



**BlackEconomics.org<sup>®</sup>**

## “Our 2023 Future”

Looking to our future that begins with 2023, certain concerns may take center stage—including prospects for Reparations and all that it portends.

Our contemplation of Reparations should take on full-bodied meaning. It goes beyond the first Black persons to legally obtain Reparations in the US (Brom & Betts vs. Ashley, State of Massachusetts) in 1781, and it transcends General Sherman’s Special General Field Order #15 in 1865. To comprehend the Reparations requirement—its justification, its meaning, its purpose—we should consult sources that provide a comprehensive perspective.<sup>1</sup>

Given a solid background on Reparation, we should attempt to answer the question: What form should Reparations take? There is something exciting about the idea of receiving a cash windfall. But “haste makes waste.” Also, there could be bamboozery in 45+ million Black Americans receiving a hefty deposit in a financial account.

Going back to the background on Reparations, we should contemplate its initial intent: To give Black Americans a solid stake

in America with the power to produce for ourselves and others and to carve out a livelihood in the most wide-reaching global economy. Knowing that the source of “all” production is land, we should realize that it is not reasonable to receive Reparations without there being a sizeable land component.

We are reminded of the statement made by some Black Americans: “My color, but not my kind.” This is a horrific sentiment in the context of the Black experience in America. What we should never forget is that, once upon a time, we were all (Black Americans) forced to live together and agreeably in a social system that was functional and satisfactory.

This historical reality should force conscious thinking about the most favorable approach for configuring a land arrangement for Black Americans. Is a return to segregated spaces preferred? Has integration been favorable for us? To what extent do truly integrated areas exist in the US? Also, as we wrote last week, we should take a moment and “...identify which of the following racial/ethnic groups are solidly aligned with Black America in our quest to resolve socioeconomic inequalities:

---

<sup>1</sup> The two such best sources today are: (1) W. A. Darity, Jr. and A. Kirsten. Mullens (2020), *From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the Twenty-First Century*; and (2) *California Task Force to*

*Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans, Interim Report*;  
<https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ab3121-reparations-interim-report-2022.pdf>.

Africans, East Asians, South Asians, Hispanics (White or Afrodescendant), Middle Easterners, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, or Whites (American or European)?”

Our bottom line should be that: (1) We send down the generations an edict that we can never let America off the hook for her historically egregious wrongs against Black Americans; and (2) in payment, we want Reparations to position us for a take-off that will generate the highest probability of socioeconomic success. We certainly do not want to look back three decades after Reparations—as we did at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and three decades beyond Reconstruction—and see that a “great promise” has passed us by.

The year 2023 is full of promise for our future. Let us be deliberative and conscious about the choices that we make, which will shape our future.

As we contemplate the prospect of Reparations and prepare for it, we must know that this process is all about, and for, us. Let us make cooperative and collaborative Reparations decisions that will bring us a spectacular future.

We deserve, want, and need a future where we achieve peace and prosperity in America—the kind that has been dreamed about for over 400 years. Let us be willing to plan and work for that future. It must be a future in which we belong because we are with those with whom we belong.

B Robinson  
123022

### -- ###