required, or one can use monetary resources to produce what is required.

Simply put, we need to control our own system for managing money (financial intermediation), which is typically banks. That is why it seems so preposterous to invite Black Americans to start businesses that require financial capital, without first inviting us to pool our financial resources to finance businesses. As it is, we develop great business ideas, take them to an outside bank, which denies start-up and/or operational financial capital. Later, we find that the same bank to which we appealed has financed an outsider to initiate the same type of business using our business plan.

Even if one is able to start a successful business and accumulate significant monetary wealth, if your money is in someone else's bank, then they can deny you access to your wealth for reasons of their choosing. So, our first thrust should have been, and should be, to own and operate our own banks.

History will reveal that, once upon a time, Black Americans owned many banks. However, today, there are less than 25 Black American-owned banks. By not pursuing Black banking persistently we have guaranteed our own economic failure. By actively working to destroy Black banks, the US economic system has denied Black Americans our freedom and protection.

Even as a second or third grader, we knew from watching the old TV Westerns that every functioning town had a church, a sheriff's office, a saloon, and a bank. Why have we defied this simple fact and refused to build, support, and maintain banks in our own areas of influence?

Second, we recognize that we are more than material. There is another key aspect to our being—mental. To be protected, we must control our own thinking—and to the extent possible, how others think about us. The mind control machine of the 21st century is the media. We applaud those Black Americans who have ventured into media operations. A caveat is that some of us who have had an opportunity to be prolific and powerful in the media have not taken care to generate and broadcast positive images of Black Americans. Therefore, around the world today, it is not uncommon for Black Americans to have to face the effects of adverse stereotypes concerning Black Americans.

Consequently, the second step in our protection is to control the media operations that have access to our areas of influence. Quizzically, you ask: “How do we achieve this outcome?” The answer is simple: “Do not purchase media devices that you cannot control—such as televisions and radio.” We all know that there is endless media on the Internet that can be reached by computer or mobile device. However, you must search purposely to view such media. Importantly, we should have and use our own watchdog body that can assess continuously media and provide a stamp of disapproval or approval.

When we form banks and their 21st century equivalents and use our resources to protect ourselves physically, and control the media that we consume, then we can be successful in protecting ourselves from hurt and abuse.

A key leadership body that can move us toward a protected state is the Black Church and other Black religious organizations. We would venture to say that 99 percent of Black religious organizations worship monotheistically. Therefore, theoretically, it should be easy to break down barriers to collaboration between these organizations. It is an open secret that the Black Church is nonfinancial asset rich, and that its revenues are robust. Nevertheless, much of the Black Church is doing little to help Black America achieve a protected state. It would be very favorable if Black churches would discontinue inviting Black Americans to invest in new church edifices; rather they should invite Black Americans to invest in Black banks, which can help protect us materially/physically directly, and mentally indirectly.

It is time for Black Americans to focus before it is too late. Let us establish a laser-like zeal for forming financial institutions (banks) and controlling the media that we produce and consume so

that we can protect our bodies and our minds. Failure to do so guarantees our certain destruction; and the Black Church, with all of its leadership capabilities and potentialities, will be found guilty.

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