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“Should Black America Strike Too?”

Strikes are in Black America’s DNA. We have a long, treasured, and illustrious history as members and leaders of labor unions—their organizational formation, operations, and their strikes.

Therefore, it is puzzling why Black Americans have never conducted widespread (national) sit-down strikes to advance our liberty.

After narrowly avoiding potentially economically disastrous national strikes by railroad and UPS workers earlier this year, the US is currently fretting over strikes by workers who manufacture automobiles and who provide key inputs to the television and movie industries. These strikes are producing harmful economic effects not only for the US, but also for other countries. We should not forget that since the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, nurses engaged in strikes in multiple municipalities; and earlier this year, our morning routines were disrupted in certain locations as Starbucks workers struck.

It is interesting that Black Americans give no thought to unifying behind Civil Rights or political protests—often in a widespread (national) manner. But we have never

organized and launched national successful economic strikes. Here we are referring to general “sit-down” strikes.¹

The *status quo* serves as open and clear evidence that our Civil Rights and political protests have not been perfectly effective in generating desired outcomes—at least for the majority of Black Americans. On the other hand, labor strikes are often very successful in producing desired, but constrained, economic outcomes: e.g., higher wages and salaries; better working conditions; and improved health- and retirement-related benefits for a union or group of workers. Consequently, it is logical that Black America should look to sit-down strikes as a key strategy to secure broad improvements in our socioeconomic conditions in the US and to achieve greater liberty. Sadly, we have not.

Why not?

First, Black American leadership has never been unified or unselfish enough to propose adoption of a national sit-down strike strategy.

Second, the US Government and the country’s business interests have conspired to

¹ This topic is discussed on pages 5-8 of a 2016 BlackEconomics.org monograph, [21st Century Protests: A Handbook for Black America](#).

implement a set of strategies that keep a sufficient proportion of Black America (mainly the Black elite and upper middle class) satisfied and unwilling to “rock the boat,” while the remainder of Black America languishes in very unfavorable conditions. In this context, it is critical to remember that Black America’s elite, middle class, and poor are mere midgets when compared to White America’s elite, middle class, and poor.

Third, our foggy futuristic vision clouds the realization that we can develop a sit-down strike strategy that prepares us for, and limits, potential painful/harmful short-term effects, while generating very beneficial longer-term outcomes.

Instead of organizing political actions leading up to the 2024 elections, it seems logical that Black America would organize a national sit-down strike to complement the seemingly favorable open window for labor actions. The [*Long-Term Strategic Plan for Black*](#)

[*America*](#) offers many important demands that could serve as a rationale for sit-down strikes. Reparations could be at or near the top of the list of demands.

However, before adopting a sit-down strike strategy, Black America must land on the same page with respect to our plans and demands.

Suffice it to say that, if we do not seek to leverage a sit-down strike strategy to secure important Black Americans requirements in the near term, then we may soon pass the point of relevance for this strategic threat. More technology, AI, robots, and immigrants are arriving rapidly that will, sooner rather than later, render a resounding “No” answer to the question: “Should Black Americans Strike Too?” At that time, Black America will have become less relevant on the labor front, and very much less of a strategic threat generally.

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