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“\$27 Million Is Not Enough”

The late George Floyd’s family settled with the City of Minneapolis for \$27 million. In our view, this is not enough recompense for Mr. Floyd’s death. Many cities have paid settlements for wrongful deaths at the hands of police. These payments are insufficient to halt the murders of Black American men and women by the police.

Relatedly, in “[The Economics of Fear](#),” we discussed the fact that White America has a deep-seated fear of Black America because of the dastardly deeds that the former has executed against the latter. This fear is a driving force behind White America’s perpetual effort to subjugate and oppress Black America—never removing the knee or foot from our throat fearing that a bold voice and action will come forth.

Black America recognizes the nature of White America’s fear, but we do not take enough action to reinforce that fear. It is true that in [Exodus: A Book for Black Americans Suggesting a Way Out and Up](#), which was released earlier this year, we said:

...Many of the unsolved murders of White Americans may reflect the silent and unacknowledged acts of Black men and women of taking justice into our own hands on dark roads, streets, and rooms all over this nation. (p. 110.)

Given that Black America is seen as a potential source of violence, every effort is made to force us to adopt a nonviolent approach when we seek to motivate change. We are taught to believe in the success of Mahatma Gandhi’s nonviolent movement without being taught about Bhagat Singh, Subhas Chandra Bose, and the role of the Indian National Army in driving out the British. We are taught to believe in the nonviolence of MLK without mention of the role of the Deacons for the Defense and Justice and other militant groups during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement.

In a hypothetical world, George Floyd could serve as a starting point for action. A suckling babe with awareness would conclude that Mr. Floyd’s death was flat out murder. In a world of justice (*Lex Talionis*, “an eye for an eye”), there is no doubt that the murderer should be, as Malcolm X so aptly put it, “taken to the cemetery.”¹ In this case, justice should not occur on a dark road, street, or room. It should not be unacknowledged. It should be overt, out front, and center. Here we are

¹ Malcolm X (aka, al-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) made this statement as part of a speech, “The Ballot or the Bullet,” which was delivered on April 3, 1964.

not talking about 25 years or life imprisonment for the crime, which the courts may or may not mandate. We are talking about real justice.

In this hypothetical world, if a White American judicial system does not exact true justice, then a Black American judicial system could exact true justice. The Minneapolis Black area of influence (community) could convene a court, conduct a trial, render a verdict, and then implement it. If this became a widespread practice, then White police would think at least twice about murdering a Black man or woman if the police knew that a bullseye would be on their forehead for the rest of their lives.

Although we are not in such a hypothetical world, we have at least one excellent option: An economic boycott/sitdown strike. It is well known that widespread and concerted boycotts and strikes were successful in generating favorable change in India and South Africa in the past. Such action could prove to be successful now in the U.S.

We have written about the success of even half-hearted boycotts over the past few years.² Imagine BLM, NAACP, NAN, NUL, and key Black Church organizations all collaborating to engineer a massive boycott and sitdown strike. On the boycott front, we could restrict ourselves to purchases of essential food, medical items, and health-related services. If we conducted a sitdown strike, then those who could afford to do so could engage in a pandemic-like lockdown. If we could time this action properly and maintain the stance for just a couple of weeks, then we would draw strong action by White America to ensure justice for Black America when it comes to police murders.

As the nation transitions more toward a system where only major owners of wealthy corporations, oligarchs, and plutocrats matter, we must take action to obtain and maintain certain key powers.

- The power to ensure equal justice under the law.
- The power to engage in fair/balanced economic transactions.
- The power to exercise freedom of speech and movement.
- The power to thwart racial discrimination that prevents access to financial capital to build improved financial and economic systems in our areas of influence.
- The power to obtain our share of government tax revenue to build improved areas of influence, including better educational and infrastructural systems.

To fix a firm grip on these powers, we need to give due consideration to acting now.

Black America has tried many approaches unsuccessfully to secure freedom, justice, equality of opportunity, and equality of outcomes. The strategic action described above would produce improved outcomes all around. Failure to act now guarantees increasingly adverse socioeconomic outcomes for Black America in the period ahead.

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² See [“Black Boycott of Retail Sales Successful Again,”](#) and [“We Made a Difference.”](#)