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“Permission Granted”

Purpose of this release: To examine Black America’s *modus operandi* in pursuit of improved wellbeing and to urge adoption of a new *modus operandi*.

We begin this Analysis Brief with a cinematic and a biblical example concerning permission.

For experts on *Star Trek* (cinematic and television renditions) it is easy to recall the pervasive, innocuous (subtle), and repetitive scene that establishes an unchallenged hierarchy of power when Captain James T. Kirk occupies his command post on the bridge of the Starship Enterprise. It goes like this: “Someone” (elevated or low in position of authority) asks Captain Kirk, “permission to come aboard sir?” You have already rendered in your mind Captain Kirk’s response, but for completeness we provide it here: “permission granted.”

For religious scholars and laypersons alike, the following biblical passage rolls off their tongue when a need arises to differentiate between childish, juvenile, and adult-like behavior: “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man [woman], I put away childish things.” (I Corinthians 13:11) The parallel intended here in connection with the previous paragraph is that children are taught to “request permission.” However, we all know that the threshold between childhood and adulthood is marked by shedding the requirement to request permission.

An important question to pose is: “Where can we identify in Black American (Afrodescendant) History the point when Black Americans crossed the threshold from childhood to adulthood? Clearly, we were best characterized as infants socioeconomically during the *ante bellum* era. In the *post bellum* era, especially during Reconstruction, we exhibited rapid, exceptional, and immense socioeconomic growth toward adulthood. When White America observed that growth, purposeful action ensued to, if not halt Black America’s growth altogether, then to stunt it and preclude Black America’s arrival at adulthood.

Today, many Black American individuals and small collectives reflect the semblance of arrival into adulthood socioeconomically. We say “semblance” because even an unskilled sleuth can identify the important “hand(s)” behind the growth that enabled such arrival; i.e., the growth did not occur organically or independently. For completeness, we are forced to admit that Black Americans not included in the just-described group still languish in an infant-like state.

By any measuring stick, 160 years since Emancipation should be long enough—and many times over—to achieve adulthood. However, due mainly to decisions by Black American leadership, we are viewed as a “Baby People.” We continue to ask permission to grow socioeconomically because we fail to: Comprehend fully and respond appropriately to our socioeconomic environment, recognize our stunted growth, its related causes, and take appropriate responding actions.

What would be, should be, and are, signs that Black America has a mindset to overcome barriers that now prevent our socioeconomic arrival as adults? In a word, there is too little “Kujichagulia:” a *Ke Swahili* word that is properly translated into English as “self-determination.”ⁱ Therefore, deliberate and purposeful movement toward self-determination would be a definitive sign of Black America’s intention to achieve adulthood and take command of its current and future outcomes on all fronts and, thereby, its wellbeing.

We believe that Black American self-determination cannot be achieved successfully in a “racially integrated” environment because: (i) Such an environment never existed in the U.S.,ⁱⁱ and (ii) due to knowledge of current and future expected roles of resource scarcity in economies, efforts to reduce the Black American population have always been underway, and we can expect such efforts to accelerate and intensify in the future.ⁱⁱⁱ

Ideally, in a separate environment, Black America would be required to operate as a nation with a government.^{iv} Proper governance requires accounting for, at a minimum, coverage of the societal functions that most governments worldwide recognize as important.^v Existing nations serve as clear evidence that it is not impossible for Peoples (homogenous or heterogeneous racial and ethnic groups) to develop and operate self-governance systems in their independently identified territory when external intervention is constrained. Hence, Black American People can certainly develop a separate governance system for ourselves given (or having taken) territory necessary to achieve this outcome.

The fact that Black America has not arrived at adulthood largely because of inadequate leadership that has not produced self-determination infers that our leadership continues to ask our opposers for permission to achieve what we deserve. We keep jawboning without any forceful or definitive action to move forward on this very important requirement. If there can be states of Israel, Timor Leste, and South Sudan (the latter two are newly created nations since the turn of the millennium), then there certainly can and should be a Black American state.

We believe that Black Americans should minimize our concern with current leaders in traditional roles that are tightly linked to a socioeconomic system that is not controlled by us and that we will likely never control. Rather, we should focus on building new leadership in a form that can guide us most favorably using the following strategic actions:

- Identify our own resources (existing and new) that can produce a wide-reaching communications mechanism that can be used to help Black Americans achieve a mental state that values *Kujichagulia* and its related benefits and costs.
- Use the communications mechanism to secure from Black Americans affirmative sentiments concerning a desire to enjoy the benefits of *Kujichagulia* and a system of governance in an independent state, and commitments to participate vigorously and persistently in achieving the just-mentioned outcomes.

- Use the communications mechanism to identify and operationalize a decision-making process that is most beneficial for us. (Keep in mind that today's technology opens the door to novel and effective methods of decision making that are absent from traditional leadership models.)
- Enable the identification of existing and/or new strategic (immediate, medium-term, and long-term) plans that move us from the *status quo* to our desired positions along a plan path that leads to a most favorable state.
- Be committed to “working the plan,” and updating and revising it as required to reach goals along the entire strategic plan path.

The new leadership model should incorporate a “mindset” that we are not required to seek permission to perform actions that can ensure our growth into adulthood because such permission will never be granted by our opposers. Our history in the U.S. is unarguably more than permission enough, and it confers upon us mandates, rights, duties, and responsibilities to perform the above-mentioned steps toward self-determination in our own self-interest and that of our posterity. “When in the course of human events....”

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End Notes

ⁱ We believe that self-determination (*Kujichagulia*) is a prerequisite for Black American growth into adulthood for the following reasons: (1) Such growth would never be permitted by dominant socioeconomic groups if Black Americans continue to exist as a subaltern group; and (2) It is only under a self-determination arrangement that Black Americans can identify a proper leadership model to guide our growth, develop long-term strategic plans for growth, form appropriate new institutions or reform existing institutions that enable required growth, have the authority to implement plans, and enforce leadership's decisions related to the entire growth process.

ⁱⁱ The so-called “Racial Integration” effort in the U.S. is more appropriately defined as a process of “Super Imposition of Superiority.” See pages 18 and 19 of Brooks Robinson (2015), *A 3rd Freedom*. BlackEconomics.org: <https://www.blackeconomics.org/BEAP/ATF.pdf>, 555 KB). (Ret. 101725)

ⁱⁱⁱ Economists typically mark the future with an expectation of increasing scarce resources; however, there are exceptions. For Black Americans, U.S. History is replete with accounts of efforts to reduce our population (from outright murder, to death through the criminal justice system, to scientific experiments, to family planning efforts including sterilization programs, and to our use in the nation's wars). Notably, for the past seven decades, while the U.S. Black (Alone) population has not declined, its rate of growth has slowed for all but one decade. Also, it is common knowledge that the role of males in the U.S. socioeconomy is changing significantly, but particularly for Black males who are widely depicted as social pariahs. That is, the declining significance of Black males is a critical issue in Black America today. Accordingly, it is logical to expect that responses to increasingly scarce resources will include efforts to reduce those who consume resources, especially “undesirables.”

^{iv} See “Why We Need Our Own” (<https://www.blackeconomics.org/BELit/whyweneed081825.pdf>, 219 KB) for insights on why it is important for Black Americans to perform the full scope of governance duties and responsibilities. Also, see the *Long-Term Strategic Plan for Black America (LTSPFBA)*; https://www.ltspfba.org/LTSP/fin_ltspfba_071223.pdf, 1.5 MB) that interprets *Kujichagulia* to mean that we seize full responsibility for our governance across all governmental functions that span the breadth and scope of life that we live today and are likely to live for the foreseeable future. (Both publications cited Ret. 101725).

^v The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development led the development of the Classifications of the Functions of Government (COFOG). A glossary of COFOG terms can be found at the following European Community's Eurostat website: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Classification_of_the_functions_of_government_\(COFOG\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Classification_of_the_functions_of_government_(COFOG)) (Ret. 101725). A more detailed presentation of COFOG appears as an Annex to Chapter 6 of the *Government Finance Statistics Manual*, 2014: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/2014/gfsfinal.pdf> (Ret. 101725).