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"Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime where of the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

The United States Constitution, XIII Amendment

I remember back in the summer of 1994, I had overheard a brother that had to be in his early forties confabulating with some others about the "so-called" luxurious Town and Country living conditions of prisoners in the Michigan Department of Corrections courtesy of America's taxpayers. According to a newspaper article or an editorial letter that he had read in the newspaper, it claimed that prisoners were playing golf, riding bikes, watching cable television and eating steaks -all on the tab of taxpayers. As he was going on captivating the others with anger and disgust about what he had read, I was listening to him as I said to myself, "Here is another person 'lost in the sauce' of lies, half truths, and deceit from America's oldest propaganda machine: the newspaper." I had given the brother common courtesy in not interrupting him as he went on with his ranting of misinformed information about prisoner's life in the Michigan Department of Corrections. Once he was finished, I responded by simply saying, "I was locked up for five years, and I ain't never got a steak." I then explained to him and the others of what was actually going on in prison, including the prisoners' Inmate Benefit Fund that actually paid for the "Put-Put" miniature golf course, the bikes, and the "basic" cable -that is needed because of the fact that the prisons are located in rural remote areas.

And I did not leave out the fact that the "Black and White" televisions that the prisoners were purchasing with their own personal money -and not by taxpayers as the brother assumed, cost over a \$100. After hearing that, everyone who were listening became shocked, including the misinformed brother. They did not know of any of the information that I had told them. They were completely unaware. I had concluded my informative and enlightening conversation by saying that it was a gubernatorial and state legislative election year so, it was time to put the political spin, twisted with a pack of lies on the public about prisoners and prisons in order to rally up votes.

Over the years, I have seen several documentaries of television, including Court TV's "THE SYSTEM" that gives the taste of prison life but it does not tell the unscripted and un-cut story of how it has physically and psychologically affected everyone involved. In fact, most of the documentaries that I have seen on television are just flat-out lies that has given a sanitized version on prison life just to appease the viewers and advertisers for Nelson rating scores, instead of given the harsh reality of the System, and from all angles. Therefore, by excluding this, once again, people are being robbed of the truth and left with more misconceptions, mysteries and phony illusions with the classic Hollywood spin. It seems that the media only wants to dwell on the daily violence of stabbings, gang beefs, prisoner assaults on other prisoners or staff, the life of homosexuals, stool pigeons, and so forth , but staying relevantly clear of matters that are just as electrifying and eye raising as the issues that have been presented on these documentaries and programs. Such issues like administrators and officers abusing and torturing prisoners, embezzling and fleecing money from taxpayers, the deliberate exploitation of prisoners, the lack in rehabilitating prisoners (and the serious ramifications in the lack of it), the corrupt clandestine collusive systematic practices that conducted in the criminal justice system, and the evil and double-dealing

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crooked politicians who create and enact laws that in fact enriches countless of American's corporations, while at the same time, destroying the many lives of others, just to name a few. Just like slavery in the past -or with the cases of Abu Graib and Guantanamo Bay Prisons, America does not particularly care for the world to see its realities, its truths, and its dark closets of calculating evil, barbaric and savage behavior towards humanity. The same America that has for years praised and fully supported powerful international humanitarian organizations like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International who has openly pointed out prisoner abuse and deplorable living conditions in ~~some~~ prisons around the world, yet when these same organizations identifies and report cases of abuse in the American's prison system of its prisoners, some of America's politicians responded instead with praise and concern, but with defensive harsh unfounded, and discrediting criticism, with an angry final disrespectful statement of, "Mind your own business and let America handle its own!" How thoughtful and supporting.

I had decided to write this book -which is my first but not my last- for several reasons: 1. to inform concern individuals with the truth and reality, without spin of the truth of prison, the so-called justice system and etc.; 2. to opened the eyes of individuals who are unaware of the harsh realities of a system that has been built, not to deter crime and stop criminals, but in fact to exploit the poor and people of color for the sake of creating employment for rural America and to cleverly extract billions of available government dollars for corporate America to get their parasitic corporate welfare hands on; and 3. to explain, show and encourage concerned individuals that there are positive and productive solutions in correcting this totally failed project.

Additionally, there were personal reasons in me writing this particular piece as well. First, because of a sister who was my former college basic writing instructor at Wayne County Community College who seen that spark of genius in me and my creative writing skills. This gave me the courage to write a book. A book that I hope she will definitely be proud of.

Second, because of another sister, Ms. Simpson, -the Wayne County Jail GED instructor- who had listened to my concerns and frustration in regards to the state of African Americans, including incarceration and the lack of proper education for prisoners. I still remember her responds to my concern. She simply told me to write a book about it. And I remember my response to her suggestion -as I had the facial expression of "Are you serious!!!". I had told her, "What a book!!! Nobody want to read about this!!!" But ten years later, the idea came to mind from the same concerns and frustration that I had ten years prior.

And finally, -but just as important, if not more important- the concerns that I have for the people in society particularly, people of color who are clearly unaware of what is happening each day in the corrections and the criminal justice systems in America. People, who could not imagine or ^{phantom} the pure acts of evil that has been carried out against our precious sons and daughters all at the hands of government and its subordinate.

The Abu Graib and Guantanamo Bay torture, rape and abuse scandal, the Bush Administration's deliberate denial in recognizing the detained prisoners as Prisoners of War under the Geneva Conventions treaties, and the deliberate denial in allowing the prisoners to have a fair day in court in order to prove their innocence in not being so-called terrorist or insurgents has placed a microscopic world eye on America and how its democracy truly works towards humanity. Now, the world had the opportunity to see a taste of what the poor and people of color goes through everyday in this American styled democracy. When I had seen those gruesomely vile photographs of the detained prisoners in Abu Graib prison (the same publicly described

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torturous death house that was ruled by Saddam Hussein) on CBS's news documentary, 60 Minutes -who originally reported the photos, it did not come to any surprise to me at all, because at the time I had seen the report, I was residing in one of America's training camps, Ionia Maximum Correctional Facility -also known as I-Max, a super max prison, who guards were carrying out some of the torturous and abusive acts towards prisoners including, the lynching of an African American man. So, I unequivocally related, felt and imagined the hell that those men and women were going through. The world was rightfully shocked and sickened with disgust after seeing those terrible photos of abuse and torture, and it left a question upon us all, "How could a humane person or people do such evil, barbaric acts of savagery?"

And the answer is easy, American's prisons are the breeding and training grounds for this atrocious wild animal behavior. When I seen the photos of the frightened men being attacked by dogs while on a leash, handle by military guards, it reminded me of a video tape recording that I had seen on the news back in 1997/98 of several afraid African American young men who were being forced to snake crawl on the floor and through a gauntlet of Texas correction guards with very aggressive K-9s viciously barking and snarling just inches from the young men faces. According to the news report, it was claimed by Texas Correctional Administrators that it was a training exercise tape. At the time that this reported training tape was discovered, President George W. Bush was the Governor of Texas and the United States Attorney General, Antonio Gonzales was his attorney. So, you have to wonder if this training tape was the precursor of what was in store for the world.

It also did not surprise me that some of the individuals who were involved, were caucasian males, who were correction guards, and the fact that the individuals said that they were instructed in carrying out these vicious savage animal acts towards human life. They were just doing what they were trained to do in prisons in America. It is the same with the Bush Administration, as they denied and so-called denouced the acts of some of our fine men and women in uniform, describing them as rouge guards acting alone, thus leaving them to hang -or as we call it, "Left them hangin'". This type of conduct happens in both the American prisons and police departments everyday. The administrators will explicitly or imply to their subordinates that it is okay, -or cover up- and take the ~~stance~~ stance in "seeing no evil, hearing no evil, or speaking no evil" thus, placing the classic law enforcement's "Wall or Code of Silence" in discovering what actually happened in an incident or incidents. If the case was too serious, and the subordinates can not stand the heat, fingers starts to point, and usually towards the "Higher Ups" -the administrators. And of course, the administrators will simply protect themselves and deny any responsibility in the condemn subordinates' actions. That is the system.

I thought that the year of 1984 was a very significant year in starting the book and the reason for this is simple, -as you will see in the first chapter, "The System"- I believe this is when the silent attack on urban America and its African Americans started. The "Silent War" that the poor and African Americans were unaware of was in fact being carried out on their lives and in their communities. With the introductory of the new deadly drug, "crack" cocaine, the upsurge in handguns and sophisticated military style assault weapons, severe unemployment, the start of the new ~~transmitted~~ deadly disease HIV/AIDS, a new era in pop culture, and other situations and circumstances that were beyond the control of the poor clearly created a very unhealthy, violent, hostile, and evil atmosphere for everyone who were directly and indirectly involved. At the time these catastrophic elements were invading the African Americans' many urban communities

☐-to abuse and assault prisoners;

☐-monkey; ☐-transmitted

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across America, the federal, state, and local governments were creating and passing laws and policies, along with propaganda campaigns in order to successfully carry out their modern time slavery agenda that had been strategically put together in their many think tanks. After the Civil Rights Movement that had politically and socially rocked the Nation, the powers that be had to find an answer to the problem -and new problem- that they were having with African Americans particularly with its youth and the civil rights babies who were being born in the 1960s and 1970s.

The obvious concern was America feared the fact that the civil rights youth, who lived through the pain and terror, and seen the savagery in white racist America as it was being carried out on non-violent African Americans and caucasians who not only supported the civil rights movement, but also participated in the cause as well, now would symbolically teach their offspring not to fear the white racist establishment and fight the government. This teaching would clearly break the cycle and lock hold of terrorist institutional oppression that had been in place for over several centuries by slave holders, traders and others including the infamous Willie Lynch -who had instructed and taught slave owners and others in the so-called appropriate and effective way in breaking and maintaining continuous fear in African Americans forever. That type of teaching would had clearly torn down and created total havoc and disrupted peace on America soil, and therefore, it had to be prevented, at all cost. So, the answer to the problems were to create situations and circumstances that were so clandestine to African Americans and other, that about the time everyone became aware of what was happening, it would had been too late in making serious efforts in eradicating the problem. It has been publicly reported that the America's official goons, The Central Intelligence Agency, popularly known as the CIA, had been involved in the massive distribution of cocaine -among other criminal activities- in order to finance the Reagan Administration's backed war in Nicaragua back in the mid 1980s and allowed Panama's former leader, General Manuel Antonio Noriega -who at the time according to a news published report, was receiving over \$200,000 annually from the CIA- to ship tons of cocaine to America in order to so-called obtain secret information about communist Russia and its government spying organization, the KGB, just to name a few. In allowing this massive cocaine problem to plague and ravage the urban American street, the American government had once again used African Americans and others as "sacrificial lambs" out this time, to save America from this so-called enemy, Communism. The same communism that America has been fighting against for over 60 years. The same communism that has created some of the deadliest wars in world history including the Korean War and the controversial Vietnam War. The same communism that America with its propaganda placed fear and hatred, just in the mere fact of hearing the word, with its American citizens, which was later used to help destroy the Civil Rights Movement and assassinated some of our greatest African American leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. -a brother who spoke out against the Vietnam War and gave the powerful and explosive speech exactly one year before his assassination, denouncing the American corporate sponsored Vietnam War. That same communism that caused America to aid the Mujahedin, the Afghan resistance movement, and 911 terrorist suspect, Osama bin Laden with billions of dollars, supplying military weapons, and military training in response to the Soviet's invasion of Afghanistan in December of 1979. In fact, it is the same communism that America has given hundreds of billions of dollars to -Russia- in order to save its fallen and unstable economy, borrowed and now owe hundreds of billions of dollars to -China, and now it is helping to build their country's economy out of American's corporation greed and destroying the quality of life of its own American citizens at the same time.

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The 1990s had produced a major explosion in the prison industry throughout the United States and both the incarceration and the employment rates had a dramatic upsurge as well. In that period, African Americans had seen the incarceration rate of their men, women and children jumped to significant portions, while at the same time, the employment numbers for corrections, law enforcement, and in other areas of in the justice system had a drastic rapid rise as well.

Particularly, for the caucasian population. In regards to the correction departments and its massive employment of caucasians, this is largely due to the fact that a majority of the correctional facilities were systematically built in rural remote areas, hundreds of miles away from African American communities.

With this in mind, not only did this limit African Americans opportunities in obtaining employment at these prisons, but also obliterating any interest in living in many of the all caucasian rural communities for obvious American historical reasons. Since the prison industry boom, all educational and rehabilitation programs that had been in place for decades, were now being eliminated ~~for~~^{for} propaganda, manipulation and so-called lack of funding. Many of the individuals who are caught up in the incarceration trap, are now being incarcerated for longer periods -in most cases two to ten times longer, for simple non-assaultive felonies, like being in possession of a few pieces of "crack" cocaine. Yet, this same get tough on crime justice system has continuously time and time again, allowed rapists, particularly child molesters to walk right out of the front prison gates with paroles, only to return, not only for rape, but for murder. It is obvious that America has its priorities in the right place. Keep a young man locked up for ten odd years for selling dope, but release a man who has a problem with keeping hands off children.

One man is incarcerated for economical reasons, which is the case with most African Americans who are incarcerated, today, and that problem can easily be corrected with vocational and college training, with some assistance once the prisoner is released. But on the other hand with rapists and child molesters this is a disease for some and a serious predatory problem for others. But in any case, for some odd reason, America's criminal justice system does not take these type of crimes serious.

And what supports my position, is the fact that just recently, in the early part of 2006, a Connecticut judge had sentenced a man to sixty days in jail for child molestation. In another case, a woman who was a school teacher was convicted of molestation was only sentenced to five years probation and house arrest. And yes both were caucasians. In fact, it was said, the reason why it was decided not to sent the women to prison was out of concern for her safety. People, that is what protection is for. Also, I do not see anyone having a problem when they have sent thousands of African American men, women, and children to this hell hole. So, what is the problem now.

It seems like People of Color are going through flat out hell all over the world.

From Darfur, Sudan to Brazil, South America. From India to France. From Mexico to Harlem, USA and it has sadden me very much. Even though I am incarcerated with natural life and may never be physically free, I still have compassion for others and pain for their struggles. Just like the tragic aftermath in the hurricane of Katrina, I cried when I seen what had happened to our people and how they were being treated by the government. The negative portrayal of our people in the media by some newspapers and television news networks was a complete travesty. Their coverage and political spin in the tragic incident was wrong, unjustified and totally unfair. It was clearly recognized by some of how some media sources were very bias in its coverage of the tragic incident. Evidence showed how published reporting, -along with photographs- told two different stories of self preservation and acts of survival with both African Americans and caucasians, as African Americans were perceived as looters and law breakers, while caucasians were "just finding

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things". Thank God for media sources like Oprah Winfrey, Ebony, Essence and others who recognized the truth and unbiasedly reported the actual hell that everyone who were involved was going through. I had cried, just like I cried when I had seen the situations in Darfur, Sudan, in Nigeria, in Iraq and still other places around the world. I know that may be hard to believe that a man like myself would have pain and emotions for others, considering the fact, we are often portrayed as evil and heartless savage beast, who needs to be put away forever. I guess I feel empathetic for others, because I am going through their same pain. I remember Minister Louis Farrakhan once explained this during a speech. He said, have you ever wondered why you feel sorrow and pain for others you do not know around the world when a tragic accident happens to them? He continued by saying, because you are going through the same struggles that person or group of individuals are going through.

God is my witness, just recently a group of individuals of a lottery pool at a meat packing plant had just won the lottery for about a \$130 million. I had told myself, if I had won that money, I would had taken \$30 million and gave it to Oprah so, she could had provided the Katrina victims with fully furnished new homes. My mother has always told me never to use God as your witness, but what I had said is true. It was the true and sincere sympathy that I had for the Katrina victims.

Sometimes when I am alone and thinking to myself, I imagine myself having some of the wealth that the richest men and women in the world has so, it would enable me to help the entire world like a philanthropic egalitarian. But I realize, even people like Bill and Melinda Gates -two of many individuals that I admire very much-with all the wealth they have and the philanthropic work they do for everyone, they still can not save the world. I truly understand deeply what Ms. Helen Forsade Adu -songstress of the world popular spiritual jazz group, Sade- meant in the smooth lyrics of "King of Sorrow". ♣ is a very touching verse in the beautiful song that unequivocally describes the situation of our people, and in fact the world. The verse Ms. Adu says is:

"I want to cook you a soup that warms your soul;
but nothing will change, nothing will change at all."

Symbolically (from my interpretation of the verse), what Ms. Adu is cleverly expressing in this poignant, eloquent verse is: she want to help the world of all its ails, but she recognizes that even with her unselfish contributions in helping the world, it still will not change the overwhelming problems in the world.

I wonder could this sister be right. Is it too overwhelming for any of us to solve?

I do not know, but I do have the faith that it can, if it is God's will. In the New Testament, in the Book of Mark of the Bible, Chapter 11, verses 20-25, Jesus told Peter about having faith. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him." Just as our forefathers overcame and succeeded, we shall as well.

Now, I am about to allow my thoughts to flow, as The Game said in "Dreams", and "watch the ink from this pen bleed".

ECONOMY

"It is better to let money be my slave than to be the slave of money."

John D. Rockefeller

African Americans, America and the American's economy has always found themselves in the mix of things especially, when it comes to the word: "Profits".

During slavery, African Americans were being exploited in all endeavors of the caucasian's quest in becoming rich and powerful. Go through the America's history and you will find where general labor was needed, nine times out of ten, African Americans were used. African Americans physically -as well as economically- built this country. That's right! America was built, sustained and developed to one of the most powerful nations in the modern world, all on the backs of African Americans.

Here is some of the evidence of it. It has been discovered according to a published article in the Final Call (February 8, 2005) "J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. admits to slavery" by Hakobra Anderson that several now existing corporations -who are currently listed in Fortune Magazine's 2005 Annual Report of Fortune 500 America's Largest Corporations (April 18, 2005)- had ties to slavery. The listed corporations are: Astra (insurance co.) -listed on Fortune 500 at 106/ revenues of \$19,904.1 Billion, New York Life (insurance co.) -88/\$27,175.5, Union Pacific (railroad co.) -174/\$12,213.0, CSX (railroad co.) -269/\$8,187.0, and Norfolk Southern (railroad co.) -286/\$7,312.0. There are corporations that were not listed in the annual report that had ties to slavery as well and made enormous revenues in 2000.

The corporations are: FleetBoston (financial inst.) with revenues of \$22,608.0 Billion, J.P. Morgan Chase (financial inst.)/\$60,065.0, R.J. Reynolds (tobacco)/\$8,167.0, and WestPoint Stevens (textile mfg.)/\$1,816.0.

In the article, it went on to say that J.P. Morgan Chase -whom had conformed to a City of Chicago's ordinance called "The 2003 Slavery Era Disclosure Ordinance" which mandates that companies conducting business with the City disclose whether they had profited from slavery- made a written public statement admitting that they had in fact profited from slavery after discovery through an extensive research of their company's history that "between 1831 and 1865, two of their predecessor banks -Citizens Bank and Canal Bank in Louisiana- had accepted approximately 13,000 enslaved individuals as collateral on loan and took ownership of approximately 1,250 of them when the plantation owners defaulted on the loans." Thus, as you can see, these corporations, and still others, has become companies with enormous annual revenues and profits partially, with the help of African American's forced free labor and America's racist institutional laws that had placed African Americans at a clear economic disadvantage, by turning their hardwork and labor into unjust earned profits for the many corporations in American and abroad.

In fact, other nationalities of people from around the world knew about the exploitation and economic advantages that could be profited from African Americans as well. They know it so well, that when they -ie. Middle Easterners, Asians, Africans and Europeans- come to the United States, they will set up shops in the urban communities of predominately African Americans. The foreigners also know that most of us are unconscious to this fact and therefore, capitalize from it. They know the property in the lower income classed neighborhoods are extremely cheap to purchase and easy to obtain, because of the property's value. I mean, who will fight for it! Most of the African Americans do not own any of the properties that they live in -or on, anyway. The property owners are most likely "slumlords" who are hustling the unfortunate for fixed income subsidies from state and federal aid.

A person like the slumlord does not have a problem with departing with worthless property for a quick nice or handsome buck. As most of them are waiting on that

that next big urban gentrification development project that would enable them to cash in clearly above the property's value actual worth. But to the foreigner, the worthless property is like a pot of gold that he can make his start in America for him and his family. Once he has obtained the wealth from African Americans, he then, moves his family to beautiful, safe and crime free communities. His children attends the excellent suburban and exurban schools in which they will receive a class A-1 education, graduate, then, attend and later graduate from colleges and universities in America. And this will be accomplished less than one generation -20 years.

Take my hometown, Detroit, for example. According to a published 1999 article in the Final Call, 75 percent of the businesses that are owned in Detroit are Arab and Arab American owned and 25 percent of the ones that are owned on the outside of Detroit are owned by the same ethnic group. They are owners of the party/liquor stores, gas stations, supermarkets, pawn shops, jewelry stores, junk yards, the city's popular weightlifting gym (Powerhouse), coney island restaurants, clothing stores, dollar stores, furniture/appliance stores and etc. And what the Arabs do not own, the Asians own -beauty and hair supply shops, clothing stores, restaurants, mini malls and cleaners- or caucasians like the Little Caesar Pizza Giant, Mike Ilitch and family owns -Detroit Tigers, Detroit Red Wings, the Perous Fox Theatre, the Starcity Casino and etc. Now, do not get me wrong, there are African Americans in Detroit that own businesses in and around Detroit -and I had made it my business in patronizing them when I was in society- but for a town that is predominately African Americans (85 percent), there is no excuse for the bombardment of outsiders.

But we as African Americans only have ourselves to blame, because some of our brothers and sisters who were the entrepreneurs in our community had sold their businesses to outsiders, not realizing that it would come back and haunt us all.

In the late 1960's until, the early 1990's, Arabs had heavily occupied the eastside area of 7 Mile/Woodward Avenues in Detroit. While they were living there, their children had attended the public schools that the African American children attended. In fact, the Arabs worked, played and lived around the African Americans and for countless of years -and still today- African Americans have been employees at the Arab's business establishments. Brothers would worked many of the "inferior" jobs including, security guards, stockboys and janitors, and the sisters, -for some strange reasons- would only work at the lottery machines. Additionally, if the sister gives into their sexual advances, his sex toy. (Sound like good old slavery to me.)

The Arabs and Arab Americans had a clear out agenda, and that agenda was to exploit the historical "get rich quick" market: "The Hood". They had strategically bilked hundreds of million of dollars out of the communities in Detroit and took aim for "Henry Ford Country" -Dearborn, Michigan. This is now the home, -or should I say, "hooch"- for thousands of Arabs and Arab Americans. In fact, Dearborn has the largest population of Arabs in America. They have also made other cities around Detroit -Bloomfield Hills, Farmington Hills, Sterling Heights and etc.- as their communities. The amazing thing about this, these cities especially, Dearborn, were at one time very discriminatory towards African Americans purchasing homes in their communities. In fact, back in the summer of 1985, there was a major fallout between the African Americans in Detroit and the City of Dearborn that eventually lead to a major economic boycott of the City of Dearborn's stores including, the popular Fairlane Shopping Mall, because Dearborn had enacted an ordinance that excluded all non-residents -particularly African Americans- from utilizing their public city parks. (Dearborn has never had any problems with African Americans spending their money in the town's stores or in the mall, as long as they had behaved -not acting a hoodlum- or were not shoplifting. Our money is most valuable to the American's economy and that was perfectly clear in 2004 when several African American leaders in Detroit decided that they wanted to build an "African Town" in Detroit in order

to create independence, culture, and commerce. These leaders were met with strong opposition and negative criticism from everyone including the Detroit's Mayor, Mr. Kwame Kilpatrick, the late City Councilmember, Ms. Kay Everett and individuals from the Arab community. The opposition main gripe was that the city should not fund the project with the city's tax dollars. I have a question, though? I would like to know where were these individuals when the people of the State of Michigan had partially footed the bill to have Comerica Park built for Mike Illitch and his Detroit Tigers? Now, everyone don't speak all at once. (According to a published article in the Final Call "Consumer Nation! Black America squanders potential power through spending habits" by Cinque Muhammed (July 15, 2003) a Chicago based marketing research group, Target Market News, Inc. (TMN) released a report on African Americans' spending that stated in 2002 this group had some \$631 Billion flowed through their hands.))

I remember reading for the first time in 1991 -in prison- "The Autobiography of Malcolm-X" by Alex Haley. Malcolm-X had expounded on the fact how several ethnic nationality groups would move in and open up businesses in the African American community of Harlem and extract -or as he had called it, "bloodsuck"- the wealth out of the area and in the process, built their own safe and secured communities, while African Americans continuously suffered in the hood. This great brother, Malcolm-X, had made this analogy or observation of this overt cycle of the exploitation of African Americans over 40 years ago and it is still in full effect, today. Just take a minute and think for a moment. Look over your urban communities in your neighborhood, and you will see what Malcolm-X had expressed in his autobiography rings true today. I mean, even to the point where he had discussed the fact how the police would protect the owners' property, as opposed to protecting the people in the community.

These problems still ill our communities today. You have the many owners of service properties in the neighborhood that will take your money, rape your sister, beat your brother, and kill your child. But our people will still go right back to the abuser, even though the entire neighborhood knew that the owners had shot and killed a brother or raped a sister. Case in point: Back in 1999 in the City of Detroit, a brother was beaten to death by some Arabs who owned a liquor store.

The brother tragically lost his life protecting his young teenage daughter, being raped by the Arabs. The father of the daughter had went to the store after learning that someone at the Arab's store had made inappropriate sexual gestures towards his daughter. While the brother was addressing the problem, he was beaten to death by these people. Just think!!! I could not imagine in a million years individuals like Mr. Earl Graves, founder of Black Enterprise, Mr. Russell Simmons, founder of Rush Communications of NYC, Inc., or even the famous entrepreneur/rapper Jay-Z shooting or beating a sister, brother or even a child, because they came into their place of business and stole an item from the store or made a legitimate complaint in regards to unsatisfactory products or services -let alone about a father addressing concerns about his daughter- but for some odd reason, you have other ethnic nationalities that conducts business in our neighborhood who thinks otherwise.

The thing that is so hypocritical about these Arab's actions, if an outsider -brother or caucasian- is found to have a romantic relationship with a women of their group, he is subject to be killed including, the woman. (Even after the vicious killing of the brother whom was defending his daughter, African Americans still shops at the store like nothing happened. Dig that!!!)

What makes matters worse, it is a known fact that the Arabs and other ethnic groups are pushing drugs in our communities. Using our children as foot soldiers to peddle it to our unconscious and conscious sisters and brothers.

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Recently, I was reading "Citizen's Letters" from the editorial section of the Detroit News. During my reading, I had come across a letter written by Mr. Martin Hanna, Executive Director of the Chaldean American Chamber of Commerce. In his letter -"Detroit's police harasses Chaldean party stores" (dated February 28, 2005)- he gives a charging informal indictment against Detroit's Mayor Kilpatrick in regards to the recent raids by the Detroit Police of the Chaldean owned liquor stores in Detroit. The letter was written in response to an article -"Party stores crackdown creates rift" (dated February 14, 2005)- written by the Detroit News. In his letter, he stated in part:

"It is important that readers understand the persecution and harassment of party stores in this city. *** The Detroit Police, under the direction of Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, has been intent on carry out a vendetta against party stores in the city. *** It's hard to believe Detroit is doing so well combating crime that the police have the luxury of spending 45 minutes raiding a law-abiding party store or supermarket on pure fishing expedition."

I totally agree with Mr. Hanna. Law-abiding citizens including, Chaldeans should not be subjected to unwarranted stoppages and baseless searches. But I also understand the Mayor's position as well. For years, countless of party stores owned by Chaldeans has contributed to the distribution of illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia. Therefore, by the Mayor being a resident of Detroit himself, I am quite sure in his time of growing up in the same neighborhood as the young drug dealers, drug users and others who affiliated themselves in the trade, has seen, heard or known of someone in the trade and the "connects" involving Chaldeans. I will admit, not every business establishment owned by Chaldeans are conducting illegal activities but, Mr. Hanna, must be in a state of delusion or believes that he is living in the environment of "Alice in Wonderland" if he thinks that the Chaldean and Arab communities in the business world has a total impeccable record that would qualify them for sainthood. If he does, he is the only one. Then, Mr. Hanna goes on further by questioning why raids have not been conducted on national store chains, like CVS and Rite Aid who also sell liquor. Well Mr. Hanna, because businesses, like CVS and Rite Aid has a license that permit them to conduct business through their pharmacies, by selling government approved drugs courtesy of their trained and licensed "friendly" pharmacists. Additionally Mr. Hanna, CVS, Rite Aid and companies alike has a proven reputation of not involving themselves in the illegal distribution of drugs -ie. cocaine, "crack" cocaine, heroin and marijuana- and believes in keeping a flawless distinction when it comes to the code of ethics in the prescription drug community. Remember, they have shareholders and the Security Exchange Commission (SEC) to answer to. My suggestion to Mr. Hanna, is that he and his comrades clean house on this matter so the Mayor -or anyone else for that matter- will not interrupt the lives of law-abiding party stores and supermarket owners just on pure fishing expeditions.

In fact, while we are on the subject of drugs and the illegal marketing of it, I would like to discuss the continuous exploitation of this trade as it relates to African Americans, Hispanics, Latinos, and caucasians.

First, I want to say, that you are naive or living in a state of denial if you believe that the American government does not have any direct or indirect involvement in the distribution of drugs in America particularly, heroin, cocaine, and marijuana.

Second, you must be oblivious if you believe that the countless branches of

government agencies and Corporate America are not aware that they are making money -directly or indirectly- off this highly profitable business of illegal narcotic trade. The industry of illegal narcotics and its distribution is a hard and quick generating multi-billion dollar business. Each year, countless of billions of dollars are made in this industry to finance wars, civil and domestic conflicts, and terroristic plots, to feeding the bellies, putting clothes on the backs and placing a decant roof over a child's head in the urban and rural communities in America.

The drug problem has been a major problem in the urban communities that has basically destroyed our people with no end in sight. The drug trade "piaged" our people particularly, our valuable and most precious asset... "our youth". They are massively being exploited by the drug trade and it is killing us at an alarming rate. I have discovered some facts from published reports to prove my point.

According to an article in the Detroit News -"Region's drug seizures escalate" (dated April 5, 2005)- it stated that drug seizures in Metro Detroit had increased while, in the same period, drug use had decreased. (Now, that sounds very familiar! Oh yash!!! That's the same rhetorical nonsense that has been said about the decline in crime, but the rise in the prison population in the U.S. Well, that's their story.

So, we'll just let them tell it how they want to.) The Detroit Police had seized \$5 million in drugs and \$10.7 million in cash and other goods associated to drug trafficking -a jump of 3 percent and slightly over 50 percent from 2003, respectively. The article continued with the fact that more than 290 pounds of cocaine and more than 4 tons of marijuana were included in the Detroit Police seizure in 2004, 108 million tablets of pseudoephedrine were seized in Detroit in 2003 in the so-called "Northern Ice" crackdown in order to stop as the writer pointed out "the flow of the precursor drug to methamphetamine" and arrested over 7,700 individuals on drug charges. In one case, the authorities had indicted over 30 people from six states (10 were from the suburbs of Detroit) who were allegedly part of a multimillion-dollar drug ring in which -as the authorities claimed- they had sold at least 40 tons of marijuana since 1991. In another case, two individuals -who lived in the suburbs- were indicted on claims that in the past three years, they had earned more than \$50 million in drug profits and distributed more than 25 tons of marijuana. For some strange reason, Ms. Karen Tandy, the Director of the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration believes in her mind that the U.S. is winning the war on drugs. But how can that be when you have an organization that has been in business for close to 13 years and another organization who has made \$50 million in drug distribution less than three years. (Unless she was talking about the fact that so many people has been caught up in the government's atrocious net that has over populated the prison system in America with African Americans. Some say in actuality, the "War on Drugs" was in fact, the "War on Blacks".) There are countless of other individuals and groups who are making more money and distributing more drugs. During an interview on "News and Notes with Ed Gordan" (dated June 1, 2005) -a National Public Radio (NPR) show- the United States' Drug Czar, Mr. John Walter told Mr. Gordan that in 2004 the U.S. had seized over 400 tons of cocaine. So, you can just imagine the cocaine that was not seized and successfully hit the streets of America. Further, Time Magazine had reported in an article -"The killers next door" by Tim Padgett and Nuevo Laredo (April 18, 2005)- that the U.S. State Department reported that 90 percent of the cocaine that has flooded the U.S.' streets come from Mexico which has brutal cartels that controls the country's \$25 billion-a-year drug trade. So, with this in mind, I am surprised that Ms. Tandy would make a statement that, "the U.S. is winning the War on Drugs", knowing that the U.S. has been "so-called" fighting the war every since President Richard Nixon declared war, and the former first lady, Nancy Reagan reiterated war on the trade in the

early 1980's after she had discovered that 15 and 16 year old African American children were purchasing homes in the suburbs for their mothers and siblings who were once living in the dilapidated and crime infested urban housing projects and purchasing \$100 thousands exotic automobiles off the proceeds that they had made in peddling drugs for infamous and notorious drug organizations, like "Young Boys Incorporated" -aka- "YBI and others. And for those who do not know about the drug trade, when Mrs. Reagan made her "Say No to Drugs" campaign, the popular drug was heroin -which was used in "Mixed Jive" (this was "shot up" through the needle) or "Raw" (this was inhaled or "snorted" through the nostrils). So, "crack" cocaine was relatively unpopular, or in some cases, unknown to the drug dealers and drug users. But by 1985 or 1986, it was the hottest drug on the block.

Once these tons of drugs are seized, they will eventually find its way back on the streets by the very government agencies who had seized them in the first place.

Case in point: A former employee who worked in the evidence room of the Detroit Police Department had pled guilty and received 15 years in prison -in August of 2004- for taking at least 220 pounds of cocaine -between the years of 1994 and 2000- from the evidence room. In his last heist which occurred in 2000, he had removed over 53 pounds of cocaine. The Detroit Police Department had discovered that the employee was stealing the cocaine after it was found that a package of "Gold Medal" brand flour was in a box that was contained for drugs. The officer had made over \$2 million from the six year heist.

Additionally, I had heard a news report (dated May 17, 2005) in regards to a sting operation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation -FBI- of their very own. According to the report, it was discovered that several agents were smuggling drugs to the United States from Mexico, by way of the Arizona's border. They were using their identification as FBI agents in order to avoid detection. Pretty ingenious.

There has been countless of reported cases throughout America over the years in which the "law" has been involved in the direct distribution of drugs, and then, pocketing the proceeds -at the same time, sending countless of African Americans to prison for selling and using the garbage. We hear about these cases daily, but the law enforcement community defends these exposed clandestine acts as a case of "rogue cops" or just a "few bad apples". If that is the case, you have an orchard of them.

Then, there is the "so-called" legitimate profits that are being made by the law enforcement agencies through the seizure of money and properties that are obtained in drug raids and/or court orders from the accused dealers and kingpins.

In turn, the proceeds are used in fact against the individuals who made it. The most bizarre and crazy thing about this practice, the dealers are well aware of this. So basically, the government used the dealers and kingpin as "harlots, courtesans, suckers, and saps" to push the garbage to our people, all the while, they are watching and keeping tabs on the dealers' profits and proceeds. Once, the government gets tired of "using" the dealer as their "Bitch" (as in the term, "female dog"), they will arrest the dealer, take all the property that they had accumulated, sell it to the highest bidder, make the dealer out of a "low-lifer" rat after they have done their publicized smear campaign with the courts and thus, sentencing the dealer to the governments' "living coffins" (prisons) as the dealer and the governments' other bitches -other brothers or sisters who have been "pimped" by the government- "politick" about the old memories when they were the neighborhood "Ghetto Superstars". As they rot year-by-year, the government continues to make more money in the trade by using other brothers and sisters as their "Plunkies".

If you think I am lying, look at Mr. Ricky "Freeway" Ross and his case, U.S. v. ROSS, 372 F.3d 1097 (9th Cir. 2004). The drug trade pays for the crime fighting

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equipment that is used to incriminate the dealers and their comrades. For example, in the City of Chicago, the Chicago Police Department has placed sophisticated hi-tech surveillance cameras throughout the "Hood" in order to watch all activities -particularly the illegal ones- courtesy of the drug dealers. These cameras has "shot spotter" technology that can detect the trajectory of a bullet and has 360 degrees scan capability. The cameras are placed in plain view and has the "Chicago Police" logos on them with blue lights. The video images are viewed on laptops at the stations and it records the drug transactions being made by both the customers and the dealers. Dig That!!!! The police do not have to catch you in the act. It is recorded. Man, this is crazy!!!

Even the White House in Washington, D.C. does not have clean hands when it comes to the drug trade. In fact, they are the main culprit in most of the free flowing trafficking of the illegal narcotics in America. I know that may come to a shock to some, but that should not come to any surprise. The White House has for years used their "frontmen" or "fallguy" the Central Intelligence Agency -or as it is popularly known, the "CIA"- to conduct secret operations or tasks in an effort to protect or "so-called" protect America's interests and for national security purposes. The CIA was established in 1949 after World War II and its main objective or sole mission is to obtain critical information about the activities of opposing nations particularly, the communist controlled nations or rogue dictatorial regimes who countries are considered unstable and susceptible to communistic views. At times, the CIA will break laws including, the hideous acts of kidnapping, torture and murder. I had recently read an article in the International Socialist Review -"War Crimes and Imperial Fantasies" (September/October 2004)- that I had found very intriguing, but not at all surprising. In the article, Mr. Norm Chomsky, Professor of Massachusetts Institute of Technology -who was interviewed by Mr. David Barsamian- had made an interesting comment in regards to the CIA, their actions and who are actually responsible for its actions. He stated:

"The CIA acted, as it regularly acts, as an agency of the White House to carryout actions where you can have what's called plausible deniability. Kissinger-style orders are rare. They're usually given quietly. Actually, this one, too, was given quietly, but it was exposed. The CIA is assigned the responsibility of carry out the crimes and atrocities. And then if anything goes wrong, you can blame it on the CIA, sort of rogue elements out of control."

So, in essence, what Professor Mr. Chomsky is saying: that the CIA is nothing more than the White House's dirty and corrupted "henchmen" or "goons" who are assigned by the White House to carry out enormities -monstrous crimes- around the world like mobsters, drug kingpins, evil terrorist cartels, and street gangs. And when the crimes are exposed, the White House conveniently, points the finger at the agency -who is under the White House control- and claims that they were unaware of the agency's actions. The White House has been playing this game for the last 25 years including, in the recent scandals of Abu Ghraib's and Guantanamo Bay's torture and rape chambers. Professor Mr. Chomsky is absolutely correct in regards to the White House and the CIA being "rogue elements out of control". Just look at their latest project, "Operation Freedom" located in Afghanistan. It has been reported that the illegal opium trade in Afghanistan was valued in 2003 and 2004 at \$2.3 billion and \$2.5 billion, respectively. Opium is the country's main source of income and a lucrative economy in the war torn country. Eighty percent of the

population is employed in agriculture. Moreover, Afghanistan account for 75 percent of the world's output of opium and its exports make up 50 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). I did not find that surprising especially, after I had heard the City of Cleveland's radio talk show host, Mr. Art McCoy of "Black on Black with Art McCoy" (1100 AM WJIM) expressed his concerns about the recent massive distribution of heroin and the fact that it is now destroying the City of Cleveland. Ms. Randi Rhodes -radio talk show host of the popular Randi Rhodes' Show on AIR AMERICA- had stressed this point on her show as well, about the recent heroin trade in America and the Afghanistan's recent distribution of it. I find it very interesting that after the U.S. took control of Afghanistan, all of a sudden the country is a major producer and distributor of opium, considering the fact, that when the country was under the control of the Taliban, there was very little or no opium being produce in the country. And who are the [redacted] and book-keepers that are keeping accurate tabs of the opium that is being produce and distributed out of the country? That is just something to think about.

This is the same stunt that was pulled by the Reagan Administration in the 1980's with the Central America's conflict and the "so-called" invasion of communism. Former President Ronald Reagan accused Nicaragua -under the Sandinistas' control- of setting up a cocaine distribution pipeline and were providing aid to rebel's in their Central American countries. By the Reagan Administration being denied by Congress U.S. Government financial aid to the contras -who were fighting against Sandinista's control government- it had forced the administration to come up with an alternative plan to finance the war. That plan was to send the cocaine to the America's urban streets in order to finance the war against the communist build up in Central America. In March 1988, I had seen a hearing involving this matter -the distribution of cocaine, the CIA's involvement in the distribution of it and the Iran-Contra Scandal- on C-SPAN. During the hearing, U.S. Congresswoman, Mrs. Maxine Waters, Democratic Representative of California and other sister congresswoman had presented a 2500 page report in regards to the CIA's involvement in the distribution of cocaine in America. In response to the report, the CIA's representatives had presented only a 16 page rebuttal. Also, during the panel's questioning, I had noticed how well prepared and adamant Mrs. Waters was as she presented their position, but the same could not be said about the representatives for the CIA as it was clearly apparent that they were unprepared to answer questions from the panel including, the CIA's and Mr. Oliver North's involvement in the distribution of cocaine in America's streets which had clearly contributed to the escalation of the drug related crimes and the rise of the prison population in America. In fact, during the hearing, one of the panel members had blasted the CIA's representatives for not questioning Mr. North about the allegations presented in the African American congresswoman's 2500 page report. (It is coming on the decade mark since this information came to light and no one has been held responsible in regards to this matter. Now, why that does not surprise me?!!!!) For individuals who just refuse to believe the CIA's involvement in the distribution of cocaine during the Reagan Administration, here is something to think about. According to a published article that was reported in the Detroit News/Free press dated back in December of 1989, in the wake of the U.S. military invasion of Panama which led to the toppling of Panama's leader, Mr. Manuel Noriega and his government, it revealed that the CIA allowed Mr. Noriega to distribute cocaine to America and was paying him over \$200,000 a year for information on Russia. In another recent report that I had seen in a documentary, "The Drug Years" that was aired on the music channel, VE-1, it reported the CIA's involvement in the distribution of Heroin during the Nixon Administration. It is just something to think about.

Now, in regards to Corporate America. Corporate America has been knowingly taking its share of drug money as well. For example, lets take the athletic footwear industry. Before the early 1980's, the only popular pair of gym shoes in the "Hood" were the canvas "Chuck Taylor" All Stars from Converse. Most of the guys in the hood wore the all white high tops. They came in countless of colors, but white seemed to be the fellas favorite. You could purchase a pair for about \$16. Growing my mother would purchase ours -my brothers and I- from the retail store in the City of Hamtramck called, "The Constellation". The sisters choice of gym shoes were the Pro-Keds all white shoes that they had called "Pumpkin Seeds". Other gym shoes, like the Pro-Keds for boys, Bullets or even a cheap pair of "slip and slides" from the local grocery store were considered second and third class when it came to the hip styles of All Stars and Pumpkin Seeds. Even Nike at the time was just a gym shoe that you had seen at K-Mart's or in the J.C. Penney's catalog. (I remember my mother had a pair of the powder blue Nike's jogging shoes with the dark blue swoosh and the waffled bottom soles.) During this time, gym shoes were considered "playwear" for the most part. But the drug dealers had changed all of that, starting with the white and blue high top pair of "Top Tens" from Adidas.

"Top Tens" and Adidas were made famous in Detroit by the drug dealers of Y.B.I. "Top Tens", a pair of dark blue high-top sneakers we called them, "darkboots" - straight legged Levi's Jeans, and the famous Max Julains jackets that was worn by "Goldy" in the 70's black-exploitation classic movie, "The Mack" (a black waist length jacket with the fur around the hood) were the infamous recognised trademark for Young Boys, Inc. The boys preferred to have the white tongues of the shoes appearing over the legs of the jeans as it proudly showed the authentic Adidas' Top Ten logo on the center of the tongue. (In order to keep the logo from fading, ones would simply apply a few coats of clear nail polish over the logo. This would preserve the freshness of the logo.) I remember the first time I had seen a pair of Adidas Top Tens, I was about 12 or 13 years old incarcerated at the Wayne County Youth Home (a juvenile detention center in Detroit), and when I had seen them, they were sitting neatly on top of a fresh folded pair of Levis. As I was walking passed them with amazement, I had thought to myself, "those belong to a Young Boy".

Now, I know you are questioning the true "HOOD" origin of Adidas as you may believe that Adidas was introduced to the hood by the legendary 80's famous Hip Hop group, "The Kings of Rock", RunDMC and Jam Master Jay (Peace Be Upon His), who made famous the "onion toes" or "shell toes" with no shoe laces, -and in a sense, you are right- but in Detroit, the drug dealers made Adidas famous. (If you ever get a chance, check out the RunDMC's video, "Tricky" -off their 1986 classic smash hit, 5 times platinum album, "Raising Hell", you will clearly see RunDMC and Jam Master Jay wearing the classic "Max Julains".)

This was the same case with the athletic footwear, Pony. Pony was worn and made popular by YBI's drug messias, "Pony Boy, Inc."

Another corporation that was made famous -in the hood- by drug dealers was "Footlocker" -the flagship store that sold licensed athletic wear. Footlocker -for those who do not know- is a successfully publicly traded company that sells top brand named athletic apparel at their retail stores. The Footlocker stores are located in shopping malls, shopping plazas and specialty retail business districts across the U.S. In the Fortune's 500 listing for 2005 the company was listed at 365 with revenues of \$5,355.0 billion and profits of \$293 million. (They also have sister retail stores, Lady Footlocker and Kid Footlocker.) One of Detroit's first Footlocker was located in Northland Mall, Southfield, Michigan. This particular Footlocker had made tens of millions of dollars in the early years from the proceeds

of drug dealers by selling an assortment of the latest fashionable and hip gear -ie. Adidas' track suits, Starters' jackets with the famous or popular professional or collegiate logos, Adidas' T-Shirts, and of course, gym shoes. Crews of drug lieutenants and their workers -popularly known as "runners"- would pack the shop and literally spend thousands of dollars at a time buying gear for themselves, family members and each other. It was an egotistical symbol of power for an individual to enter the store with several runners and tell the store's sale representative, "get 'my boys' whatever they want" and before they all would leave with countless of Footlocker's store bags of gear, he would pull out a wad of money -consisting of \$100 bills and a few \$50 and \$20 bills, pay the total amount of the recently purchased items that the flawless beautiful and attractive female cashier -usually a sister- had just rung up, and before he exit the premises, he leaves the cashier -if the manager allows her to accept- with a handsome tip that would clearly cover her pay for two days for all her "so-called" troubles.

I am quite sure, that the Adidas Corporation, after seeing sales go to the roof and observed how their accountants went into a frenzy about the enormous profits that were being calculated on the quarterly and yearly balance sheets, made it their business to send representatives to Footlocker in order to see for themselves all the African American youth purchase their products. Once Adidas seen the success, they came back with the present leader "Concord" line and the drug dealers were lovin' them. (Concord was a perfect name for them, because the definition of Concord" means: A formal agreement: treaty. In a since, Adidas had made a treaty with the African Americans' youth: Continue to purchase our high priced shoes so we, Adidas, can continue to financially prosper, by using you, African Americans as the forerunners in creating a market in the United States for our high priced athletic products. And that we did. Just look at the multi-billion dollar athletic apparel industry.) Two years later, the birth of "Decades" came to life with a new under sole design. By this time -1985/86- Adidas was in fact the top selling brand in America. They had countless of styles and colors from snake skins, ostrich skins and patent leather, to their awesome flagship model, "Forum". In fact, after the 1985 unpredicted success of Nike's first installment of "Air Jordans" from the land that Mr. Michael Jordan aka "Airness" -arguably by some- had built, Adidas had counterattacked, with minimal success, by introducing the National Basketball Association's (NBA) future Hall of Famer, Patrick Ewing's line and apparel simply called, "Ewing". They were the gym shoes that the youth had to have, including my baby brother -which my mother had purchased a pair for him- but it did not quite appeal to the older youth, like my older younger brother, who had preferred the Adidas' high top cream white snake skinned Decades. Additionally, Adidas finally gave respect to the hood and Hip Hop -which was long over due- by giving RunDNC an endorsement deal. Adidas had introduced the RunDNC line which came in three style of shoes -Fleetwoods, Eldorados and Broughams- and some RunDNC's signature logo styled pullover fleece sweaters. The line was in fact nice, but Adidas -in my opinion- made several critical business decisions that turned out to be fatal and therefore, cause their demise. First, Adidas clearly waited too late in the endorsement deal with RunDNC. They should had made that deal in 1984/85 with Mr. Russell Simmons when RunDNC was on the top with the King of Rock's album and the summer movie hit, Crush Groove, because by 1986 when "Raising Hell" was released with smash hits, "My Adidas" and the Aerosmith's classic, "Walk This Way" both the African American and caucasian youth would had clearly purchased the line. Second, Adidas became too complacent, instead of being very aggressive in targeting others in the market -when they were on top- because their initial supporters -the drug dealers- that made them famous, were either incarcerated, drug addicts, in courtrooms, or gotten older, much richer with sophisticated taste in snobbish, and

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very expensive wear. Third, the new generation of drug dealers had moved on by the summer of 1987 to the "TROOP" clothing and shoe line that was introduced to the hood by the brother of M.C. Hammer and not by the Ku Klux Klans as everyone believed.

And finally, Adidas never found that answer to the "Mike & Mike" corroboration that had them on life support and put them to death -sort of speak- with Nike's mighty arsenal of "Air Force", Charles Barley's "Air Max" and Penny Hardaway's gym shoes. By 1990, Adidas was dead in the hood. Nike, Reebok, British Knights, L.A. Gear and even Patrick Ewing -whom by this time left Adidas- on his own independent brand shoe either took control or made a significant profitable surge and later, fell off. In any case, Adidas, Nike, Reebok and others had made money off their "high priced" gym shoes by the drug dealers in America. So, the next time you question the sales representative at the retail athletic shoe store, "Why in the world do the shoes cost so much?" Remember, the urban drug dealers in America had set the price years ago, before the rest of the world had caught on the gym shoe kick. Also remember, who made them famous and okay for the world to wear as everyday casual shoes, the drug dealers and the African American youth in the hood. And now, to our next lesson!!!

Other companies has been making great profits from the trade as well. Though I will agree, they have not had any direct involvement in profiting in the trade itself -or let me just say, "not that I know of"-, but they are well aware that they have received a considerable amount of money from the life of the drug dealer.

Furthermore, with the rise in the Hip Hop culture and its "Pop Culture" dominance, it has either resuscitated or popularized several companies who were considered in business terms "speciality" or "novelty" companies.

Take for example General Motors Automobile Division, Cadillac. Cadillac desperately needed new life, because the company's division was producing automobiles that were unattractive and old, mainly targeting the retired senior citizens or the generation of Baby Boomers. But that all changed when Cadillac switched their marketing strategy by targeting a younger generation of potential buyers with stylish, fresher and flashier like the Cadillac Escalade SUV or the Cadillac XLR Roadster. The Hip Hop generation has been a major contributor in getting these automobiles off the dealers' lots in the U.S., by having them in their flamboyant flossy music videos or in their driveways themselves. Quiet as it is kept, Cadillac has been "symbol of success" in the hood for at least 50 years with African Americans in all walks of our lives -from church reverends and factory workers, to pimps and hustlers. Even the first African American millionaire, Ms. Madam C.J. Walker had a Cadillac.

Here are other examples of indirect profiting from the illegal drug trade and the exploitation of it. Clothing and footwear companies like Tommy Hilfiger, Gass, Polo by Ralph Lauren, Perry Ellis, Gucci, Carhart, Dickies, Timberlands and Rockports -just to name a few- were not companies that were precisely marketing their products to urban America. Most of these companies have very expensive products and were mainly targeted to wealthy caucasian youth as these names represented the class of "prappy" and Ivy Leagued prestige. And in regards to Carhart, Dickies and Timberlands, these products are used and associated with the general labor and construction industries. But these companies has become the brand gear that has been accepted as hip gear among the drug dealers, gang bangers, hip hoppers, high schoolers, and college kids a like. I remember reading an article in an issue of GQ back in the early part of 1994 about Tommy Hilfiger. In the article, he had made a comment that was perfectly clear to me that he rather not have African Americans wearing his clothing. But in the July/August 2005 issue of King Magazine,

Mr. Hilfiger had a change of heart about Hip Hop as he recognized that the culture helped his success and got him that limited built \$650,000 red "snaz" Ferrari that he was flexing in front of -which was one of his exotic automobiles from his 20 car fleet- at his Connecticut home.

From commercial real estate to personal investments. From tangible items to intangible services. Companies and corporations all have received proceeds from the narcotic trade. In fact, Church & Dwight Co., Inc. the world largest producer of sodium bicarbonate -Arm & Hammer Baking Soda- clearly made direct profits from the "crack" cocaine trade, because baking soda is the significant ingredient in turning powder cocaine into crack. So, you can not tell me in a million years during the corporate board meetings when discussions came up in relation to revenues and profits, that someone at the meeting did not whisper to the person next to him or her, "Yeah. And a portion of those revenues came from the crack drug dealers".

The economic exploitation of African Americans is prevalent even in the prison industry as well. Corporate America has seen great profits in the last 20 years from the enormous explosion of the prison population bill up, starting with the construction companies that have been in the building business in forcing these "Modern Day Plantations" throughout the U.S. -with over 1,500 built by 2000. In Michigan (who has built over 35 facilities since 1985), the average construction cost in building a new correctional facility is roughly between \$40 million and \$50 million. During the massive building of these prisons -"plantations"- across rural America, in the last two decades, it has clearly jump started the economy for the many caucasians who live in these rural communities, because of the lack of living wage jobs. For example, Michigan's upper peninsula -or as they call it "The U.P."- main source of income for the general population beside the obvious agriculture and tourism industries, was the mining industry of copper and iron ore.

This was the livelihood for most of the caucasians for about the past 100 years.

But the industry has severely took an economic blow over the decades, therefore causing the industry to collapse and put thousands of caucasians out of work. This took on a disastrous economical catastrophic effect in the U.P. and it desperately needed another main source of employment for the many caucasians who were out of work and on welfare or employed in mediocre jobs that really did not make "ends" meet. ■■■, the prison industry came to their rescue and answered many of their prayers. This was not only the case in the State of Michigan, but across rural America where a significant portion of prisons have been built. The prison industry is so valuable to the rural communities' economy and their livelihood, that in Michigan, citizens of these prison built communities made it known to the politicians in Lansing -after learning that the Republican controlled legislature had included in their proposed 2005/06 fiscal budget bill in closing several prisons in their communities- by picketing at both the State Capitol Building and the proposed close prisons, stating that closing the prisons would clearly destroy their communities, economically, because they depend on the prisons to support their children's schools and education, their employment and so on. The citizens of the prison communities made it perfectly clear to the world -especially to my conscious comrades and myself- that these plantations (prisons), slaves (prisoners) and the master's (being the State) pay is desperately needed for their (overseers) survival. (My question is: "Did they have to be so blunt!")

Both the federal and state governments had issued contracts to mainly all caucasian owned and operated construction companies. The laborers that worked for

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these companies were caucasian males. (In fact, at the time that I was writing this book, the facility that I was currently residing at had two projects being done. One, was installing a security electric wire fence around the compound, and the other was paving a black top road around the compound -that cost the state \$300,000- and both labor crews that had conducted the project were caucasian males. Last year, the facility had two major maintenance projects done which included installing more security surveillance camaras throughout the compound and installing "cork" to the nine buildings -6 prisoners' resident units, 2 administrative offices and the kitchen- on the compound and in both projects, the workers who completed the assignments were all caucasian males. Moreover, when the facility had decided to build an additional unit for protection prisoners back in 1995/96, the laborers were all caucasian males.)

So, as you can see, caucasians, particularly males, are living the "so-called" American Dream by supporting themselves and their families, while African American men are being denied these same opportunities to support themselves and theirs.

Caucasian males dominate the outside product service companies -ie. soft drink beverage distributing companies, milk distributing company, bread distributing company and etc.- that supply the facilities with the daily needed products as well.

I have not seen one African American worker at any of the many jobs serviced to the facilities that I have been incarcerated at.

The employee base make up in the Michigan Department of corrections is the same -as I gave the percentage and hard numbers of employees that are employed for the department (See: Chapter 1 "The Matrix") -especially at facilities located in the upper lower peninsula and the U.P. In fact, Baraga Maximum Correctional Facility -which is located just below the "Rabbit's Ear" of the upper peninsula and a ten hour drive from Detroit, Michigan- in 1998 had only one African American male officer that was employed at the facility, and he was from Detroit. (I remember a friend of mine nicknamed "Taco" or "Tic-Toc" use to blaze the officer [for those who do not know what the term "blaze" mean, it is slang for making jokes of someone] about the fact, that he was the only brother who worked at the facility and he was having a romantic intimate relationship with a co-worker who was a recent divorcee of a correction officer. Taco would tell him -sounding like Chris Tucker as he tell jokes, "N-A-A-N!!! Then honkeys goin' to lynch your black ass nigga f**kin' wit' that man's white woman." "You know them honkeys don't play that up here. Especially a nigga from Detroit." "Damn Nigga!!! Then, you f**kin' wit' a ugly white woman at that!!!")

The correction officers, supervisor officers, administrators, and other personnel staff, depending on their job title and seniority can make anywhere from \$35,000 to \$70,000 a year with benefits. A husband and wife who are employed in the department can take home before taxes a combined income of \$70,000 to \$140,000 or even more. These are pretty generous living wages for individuals who only has a high school diploma, general equivalency diploma or some college credits.

In Michigan, the department's fiscal budget for 2003/04 and 2004/05 were \$1.7 billion and \$1.9 billion, respectively. According to the Michigan Department of Corrections' current director, Ms. Patricia Caruso, the department's budget is the second largest in Michigan. So, you can just imagine the total dollar amount of the fiscal budgets as it relates to the entire American corrections department

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system, combined. It is clearly at the \$100 billion a year mark, and this is not including the county jails and city lock-ups across America. With these annual budget numbers, American corporations and companies are clearly blinded by dollar signs, because of the massive dollars that are available in exchange for their products and services. There are countless of companies including food services distributors: Gordon Food Services, SYSCO Corporation, Kellogg Company, PepsiCo, Incorporated, Coca Cola, Corporation; the automotive companies: General Motors, Ford, Chrysler and John Deere, Co.; and office supplies, computer and utilities companies that has made a considerable amount of money from contracts with the departments. And why not. The government has always been an excellent paymaster. Just like my mother has always said, "If the government's money is no good. Then, nobody is." Even the state correctional and administrative employees has been cashing in on the cash cow deal with issuing service contracts to family and friends or if they have businesses themselves, making claims of so-called donating items from their business like ice cream, pizza and etc. and writing it off as a tax write off.

Then, there is the money that is made from the prisoners themselves. There are several retail catalog and warehouse companies that provide products and services to prisoners like televisions, typewriters, tape players, compact disc players, CDs and cassette tapes, to cosmetic hygienic products and snack foods. Case in point: In Michigan, a prisoner can purchase a typewriter with memory from the Swintec Corporation for about \$300. The typewriter that I am using to type this book is a Brother's ML-500 memory typewriter -I call her "Tyra Banks", named after the fashion model with the same name- and I had purchased this typewriter in 1997 for the total cost of \$149.00. (That is a major price difference for a typewriter that basically has the same function capabilities.) A prisoner can purchase a "clear" body 12 inch black & white television by NEV at a price range between \$85.00 to \$126.00 -depending on the facility that the prisoner purchased the television from (the department does not allow prisoners to purchase color televisions). I know you are shocked about the prices of the typewriter and the television, but this is absolutely true. This is clear consumer exploitation, but the prisoner has no other choice. Either buy the over inflated items or live without it.

Then, there are the catalog music retail tape and CD companies like "Music by Mail", "Pack Central", "I.E.S." and etc. that sells a wide variety of pre-recorded music -Pop, Rap, Jazz, R&B, Gospel, Rock, Blues and etc.- to prisoners via mail services at outrageous prices. I literally love all categories of music (I am an original Music Television "MTV" kid that started watching the cable network in November of 1981, just three months after it first aired), but Jazz, P-Funk, Hip Hop (old school), R&B (old school), Neo-Soul, and everything by Sade and Mary J. Blige I will say are my favorite. Normally, a newly released cassette tape from a up-to-date artist or group will cost about \$9.99 at Music by Mail and \$12.99 at Pack Central. For example, the newly released cassette tape from "The Game" -rap star- called "The Documentary" cost \$12.99 from Pack Central. Now, that is pretty high for a new tape, but that is nothing considering some of the prices for tapes that are clearly over 10 years old -in terms to its initial release date. Tapes like Eric B & Rakim -"Paid in Full" (released: 1986), Ice Cube "Predator" (1992), Digital Underground "Sax Packets" (1990), Warren G "Regulate...G-Funk Era" (1994) and Poison Clan "Poisonous Mentality" (1992) -all Hip Hop and Rap- cost \$14.99 at Pack Central. This is the same with Jazz -Norman Brown "After the Storm" \$14.99, Honey James "Seduction" (1995) \$14.99, Najee "Najee's Theme" (1986) \$9.99, Bob James "One on One" \$9.99, and R&B: Anita Baker "Compositions" (1990) \$9.99,

Midnight Star "No Parking on the Dance Floor" (1983) \$14.99, Mtume "Juicy Fruit" \$14.99 and the Dells "Dells vs The Dramatics" \$9.99. As you can see, these categories of music are the ones that African Americans are most likely to select and purchase. It does not stop there. It is the same with movie soundtracks: Menace II Society (1993) \$14.99, Dead Presidents (1995) \$14.99 and The Show (1996) \$19.99.

I am quite sure you had noticed that each of these tapes were very popular musically during the time of their release. And in fact, a few are arguably classic to some music connoisseurs and everyday common music lovers. Speaking of classics, from Pack Central, you can purchase just for \$5.99 one of Fleetwood Mac's top selling album "Rumors" on cassette ("Rumors" has sold over 17 million units since its release in 1976/77). Dig that!!! These mail service music retail companies know that African Americans are deeply in love with our music and will spend hundreds of dollars each year purchasing newly released and old school tapes and CDs. So, they overtly inflate the prices, because they are aware that the prisoners do not have any other alternative. Either you buy it, or you live without it.

The exploitation of prisoners still continues from "behind the walls and the electric barbed wire fences" in America's prisons, itself. In Michigan, each facility has its profit generating system -or would I say: "Profit Generating Machine"- called the Prisoner Benefit Fund and it is controlled or regulated by a committee which consist of prisoners -who are elected by prisoners in the facility's general population, two correction officers and the facility's business administrator. The funds are produced by prisoners purchasing items from the prisoner's store at an 8 to 12 percent mark up from the warehouse purchased price; through catalog order purchases; fund raisers -photo ticket sells and DVD ticket sells in order to make visual/audio recordings to send to family members and friends; fast food purchases from Burger King, Pizza Hut and etc.; confiscation of illegal money that comes through the mail and so on. The committees that governs these accounts -which can amount to a few thousand dollars to tens of thousands of dollars, acts in the interest of the prisoners at the facility by purchasing items for the prisoners use -eg. law books and supplies, general library books, recreation equipment (basketballs, handballs, tennis rackets and etc.), holiday meals, prisoner's television cable, appliances (washing machines and dryers, microwaves, unit fans and etc.) and so forth, negotiating and obtaining ~~agreements~~ agreements with T.V.-cable companies, general store supply warehousing companies and etc., or anything that the committee may believe that is beneficial to the prisoners as a whole.

There has been cases where the funds has been used to "blacktop" the outside prisoner's basketball courts at Marquette Branch Prison or laid a concrete walkway and fence at Baraga Maximum Correctional Facility. The system in one sense is great, because the taxpayers do not have to foot the bill for the items, events or services (including in some facilities that can afford it, paying for the facility's store clerk's salary who is an employee of the department) that are given to prisoners.

But at the same time, it is bad, because it lacks a watchdog to prevent the continuous abuse, mismanagement and exploitation by individuals who are not business savvy in keeping accurate and proper accounting records and professional management practices, who have been funding things or events -ie. officers' retirement parties- that are clearly not beneficial to prisoners or who -ie. prison administrators- has been embezzling money from the accounts. In *SPRYUTTE V. HOFFNER*, 181 F.Supp.2d 736 (W.D. MICH. 2001), Michigan prisoners were wrongfully transferred from a prison out of retaliation, because they discovered that the recreation department director was misusing the PBF funds for personal use. In fact, the Warden Forum Committee members were concerned that the money was being inappropriately used. In report -that was published in the May 2004 issue of Prison Legal News, it reported that

the New York Police Department Commissioner was charged for stealing \$112,733.98 from the jail prisoner fund.

Here is an example of mismanagement of prisoner funds. At Standish Mexican Correctional Facility it was discovered by the cable company that the facility's administrators -warden and maintenance- had illegally hooked up the cable to the newly built protective custody unit for several years. Once the company discovered the criminal act, they had immediately discontinued the contract and ordered that the unpaid back services be paid. Now, the warden or maintenance were not prosecuted for this clearly criminal act and they did not pay the back pay for the illegal services. The prisoner's benefit fund had to pay the company while the prisoners became victims of clear consumer monopolistic extortion by being forced to pay higher store prices to help pay off the debt. Additionally, the prisoner's benefit fund committee had unwisely locked themselves into a six year contract with a cable company that I have never heard of called "Are 2 Yours" Cable, based out of Ohio -where at the time that I had reviewed the contract in 2004, prisoners were paying \$1,373 each month just for 12 channels (ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, PBS and seven basic cable channels). This was clearly a rip-off, especially when there are cable companies like Charter Communications that are charging facilities like Standish -and just recently secured a contract with Charter- about \$7,000 a month for over 20 channels. I honestly believed that "Are 2 Yours" was linked to someone connected at the facility or Lansing.

Here is another example, at Standish's administration segregation (this is what is called "the hole" or solitary confinement) prisoners are required to purchase "hygienic" tickets at a cost of ten cent each for hygienic products -shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, dental floss, over-the-counter medication and etc.- that are clearly marked as free samples and not for sale, but the facility continues to illegally sell it to prisoners. (And while we are on the subject of money, back in 1995/96 it was discovered at Standish that about \$90,000 of food and/or money came up missing from the facility's kitchen. It was claimed by administrators that prisoner kitchen workers had eaten the food. Prisoners had stolen \$50,000 worth of food!!! That is crazy!!! Prisoners could not steal \$1,000 worth of food, because everything in the kitchen is lockdown and food supplies are located at the facility's warehouse where only the correctional employees, and not prisoners, has total access of it, period. The facility is a maximum security prison and prisoners movement is very limited. At the time the \$50,000 came up missing, several food service employees owned restaurants in society. So, you do the math.)

Periodically, a prisoner who is elected to the Prisoners' Benefit Fund committee would be looked at by facility's administrators as a "problem" prisoner, because he is not their "yes man", "stool pigeon" or the traditional classic "nootlicker".

He will question each of their decisions and keep a proper account of the funds.

A prisoner like this would be transferred from the facility -or as we say in prison: "put on the first thing smokin'", because he is what the administration calls a "confrontational prisoner" and not a team player. So, by prisoners fearing of acts of reprisal by the administration, the prisoner will go along with issues that he knows that are clearly not beneficial to his fellow prisoners.

The correctional departments and county jails across America has a monopolistic system in place in regards to the local and long distance telephone services. Each department in every state has some type of contractual agreement with major telephone companies or subsidiary companies to the major telephone companies. These contracts

that are made with each department, in each state generates annual revenues for the companies in the tens of millions of dollars. The departments obtains a portion of the profits that have been made for allowing the telephone company to provide the collect call or debit call services to the prisoners, their family and friends at totally outrageous rates. The excessive rates and surcharges are four times -or more- the cost when the collect or debit calls are placed from a prisoner's telephone than, from a regular telephone service -ie. the prison's administrative telephone, your personal telephone or a public pay telephone. For example in Michigan, calls made within the state cost \$2.95 for the initial charge plus one minute, and 32¢ to 84¢ each minute after. Calls made outside of the state cost \$3.99 for the initial charge plus one minute, and 89¢ after. So, a local prison 15 minute call made from facilities like Ryans Correctional Facility or Mound Correctional Facility -both facilities are located on the eastside of Detroit- to a family member who lives in Detroit will cost on average \$11.00 -depending on the time that the call is made and the service carrier. But if you had made that same local call -outside of the prison- across the street from these facilities, it will only cost 25 cent. And accepting a 15 minute out of state call from a Michigan prison will cost a whopping \$16.45. In essence, the person that is accepting the prisoner's collect call, most likely a not working middle classer, all have to pay an average \$13.00. Now, I know you are wondering why the additional charges and cost, but that has been a continued clandestine mystery to everyone as well, including the Michigan Chapter of Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (MI-CURE) who has adamantly investigating and fighting the scandalous high cost for years.

I had recently received a letter from Ms. Kay D. Perry, Director of MI-CURE and she had explained to me in the letter that Michigan receives from the telephone profits between \$12.5 to \$13.5 million per year and it goes to the County Jail Reimbursement Program. From my research on the subject, it has been claimed by both the departments and telephone companies that the justification for the enormous rates are to purchase and maintain the up keep of the recording and monitoring equipment that monitors each call and the automated recording system that continuously announce this annoying statement every 2 or 3 minutes, "this is a call from a correctional facility". There has been several complaints made in regards to this annoying announcement considering the fact, that the automated recording system tells the person who is receiving the call -before it is accepted- who the caller is and the fact that it is being made from a correctional facility. I am quite sure if a person is going to pay from \$11.00 for a local call, to \$17.00 for an out-of-state call, at least, the telephone company would have the sense to know at these prices, the person who is accepting the call will clearly know that it is coming from a prison.

According to a news report that I had heard on the now defunct Tavis Smiley Show on National Public Radio (NPR), the New York Correctional Department receives about 50 to 54 percent of the profits that are earned each year from the prisoners telephone use. In 2004, it was reported that the profits that were earned from the service in New York came to \$24 million. My God!!! That is a lot of 15 minute calls.

Now just think of how much money they are making with this monopolistic system in all 50 states. It must be an estimate of close to \$1 billion annually that the phone companies are generating in revenues. Guaranteed money!!!

I am quite sure you are asking yourself, "How are they getting away with this?"

"I know there are laws against this?" And if you had said the latter question to yourself, you are right. There are laws against these acts that are being discriminately applied towards the prisoners, their family and friends. The federal acts are: The Sherman Antitrust Act, The Clayton Act, The Robinson-Patman Act and

The Telecommunications Act which states in part: "That all charges for telephone services shall be just and reasonable and that any charge that is unjust or unreasonable is declared to be unreasonable"- protects against actions like the one that has been and continuously recurring everyday by these two agencies. The problems in this matter are legal technicalities that the telephone companies and correctional departments has conveniently defended their unfair actions under and the fact that the United States Congress and the Federal Communication Commission are dragging their feet to simply correct the issue. In fact, there has been a few federal civil cases filed on this matter, including in Michigan, but with little results. *SIRAGUSA V. HICKLEMAN*, 153 F.SUPP.2d 685 (E.D. MICH. 2001) was a class action suit that was brought against several telephone companies -Ameritech, Sprint, GTE North- and the Michigan Department of Corrections by recipients (family and friends who had accepted the collect calls) on claims that "the State and companies violated Federal and State Antitrust and Telecommunication laws by entering into exclusive inmate telephone agreements restricting inmates to collect calls for which recipients were charged excessive rates and surcharges." "Under the State's agreement with the telephone company, all inmate telephone calls originating from a geographic area assigned to one of the telephone companies must be placed to that company. Despite that fact that numerous alternative options may be available at substantially lower rates, neither the inmate, nor the recipient of such calls, may utilize a telephone service provider other than that provided for by the State's agreement." The District Court's Judge, Patrick J. Doggan had addressed and dismissed the plaintiff's class action claim on grounds, "the State was immune from the liability for restraint of trade under Sherman Act pursuant to state action doctrine."

In the case, the court addressed several positions that both the plaintiffs and the State argued including: 1. Agreeing with the State's position that the State could not be classified as a "common carrier" under the Federal Telecommunication Act's definition of that term or title, because a common carrier is defined as "any 'person' engaged as a common carrier for hire, in interstate or foreign communication by wire or radio or interstate or foreign radio transmission of energy." And a "person" is defined as "an individual, partnership, association, jointstock company, trust or corporation". The State is not a "person" and thus, can not be a "common carrier"; 2. Ruling that the "unreasonable and unjust rates" charged by companies are regulated by the Federal Communication Commission and not by courts; 3. Stating that the "unjust and unreasonable discrimination" under the act does not apply to the State because it has been ruled that they are not a "common carrier"; and 4. "The FCC, as well as several other courts, have recognized that the position of telephone services to inmates constitutes an exceptional set of circumstances and therefore, such system are not like communication service when compared to non-inmate telephone system." Now, what does that have to do with unjustly making enormous profits off of law-abiding taxpaying free citizens. As you can see, the government and corporations are working hand in hand in breaking laws and the courts along with the Federal Communication Commission, who are bound by law in stopping this criminal behavior, just ignores it, claiming there is nothing they can do. Nonsense. This is fraud, because the money is not being used for its "so-called" intended use, maintaining the up keep and monitoring the phones. Last time I had checked the Michigan's statute for the County Jail Reimbursement Act, it did not say one thing about taking the profits from prisoners' telephone service and distributed it to that program. Just another example of vile crooks in government and corporation.

The correctional departments across America all have some form of Prisoner Account System in which the prisoners' money is kept. This system is also a money making generating machine for the department and the financial institutions who control the accounts. In Michigan, about several years ago, its department had centralized the prisoners' account where all prisoners' money is processed, held, and transacted from one major account. Now, I am quite sure the department is earning some form of interest in the system. In fact, I had read in the June 2005 issue of the Coalition for Prisoners' Rights Newsletter that the Florida's Department of Corrections has been charging prisoners \$1.00 per week for having money in their accounts, 50 cent for every deposit, and 50 cent for any special withdrawal. My question is, who is getting the money? In Michigan, the legislature is proposing a 30 percent store price increase on all prisoner store items in prisoners stores.

According to published reports the money will be used to fund the Michigan State Police Academy. The legislature has passed a bill for prisoners to pay a 6 percent sales tax on all items (except food, vitamins and photo tickets) purchased from the prisoner store and catalog orders. For the record, Michigan prisoners are currently paying a cigarette tax on all tobacco products that they purchase, we pay a sales tax when we purchase any product or service in the State of Michigan, and additionally, prisoners are paying taxes and sales taxes when the prisoner stores purchase taxable products from the supply warehouses. So, in essence, we are just being double taxed. They are not satisfied with the tens of million of dollars they are receiving each year from the telephone profits, the interest they are receiving from the centralized prisoner accounting system, and other sophisticated and clandestine ways they have found to bilked prisoners and their family and friends out of. And it also goes to show you how the State can not manage money. A few years ago, the legislature had voted for themselves a hefty salary raise, considering the fact, they had cut income, salary and programs for everyone else in Michigan.

Now, that companies and people are leaving Michigan, the State has not been receiving these handsome tax revenue, ~~and~~ they are coming at prisoners, who are currently paying some sort of tax.

In regards to the prison jobs and its employment of prisoners. This is a form of exploitation in which prisoners are paid wages that are in comparison to the wages that are being made in sweatshops in the third world countries. In correctional systems across America, each department has some form of service and/or manufacturing industry that produce, process or service all types of products from milk and meat, to cigarettes, government stationary, license plates and office furniture which ~~is~~ later sold within the department, other agencies of government, or to individuals, non-profit and for profit companies in society. In some cases, it has been known of outside major corporations obtaining contract services from departments and its prisoners at substantially low-rates, sometimes lower than what the corporations would pay for temp workers. Many corporations see this business marriage with government as a win-win situation, because they are obtaining reliable low-paying workers (without the headaches of job temp workers), it totally eliminates theft and it is putting money in the government's pocket, just to name a few. I had discovered in Michigan that its legislature had passed a law, MCL 800.327a "Inmates Assigned to work in Private Manufacturing or Service Enterprise", that took effect January 31, 1987 which now can legally assign prisoners to work for outside corporations. I assume this law takes precedence over another statute -MCL 801.10- that made it illegal to use prisoners for private gain, except for the construction of highways or non-profit charitable organizations. After Reconstruction, the South instituted similar exploitation laws through The Black Codes, which allowed

plantation owners and railroad companies (laying the railroad tracks) to use African American who were incarcerated for Black Code violations. Michigan has a prison manufacturing industry itself called, Michigan State Industries -also simply known as MSI. Michigan's MSI provides just about all its tangible products that are used in its prison system, from handsoap, floor chemicals, mop heads, stationary, bedding and mattresses, prisoners' clothing, eyeglasses, to officers' uniforms, office and prisoner cell furniture and the famous state vehicle license plates that are purchased at any Security of State Office in Michigan. Prisoners who work in these MSI facilities start off at base pay of 25 cent a hour, and each month, they will receive a pay increase of 5 cent or more depending on their work performance, which is evaluated each month by their immediate supervisor. Additionally, prisoners receive what is called a production bonus. This bonus is based on the performance product output that a team of prisoners produce every work day for a monthly pay period. For example, if the prisoners made prisoner pants and each pair will take one hour to completely produce, with a work crew of ten prisoners, they must make within an 8 hour working shift, 80 pairs of pants. But, this is only to break even and maintain 0 percent. Now, let say that the team has made the required 80 pair of pants for that day and an additional 40 or 80 pair of pants. Instead of the work performance being 0 percent, it is now 50 percent or 100 percent, respectively, because of the additional pants that were produce. So, in essence, in order for the team to obtain a monthly performance bonus each month, they must maintain their everyday quota, plus, produce an additional number of pants for the entire pay period. I had worked in the MSI's garment factory for about a year and I had made each month on average \$200 -with \$285 being the most I had made in one month. At one time though, prisoners were making extremely more money. MSI had a quarterly bonus system in which prisoners were receiving on an average \$1,500 from profits that were made by the entire MSI industry. Most of the prisoners who were receiving this bonus were saving it for their release from prison, obtaining appellate attorneys for their criminal appeals or just sending it home to provide for their family. But this program was discontinued sometime in the early '90s.

The prisoner kitchen is the next preferred job that prisoners chooses. Here, prisoners are paid on a monthly bases at three levels of pay, unskilled 17 cent a hour; semi-skilled 23 cent a hour; skilled 32 cent a hour; and those with a special cooking certificate 37 cent a hour. After the first 60 days working in the kitchen, the prisoner will receive a performance bonus which consist of \$20 for unskilled; \$30 for semi-skilled; and \$40 for skilled. But in order to receive the entire bonus, prisoners must work a 174 hours or more in a monthly 30 day pay period, and you must have an excellent work performance evaluation report at the end of each monthly pay period. Now, MSI was not pressed into taking prisoners' houses, but the kitchen, that is another story. This is another area where abuse of authority is carried out daily by both correction guards and food service personnel, and I give you a few examples. First, back in December 1998, in Baraga Maximum Correctional Facility's kitchen, a prisoner had lost his \$40 bonus for allegedly stealing an eating a 60 cent candy bar. I still remember what a food steward jokingly said to the prisoner, "Yeah! That's one expensive candy bar. That candy bar cost you \$40."

Second, here at Standish, it was a brother who had worked in the kitchen for over three years as a food service clerk, but he was fired because a female officer written him a disobeying a direct order misconduct for refusing to serve her something -ketchup or mustard- that was not to be served because it was not on the menu.

Finally, my situation. I was written a false major misconduct report -insolence- because I did not take a butter dish from an officer, and told him to place it on the pot and pan sink counter. By me not taking the dish from him, he written in the report that I had called him a white trash motherf**ker. I received 30 days

detention for this lie, which I am currently serving as I am writing this sentence.

There are stories after stories in which guards and food service personnel has clearly abuse their authority, and in some cases where prisoners had ended up seriously hurting them. The reason for this, some of the administration and prisoners has took the kitchen job as during slavery, as the "House Nigga Position". The administration knows, because of the action of certain prisoners, they will do anything to keep the job that is only paying up to an \$100 each month. So, the Bojangles' and Stool Pigeonin' goes on. (I had talk about this in the Chapter, Ghosts in the Machine). Before I move on, I want to say this: I can not figure out to save my life why would a guy who says he refuses to work at a fast food restaurant for minimum wage, but will work in a prison kitchen -or any other prison job for that matter- for 17 cent.

There are other institutional jobs that prisoners are assigned to, i.e. porters, quartermaster, yard crew, maintenance and so forth that only pay 94 cent a day for the first 60 days and a \$1.25 after. Law and general library clerks in my opinion have the best and peaceful institutional jobs, and they pay pretty good monthly wages for doing something they enjoy, with little work.

In a nutshell, the administration used the work force of prisoners in order to successfully run the day-to-day operations of the institutions. Some people may not see this as exploitation, but it is. Especially with the wages that the prisoners are receiving.

The reality is, people of color are in fact the life in which everything else sustains its life off of in order to survive. Whether it is the prisons across America that warehouse the enormous amount of African American men and women, and Hispanic men wholesale in order to create a living wage job for the caucasians in rural and lower-income America, or the cheap labor of African Americans in America, people of Mexico, people of China and the people in third world nations in order for big corporations to escape the unions, big wages and benefits that are so-called cutting into their profits. Whether it is the valuable national resources in Africa -i.e. diamonds, gold, platinum, manganese, tantalum and titanium in South Africa, diamonds in Sierra Leone, the cocoa from the Ivory Coast, the valuable oil and national gas from Nigeria, the people who are everyday captured and placed in slavery in Sudan, or the ancient historical artifacts and history from the great Pharoahs their wives, children and servants that are everyday on display in museums and exhibits all over the world for public viewing for a profit. Whether it were the slave hymns of the past that expressed pain, heartache and sadness that created the Blues, Ragtime, Gospel, Rock and Roll, Jazz, Soul and Rhythn and Blues, or the modern-day culture of Hip Hop that expresses our pain, our anger, as well as our happiness that is heard, accepted, embraced, and emulated in every living ~~country~~ and nation throughout the entire globe -just as our music has done in the past.

Whether it was the American slavery of the past, or the modern day two bit, five and dime jobs that are presently being held by people of color in America. Whether it were the inventions, discoveries or creations by our great brothers and sisters of the past -i.e. Dr. Charles Drew discovering plasma that created the blood banks all around the world, Mr. Garrett Morgan inventing the traffic light and the gas mask that has saved hundreds of million of lives everyday around the world, or Mr. Lewis Howard Latimer, who had solved the problem that Mr. Thomas Edison or Sir. Alvan Clark could not solve, by creating carbon filaments for light bulbs that enable to illuminate the entire world by electricity, or the intellectual and leadership minds of the present as well as the past.

I once told a dear comrade of mine in a letter, in response to how we have allowed others to profit off us and our creations. I told him in the letter, the problem with us as African Americans for too long, we have been too concerned in sustaining life by begging others, symbolically for water in order to live, when in fact, we have not realized that we are the rich valuable water well, itself, from which others, we beg, get the water from in order all of us to live.

Essentially, what I mean is this: We have always found ourselves in positions of power where we are the exploited ones, by others who has taken control of the very things that we have created ourselves. Even one of America's founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson seen the importance of Africans and African Americans when it came to him, his family and their quality of life. In this excellent book called, "Black Genius and the American Experience" by Dick Russell, in chapter 18 "Ancestors - The Astronomer/Surveyor: Benjamin Banneker" of part 3 "Builders of America", Mr. Russell had spoke on Jefferson's acknowledgment for the need of slaves in order for his survival. Mr. Russell said:

"Some years earlier Jefferson, in his Notes on Virginia, had expressed strong misgivings about the slavery system, while admitting that his own livelihood as a Virginia planter was dependent upon it."

Even the company that Nike built, Nike Corporation, the number one athletic apparel and gym shoe company in the world -who had in 2000 according to Fortune Magazine made close to \$9 billion in revenues- has been discovered in having pertinent concerns in the Hip Hop mogul and jetsetter, Mr. Damon Dash and his recent purchase of Pro-Keds. During an interview with Mr. Ed Gordon on NPR's "News and Notes with Ed Gordon" dated August 10, 2005, Mr. Dash had revealed in how Nike's representatives had threaten retail stores by telling them that if they decide to sell Mr. Dash's Pro-Keds products, the company will discontinue in supplying them with Nike Products. Now, that is deep. That sounds like some Malicoo misole type plays. That goes to show you how important -and threatening- our influence and capital dollars are in the world. How ironic, here is a brother who helped carry the "torch" for the culture of Hip Hop, that has himself contributed to Nike's grand fortunes, is now being threaten by Goliath, himself. The giant has finally realized that the day has come, that the true mighty giant, Little David has finally awaken.

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'Qui non habet in aere, luet in corpore' means:
"What a man cannot pay with his purse, he must suffer in person"

Source: Legal Maxims of Black's Law Dictionary

One of my favorite nighttime dramas that I looked forward to watching every Sunday night -before it was discontinued in 2004- was "The Practice" on ABC. This former Emmy Award winning show was an excellent and intriguing criminal court drama.

The main characters: Bobby, Eugene, Elinore, Jimmy, Linzie and Rebecca were the real authentic characters of what a true, genuine, and most importantly, trustworthy defense attorney theoretically is required to be when representing his or her client.

Their Law Offices of Donnelly, Young, and Front each week had zealously defended each of their clients -whether the firm's services were retained or state-appointed- with the best competent and appropriate defense strategy for each client they had represented. These small screen attorneys knew the meaning of the legal term "Fiduciary Duty" when it came to the representation of their vulnerable and sometimes discombobulated clients. The firm did not discriminate against their clients regardless of their background or how horrendous, and at times, bizarre the crime was. In fact, for the most part, they did not question the person guilt or innocence. And when they did, the firm still gave the client the best representation that was considered paramount to the American Bar Association's standards and the Sixth Amendment of the United States Constitution which states in part: "...to have the assistance of counsel for his defence". Each week, after I had observed the conclusion of a great presentation of a case during trial, and a powerful and eloquent summation that had been given by one of the attorneys, particularly Bobby, Eugene and Elinore, I would tell myself, or one of my comrades -who also watch the show- "Now, if I had one of them as my attorney, especially Elinore, I would not be here." Then, I shake my head with anger and frustration, because of the fraudulent representation that I had received from my "so-called" defense attorneys on my criminal case that I am currently incarcerated of. To be honest, if countless of convicted individuals had attorneys like the ones from The Practice, they would not have been convicted of the cases that they are currently serving, or had served in prison. This is a troubling fact and a reality that has been sadly ignored for too many years by America.

Recently, the American Bar Association's "Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defense" had released a report about America's poorest defendants who lacked the protection of properly trained and prepaid defense counsel in criminal cases.

The ABA's report entitled: "Gideon's Broken Promise: American's Continuing Quest for Equal Justice" was partially published in an article that I had read in the March/April 2005 issue of the Michigan's State Appellate Defender's Office's (SADO) Criminal Defense Newsletter. In the article, the report had placed wrongful convictions throughout the State of Michigan and the nation -as it increases- "Potentially as high as 10,000 annually nationwide". Published in that same article, Dennis Archer, former Michigan Supreme Court Justice, former Mayor of the City of Detroit, and past president of the American Bar Association and the National Bar Association commented on the risk of wrongful convictions because of the lack of properly trained and funded defense attorneys who represents indigent defendants.

In the article, Mr. Archer had discussed during the interview with concerns that "In Michigan, state funds are provided to trained prosecutors, but defense lawyers who provide indigent defense services do not receive equal training. Many times,

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indigent defendants run the risk of not having properly trained counsel. What this means is -innocent, poor people are at constant risk of being wrongfully convicted."

In Michigan, the state was ranked dead last when it came to the resources provided to defend indigent individuals accused of a crime, and in the County of Wayne (the City of Detroit is located in this county), trial court fees that were provided to state appointed attorneys who represents the indigent had been reduced by 10 percent -considering the fact, that the fees has not been increased in decades.

With this in mind, according to the Department of justice, approximately eight out of ten state felony defendants are represented by court-appointed attorneys.

These frightening facts should alarm everyone, particularly civil rights and human rights organizations and law makers in the United States, but it has not.

Each year, the U.S. criminal justice system convict and sentence individuals to prison with outrageous sentences including death, being clearly aware of the fact that the person just convicted received unacceptable, substandard representation from a criminal defense trial attorney, and a lack of proper funding to conduct a meaningful and effective investigation in order to present a viable defense to the prosecution's case. The criminal justice system notorious answer for this legal travesty and imbalance on the legal scale of justice is: "The accused is entitled to a fair trial, and not a perfect one." In reality, they are correct. It is totally impossible to give anyone a perfect trial -or can they? You have unforeseen biases by judges, prosecutors, witnesses and/or jury members that might not have been uncovered by the attorneys during voir dire -questioning of potential jury members who will hear and decide a particular case. ~~Witnesses~~ are witnesses who are not accurate with facts, because of their memory, time, or the perception of an incident had faltered. Then, there are the expert witnesses that have their expert opinions on subjects that may be in total disagreement with another expert's opinion on the same subject matter, and so on. But the problem with cases dealing with the poor and destitute, particularly with African Americans and Hispanic Americans, they are not receiving fair trials. Often times, they are receiving trials that are no more ~~times~~ a "Mock" trial, in a "Kangaroo" court system. The system believes that an individual received his or her due process and equal protection rights under the United States Constitution. (Yeah, Right!!!) There are situations where the trial attorneys -who are retained or appointed by the State to represent the accused- were unprepared (because of heavy case loads, laziness, personal problems and so forth), incompetent (because of a lack of criminal law experience and etc.), had a lack of interest in the accused's case, or in the case with my criminal attorney, giving fraudulent representation -as the attorneys skillfully works with the prosecution in order to see the accused ~~lose~~. There has been a discovery of countless of incidents in which the police departments, including the detectives, crime scene specialists, forensic technicians, pathologist and others from the - criminal investigation community, have been involved in criminal acts of planting, altering, manipulating or withholding evidence, which led to the accused's conviction. And then there are the overzealous prosecutors who knowingly, and in fact, encourage witnesses to testify falsely, present evidence that he or she knew was totally false; argued legal or factual positions that were deceitful, or made comments during trial or in summations (closing arguments) that were illegal, prejudicial under criminal law and procedures, or plainly just were not true. These types of situations are nothing more than a gross miscarriage of justice. Yet, you have thousand of convicted individuals who are incarcerated -or were incarcerated- based on these and other types of deliberate misconduct by both the state and federal prosecutors and defense attorneys.

■ -There; ■ -than;

■ -who

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In the Detroit News, reporter, Mr. Ron French had investigated and reported the corruption that was discovered in the homicide section of the Detroit Police Department in an article called, "Charges Rock Homicide Unit (July 27, 2000). It was reported by a homicide detective -who killed himself and his wife after revealing the corruption from the department- that the homicide had routinely hid evidence in a "miscellaneous file" that could have cleared suspects of crimes that the section were investigating. They had deliberately withheld exculpatory evidence from the prosecutor's office because they knew that the evidence would be given to the defense. This was the situation in a man's case who was convicted of murder. Not only did they conceal the evidence in the case, the detectives said he observed the then Commander, Mr. Gerald Stewart shredding evidence in the man's 18 year-old murder case, and in another case in which the police were focusing their investigation on the wrong man. Additionally in the article, it was revealed in 1997 that a former Commander, Mr. Joan Ghosgoian had allegedly in up to six homicide cases improperly obtained confessions. In another published article in the December/January 2003/04 issue of the State Appellate Defenders Office's Criminal Defense Newsletter, it had reported three Detroit news articles -"Charges Dropped Against Man Convicted on Questionable Testimony", (Detroit Legal News, December 8, 2001), "Detroit Robocop Allegedly Led Ring" and "17 Officers Accused of City Reign of Terror", (both, Detroit Free Press, June 20, 2003)- that revealed alleged corruption of Detroit Police Officers, from stealing drugs, money or firearms; planting drugs and guns on suspects; taking money from suspects in exchange of not arresting them, to making false police reports and committing perjury under oath in the court of law. NOTE: The Federal Bureau of Investigation had two federal investigations conducted on the Detroit Police Department in regard to unprofessional and unethical behavior within the department.

In Chicago, it was reported that the Chicago Police Department Homicide Section also infamously known as "Area 2" had viciously tortured at least 60 men -from 1972 to 1986- by bounding, beating, and suffocating the men with plastic in order to extract false confessions from innocent men. In fact, in 1998, the Chicago Police Department had wrongfully extracted false confessions from two African American boys, ages 7 and 8 in the brutal rape and death of a 12 year-old African American girl. The charges were later dropped after it was discovered by DNA test results of the semen that was found in the young girl's body, and the fact that the boys were incapable of ejaculation, that the boys were not the source of the semen.

According to a study done by Mr. Steven A. Drizin, a professor of law at Northwestern University Law School and Mr. Richard A. Leo, a professor of criminology at the University of California, Irvine, Professor Drizin found that false confessions are most common in murder cases. "These are the cases where is the greatest pressure to obtain confessions," he said, "and confessions are often the only way to solve these crimes." Confessions are not only obtained by torture, but also by detectives telling lies, making false promises, coaching, coercing, and so forth. Barry Scheck, Peter Neufeld and Jim Dwyer in their great and exceptionally informative book, "Actual Innocence" points this troubling problem out as well.

In Chapter 4, "False Confession", the authors expounds on the history in the police techniques in obtaining confessions from individuals -from the notorious and brutal tactics called the "Third Degree" created by Thomas F. Byrnes, to the modern-day psychological interrogation techniques called, "Maximization-Minimization" or popularly known as: "Good Cop-Bad Cop" created by Fred Inbau and John Reid.

Throughout the chapter it went in-depth on confessions and how in several cases, the confessions turned out to be false. The authors wrote on page 92 the following:

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"How often false confessions are made and results in convictions is a question that social scientists have not been able to answer with much confidence. Nationally, estimates range from a low of 35 up to 840 annually. Among DNA exonerations studied by the Innocence Project, 23 percent of the convictions were based on false confessions or admissions. Most jurors can't swallow the idea that people would admit to crimes they had not committed. Confessions retain a unique power in courtrooms: 73 percent of juries will vote to convict even when admissions have been repudiated by the defendant and contradicted by physical evidence, studies show. Almost none of these defendants come to modern courtrooms with physical scars from interrogation-room beatings. The third degree of Inspector Byrnes and his prodigy has been replaced by psychological techniques too subtle to leave visible marks."

Peter Carlson from the Washington Post summed it up best when he said, "The difference between the third degree and psychological interrogation is akin to the difference between getting mugged and getting scammed."

Then we have the notorious "Cowboys", the Los Angeles Police Department and its racist Rampant Division. In the wake of the vicious and savage beating of Mr. Rodney King, The Christopher Commission was formed. In the Christopher Commission Report and in a civil suit that was filed against the department (CUMMINGS V GATES, 989 F. Supp.2d 1262 (9th cir. 1997)), it revealed that the department had practiced clandestine procedures. The first practice was the Code of Silence -this is where officers not only refuse to report their co-workers' unethical or criminal behavior but will testify falsely under oath in an effort in doing so. This well known practice is done throughout the law enforcement, corrections departments, and other forms of government and the private sector. The report revealed that the bad cops -which the report said was small in number- accounted for most of the excessive force cases and that the so-called good cops followed the code of silence as well, even when protecting the bad cops. The department's second practice, the report indicated, was the fact that the LAPD relied as the report said, "far too heavily on the versions given by the officers, discounts far too readily the versions of other witnesses, and does not avail itself of opportunities to obtain information which might provide insights into the truth of the relevant events." The report also said that citizens' complaints against LAPD officers could not be "substantiated" (supported) even if there was corroborating evidence from uninvolved officers. This does not surprise me at all considering these are the same practices that are being carried out throughout the entire law enforcement, correctional departments, court systems and other imaginable organizations across the United States everyday without any formal corrective disciplinary actions for their blatant evil, corrupt and low lived behavior. The LAPD was in fact so corrupted, that after the discovery of over 70 officers who were involved in what would be notoriously known as the Rampant Scandal, the State had reversed more than a hundred criminal cases because of police misconduct and the city's tax payers had to pay more than \$40 million in legal settlements. This is far less of what the Detroit's tax payers has paid in police misconduct cases in the last 18 years -between 1987 and 2004- which came to the grand total of \$188 million. I remember PBS's Frontline did an excellent report on the LAPD called, "LAPD Blues". It gave a great detail account of this corrupted police department.

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Even in Milwaukee, its police department recently had to fire over 40 police officers, including former officers -in a separate incident- who had savagely beaten Mr. Frank Jude after he and another African American man came to an off-duty police officers' house party with two caucasian women.

This is the same atrocious atmosphere across America's police department, including the racist Grand Rapids Police Department. (Not taking it off the subject, but have you ever noticed after a terrible incident happens involving bad police, bad correction officers, bad judges, bad prosecutors, bad politicians, and so on that someone will claim that there are only two percent of these "bad apples" in America's criminal, penal, judicial and political system? I often wondered after hearing this nonsense, if this is true, why is it that only African Americans, Hispanics, Latinos and the poor ends up with these bad and evil two percenters?)

Even Mr. Ted Rall whom identified himself in a column that he had written in the July/August 2005 issue of The American's Bulletin called, "Police Perjurors - Throw Lying Cops Off the Force" as a "clean-cut" ivy-educated white columnist.

This columnist had recognized after the New York Police Department had arrested 1,806 individuals during the 2004 Republican National Convention that 91 percent of the 1,670 cases that proceeded in court, either ended with the charges being dismissed or a verdict of not guilty rendered after trial. Mr. Rall concluded that, "If cops are willing to lie about events witnessed by hundreds of people in board daylight, while the cameras roll, if they're unafraid to file phony charges against white college kids with rich parents who can afford good lawyers, one can easily imagine what they do to minority teenagers on the desolate streets of the slums.

Who can blame urban kids for despising the police?" Mr. Rall has seen for himself as African Americans have known and witnessed themselves for years: "That the America's police are some lying ass motherf**kers!!!" Now, you see why Mr. Rodney King did not stop for the police. Why Mr. Timothy Thomas ran like hell from the police before he was unjustly shot in the back and killed by the Cincinnati Police.

The same Cincinnati police force that had killed fifteen African American men in a two year period. "Run Nigger, Run!!!" As you can see, an African American man does not have a chance in this corrupted system. The "Scale of Justice" is always tilted against him.

Believe it or not, as I was just writing (writing) on the issue of DNA and how it is now being criminally altered by forensic crime labs in order to aid prosecutors in wrongfully convicting the innocent accused, I had heard a report that was aired on the award-winning radio news program called, "All Things Considered" -which is aired daily on National Public Radio (NPR)- about the doctor who discovered the fingerprinting or the identification marking in Deoxyribonucleic Acid, better known as DNA. Being interviewed by Mr. Robert Segall, Sir. Allen Jefferies of Great Britain and professor at University of Lanchaster stated that he had discovered it back in September of 1984, actually by mistake. He went on to explain that the first time DNA was used in a court proceeding was in an immigration case. The case involved a family who lived in Great Britain, but their origin was from Ghana, Africa. Sir. Jefferies was summons by the court to conduct a DNA test on a young child from the Ghanaian family, because the British government believed that the child -whom went to Ghana and returned to his family in Britain- had been switched and passport altered with another child from Ghana. After the tests were conducted, it revealed that in fact the family had the correct child and the British government ultimately dropped the charges. Sir. Jefferies stated

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that he was very elated about the results, the fact he had saved the family from being separated, and his discovery being used for the good of mankind.

Before O.J. Simpson's "Trial of the Century" case, common people in the world did not know or knew very little about DNA and its accurate identification results.

Everytime I see or read an innocent person being released from prison or death row because of the DNA results that had proved his or her innocence, I say to myself or to my comrades, "Man, the person who discovered DNA is a bad man, because it has been saving the Black man." And it has -DNA, video cameras and other technology and science. That might sound silly, but I am telling you the truth. Since the admission of DNA testing results in the America's court systems, it has exonerated over 145 innocent victims nationwide -111 of them were from death row. In a published report that I had read in the Michigan State Appellate Defender Office's Criminal Defense Newsletter (May 2004), "Exonerations are Tip of Iceberg: Study Suspects Thousands of False Convictions." In the article -that was obtained from the New York Times (April 19, 2004)- it reported a study that was conducted by University of Michigan Law School Professor, Mr. Samuel Gross and several 21 law students about a dramatic increase in exonerations in the United States. In their study they had discovered from 1989 through 2003 that 328 individuals -316 men and 12 women- were exonerated of crimes that they were convicted of. DNA had cleared 145 of them and 183 were cleared by other means. The study found that more than half had served terms of 10 years or more, 80 percent had been incarcerated for at least 5 years and as the report concluded as a group, they had spent more than 3400 years in prison for crimes for which they should have never been convicted -an average of more than ten years each. In the article, the author stated:

"If we reviewed prison sentences with the same level of care that we devote to death sentences, there would have been over 28,500 non-death-row exonerations in the past 15 years rather than the 255 that have in fact occurred."

There are other facts that the study found:

1. Death row inmates represent a quarter of 1 percent (0.25 percent) of the prison population but 22 percent of the exonerated;
2. Biological evidence helped to free 22 percent of the exonerated defendants in rape cases;
3. Even in murder cases, only 29 percent of the murder exonerations involved DNA evidence -and most of them were rape-murders;
4. Some 90 percent of false convictions in the rape cases involved misidentification by witnesses, very often across racial lines; and
5. The leading causes of wrongful convictions for murder were false confessions and perjury: co-defendants, informants, police, or forensic scientists.

Here are more additional facts that was published in "Actual Innocence" by Scheck, Neufeld and Dwyer, which the authors found to had led to wrongful convictions.

FACTORS LEADING TO WRONGFUL CONVICTION IN 62 U.S. CASE

DNA Inclusion - 1 (case(s))
Other Forensic Inclusion - 5
False Confessions - 15
Informant/Snitches - 15

False Witness Testimony - 15
Bad Lawyering - 17
Microscopic Hair Comparison - 18
Defective or Fraudulent Science - 21

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Prosecutorial Misconduct - 26
Police Misconduct - 31

*Serology Inclusion - 32
Mistaken ID - 52

PROSECUTORIAL AND POLICE MISCONDUCT

Prosecutorial Misconduct

Suppression of Exculpatory Evidence 43%
Knowing Use of False Testimony 22%
Coerced Witness 13%
Improper Closing Arguments 8%
False Statements to Jury 8%
Evidence Fabricated 3%
Other Misconduct 3%

Police Misconduct

Suppression of Exculpatory Evidence 36%
Allegation of Undue Suggestiveness in
Pretrial ID Procedures 33%
Coerce Confession/Admission Alleged 9%
Evidence Fabrication 9%
Allegation of Coerced Witness 9%
Other Misconduct 4%

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

RACE AND MISIDENTIFICATION

African American Misidentifying African American Defendant 24%
Caucasian Misidentifying Caucasian Defendant 28%
Latino Misidentifying Latino Defendants 3%
Caucasian Misidentifying African American Defendant 35%

NUMBER OF MISTAKEN WITNESSES PER CASE

1 Witness - 34 (case(s))
2 Witnesses - 14
3 Witnesses - 2
4 Witnesses - 1
5 Witnesses - 1

In Michigan, there was a brother, Mr. Eddie Joe Lloyd who was freed after spending 18 years illegally in prison on a false confession that he had made to detectives that was discovered to be false. The confession was the key piece of evidence that was used in convicting him, but thanks to Sir Jafferis' mistake-discovery, Mr. Lloyd was exonerated and freed. Mr. Lloyd's story unfortunately came to an end. He had recently died from heart problems in 2005. He did have an opportunity to spend some precious and very valuable time being a dad and granddad to his family. Peace Be Upon Him!!!

In the wake in the discovery of the innocent through DNA, countless of states, including the Federal Government with its "Justice for All Act of 2004" and the federal funded "Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Program" has passed and enacted laws which has set aside money to finance post-conviction testing in criminal cases. (The program was named after an innocent man who was the first to be released from death row as a result of post-conviction DNA testing.) With this in mind, both the law enforcement agencies and the district attorneys across America has been publicly complaining about the fact that the federal and state governments are using taxpayers' dollars in order to finance DNA testing. They believe that the individuals who wants the test should pay for it themselves. And therefore, courts has rendered decisions that has placed strict standards -that are no more

* "Serology Inclusion" refers to ABO and protein blood typing of semen, saliva, and bloodstains. "Other Forensic Inclusion" refers to the comparisons of fingerprints, fibers, and other physical evidence.

than obstacles- that an individual who is making the request are requiring to meet before the evidence is produce so the test can be conducted. There are states, including Michigan, that denies DNA test request on the grounds, that even if the test results were favorable to the convicted individual, it could not conclusively establish innocence. (Now, that is crazy!!!) The courts and legislatures has placed time limits in bring DNA test request. So, if you do not make the request in a timely matter, your request is dead. The prosecution community -even though they accept the DNA test results as reliable- has set in motion a covert campaign in trying to influence society to be very skeptical of DNA testing results and a person's innocence when there is other evidence of guilt. But they are doing this only in the interest of winning, and not justice. Case in point: The New York Times published a report about an oral argument hearing that was being heard by the Missouri Supreme Court. The case involved newly discovered evidence of a death row prisoner. At the hearing, the prosecutor was trying to convince the court in not overturning the conviction. Now, this is the job of the prosecution, but the problem in this case, the prosecutor -who was flat out blunt- wanted the conviction and execution to stand regardless if the evidence proved that the prisoner was innocent. Here is a portion of the argument:

"'Are you saying' asked Judge Laura Stith, 'that even if we find he is actually innocence, he should be executed?' Frank Jung, an assistant state attorney general, replied, 'That's correct.' 'To make sure we are clear on this', added Judge Michael Wolff, 'If we find in a particular case that DNA evidence absolutely excludes somebody as the murderer, then we must execute them anyway if we can't find an underlying constitutional violation at his trial?' Again, Jung said, 'Yes'."

Now, what you have read is America's tax dollars at work. This may shock you, and it should, because you could had been that innocent person. But to prosecutors like Mr. Jung, it is all in the life of being a heartless person. To them, it is all about the win so, they can talk about it over drinks at the attorneys' and judges' hangout -the bar, all the while, the prosecutor has knowingly sent an innocent man to the gallows.

Both the prosecution and law enforcement has repeatedly tried -and some success- to produce favorable DNA test results for the prosecution by altering or manipulating the results, claiming that the results were inconclusive or there was not enough evidence in order to make a proper and positive identification when in fact, test were conducted and the results were found to prove the accused's innocence. Here is an example. You are a juror at a brutal rape/murder trial. The prosecutor has presented allegedly incriminating DNA evidence -semen/blood of AB type, and very unreliable eyewitness. The semen/blood type matches the accused's type, and the eyewitness testified that he saw a man run from the scene and the accused looked like the person he saw. The prosecutor has also presented testimonial evidence from an expert witness who has testified to the fact that the blood type is a rare type, and only one in a million individuals in the world has the type. Now, at this point, from the evidence presented, you could reasonably believe that this is the accused's semen/blood. But you still would like to know the results of the DNA tests in order to be positive of the man's guilt. But that is a problem. The expert witness who performed the tests could not make a conclusive DNA identification match because there was very little evidence left on the victim. So, the only evidence that you

and the other jury members has to consider are the questionable eyewitness' identification and the semen/blood evidence. The prosecutor want you to convict this man on this evidence, and most importantly, the fact that there are only one in a million people in the world with this rare blood type. The prosecutor knows that any reasonable person in your situation will convict this man, and you have.

Now, guess what?!!! DNA tests were in fact conducted and the results proved that the man was not the culprit, but the exculpatory information was withheld from the condemned man and from you. This is the type of corrupt nonsense that the government does everyday without caring of the lives that they are destroying. They want you to play this game of "mental gymnastics" with the limited evidence that was presented against a man's life, instead of telling you the actual results of the DNA test.

And what about the victim and their family? They just do not care.

Then, there are those prosecutors and detectives who will just "go all out" to frame an individual, by taking evidence of the accused and claimed it was found at the crime scene. O.J.'s case is a perfect example. He was lucky though. He had attorneys who know the police's and prosecutor's tricks. See, an average state appointed attorney -or even an retained attorney for that matter- would not had the thoughts in investigating the police officers, the detectives/investigators, the prosecutors and others like the attorneys in O.J.'s case. Because to do that, would be going against "The Establishment". These are the attorney's friends, family members, and brothers and sisters in the practice, and to question them, would mean being: "Marked". Especially, if the establishment is trying to put someone away.

But the "Dream Team" (a famous title given to O.J.'s defense team of world famous and renowned attorneys and investigators), on the other hand, had zealously put the State on trial exposing police misconduct, from allegedly planting evidence, to state witnesses, like Detective Mark Furman, testifying falsely under oath. After the eloquent and powerful: "If it doesn't fit; you must acquit" summation delivered by "The People" civil rights and criminal defense attorney, Mr. Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. and the acquittal of O.J., many Americans became very angry about the verdict.

America blamed everyone, but the right ones. The corruption that was discovered in the case, Detective Mark Furman -with his bigotry and unprofessional abusive past while on the Force- who committed perjury, and other factors got O.J. off.

O.J.'s attorneys did their job, and that was to create reasonable doubt. The state by putting Furman on the witness stand basically killed the case. Even the former state's prosecutor who was so vocal in trying the case, Mr. Christopher Darden admitted to Oprah during an interview that Mr. Cochran told him, "Man. You better not put that boy on the stand." So, everyone, including the families of Nicole Brown Simpson, Ronald Goldman, and O.J. Simpson, angry with the corrupted LAPD and Furman.

The Dream Team was in fact just that to a poor man, a dream. He only wish to have attorneys and investigators like them. The average attorney would not believed that the police department would framed their client. If O.J. had the attorneys that some of the poor, like myself, He would be sitting on death row.

For years, scandals has been uncovered on countless of crime labs and its personnel across the nation who have been involved in altering physical evidence collected from crime scenes and making the evidence appear positive towards the accused guilt. I had read a report in which the FBI's crime lab had a team of mad scientists called, "The Fraternity" that would altered DNA results in order to make them favorable to the prosecution's case. In the report, it stated that these evil monsters would intently diluted the test with the testing chemicals in order to make the test inconclusive of the accused's innocence or guilt. The most alarming thing about this discovery was the fact, according to the report, that it was specifically targeting African Americans' criminal cases. The FBI's crime lab had

been identified as using flawed science and skewed testimony in over 3000 criminal cases. (J. Edgar Hoover still lives, even in death. As you know, the FBI's Headquarters is ironically named after him.)

In Houston, its crime lab had to be closed after discovering that, at least 20 cases, including 7 death row cases, had given flawed science results. In Chapter 5 - "White Coat Fraud" - of the book, Actual Innocence, it reported several cases of forensic science fraud, including the fraudulent acts by Fred Sain and Ralph Erkmann who were involved in some of the vilest and monstrous acts known in the forensic science community. The chapter also reported other criminal acts in which a police officer in Orange County, California photocopied fingerprint cards from suspects and then, pressed the wet photocopies of the prints onto blank "lift" cards from armed robberies, the authors said. In another case, the authors revealed in upstate New York, state troopers were planting fingerprints on evidence in cases, and it was only discovered after a trooper from the department applied for a job at the CIA and boasted to them about it. The sad thing about this story, once the F.B.I. was notified about the practice, the agency took a year reporting it to state authorities. Trust me, these are not isolated cases. I have seen countless television news documentary programs, including NBC's Dateline, who have shown reports of crime labs and its employees altering evidence, and giving false testimony as expert witnesses to evidence, including DNA results. Now, you see why the parents of JonBenet Ramsey wisely had their hired specialists reside along side the state's specialists when tests were being done of the evidence that was gathered from JonBenet's rape/murder case. The family did not care how the media or the world saw them, or what they had thought of them. Their attorneys knew that the state was hovering around the Ramseys like buzzards circle around a carcass, and they had to shut it down. Poor individuals, on the other hand do not have this helpful and necessary luxury once they become a suspect in case, and this is clearly to the state's advantage. Even at times when a person is fortunate enough to have attorneys who are really in their corner, it still does not guarantee that a person will receive all access to the evidence like the Ramseys.

I recently read an article in the February/march 2005 issue of Innocence Denied called, "We Are Off Target: The Bully is a Prosecutor" written by Miti Ajum-Osagboro (Political Prisoner No-5021). In this informative and enlightening article, the author comments on an article that was written by the popular non-African American author, America's State Senator, Eric Holder.

In the senator's article, "Not To Be Trusted Are the Police", the good brother - as Brother Miti Ajum-Osagboro explained, gave "...a detailed expose on how cops in the heartland, in a ploy to keep federal funding, are illegally collecting DNA samples from African men to use later to set them up wholesale." What even caught my eye even more as I continued to read Brother Ajum-Osagboro's explosive article was fact of what he had said in regards to the prosecutor. In his keen analogy, he stated:

"The corrupt prosecutor is the bully!" *** "We must refocus our telescopes on the prosecutor because he or she is the sun in the judicial constellation that all other law enforcement entities revolve around, second to none in power or influence. When the chain of command within the just-us system is understood, you realize that above the damage wrought by a judge, a cop, or a treasonous defense lawyer, stands the work of the prosecutor." ***

'Prosecutors routinely withhold exculpatory evidence, threaten witnesses, falsely testify, manufacture evidence, suborn perjury as

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will as perform numerous other criminal acts. For these crimes, they should be put on wanted posters. Wanted by the people for removal from office for unspeakable crimes against the people, particularly African people. The district attorney is used to being on the offensive so we put them on the defense, which will assure our victory because their criminal conduct is indefensible."

Here are some examples of what the comrade has pointed out. I came across an article in the May 5, 2005 issue of Rolling Stone called, "Dirty Secrets" by Kimberley Sevcik. This article troubled me very much because of the nature of the charges, and the fact that the corrupt prosecutor is still in office. The prosecutor, Ed Jagels -or as people calls him, J. Edgar Jagels, was the head District Attorney for the District of Kern County in Bakerfield, California. According to the article, Mr. Jagels, between 1983 and 1987 had sent twenty-nine people to prison for alleged child molestation, some receiving up to 400 years. It was later discovered that his office had coached children into making false allegations -some stories were bizarre and unbelievable- about their parents (mainly fathers) molesting them without any physical evidence to support the children's allegations. While Mr. Jagels and his office were framing parents and destroying families, he had a crew "in the closet" molesters who were judges, prosecutors, and other community elites who infamously became known as "The Lords of Bakerfield". These men would have sex and sex parties with homeless teenage boys in exchange for money and drugs. The article went on discussing the fact that Mr. Stephen Tauzer, who was second-in-command as prosecutor under Jagels, was found dead as a result of several stab wounds, by a teenage boy's father. It was believed that for several years, Mr. Tauzer had a sexual affair with the teenage boy in exchange for drug money.

In Texas, there was a prosecutor that was describe as "blustery and hot-tempered" who was sending individuals to prison from 36 years to 99 years for drugs. But in January of 2005, it came to an end when his secretary -who was working for the FBI and wearing a hidden wire and recorder- was present when he was stealing drugs from the police evidence room and "shootin' it up." Can you believe it. He did it right in front of his secretary. The former prosecutor had recently pled guilty to possessing a firearm while using illegal drugs - a charge that could send him to prison up to 10 years- and his other drug charges were dropped.

This is nothing new with prosecutors. You hear these kinds of stories of prosecutor abuses, but they are ignored by America. In an article, "Misconduct Found in Thousands of Cases" by Micheal Sniffen of the Associate Press, it was found that 223 prosecutors across the U.S. were cited by judges for two or more cases of unfair conduct, but out of 33 years, only two prosecutors had been disbarred for misconduct in criminal cases. The article further revealed after a three year study by a private ethics watchdog group, The Center for Public Integrity, that 32 defendants in 28 cases were exonerated after judges concluded that misconduct by prosecutors contributed in the conviction of innocent individuals. These cases included rape, kidnapping and murder (some were sentenced to death). So, the corrupt behavior by prosecutors across the U.S. is not episodic, as everyone would like to believe, but in fact, an epidemic at massive and troubling proportions. Most of the abuse is concealed and never discovered, because in most cases, the accused will plead guilty, instead of taking the case to trial. And, those who do take their cases to trial, and are later convicted, without a trustworthy appellate attorney, a news publication or media reporter, who would expose the misconduct, or a honest court law clerk , who actually does the research and draft the opinion for the reviewing judge who is hearing the appeal, the abuse will not be exposed and corrected. It

does not make a difference how blatant or egregious the misconduct was. I am an example of this abuse, which I had elaborated further in the Chapter, "PEOPLE V KENNETH COLVIN, JR." The prosecutor's job is to seek justice, but in reality, they are more concern with: 1. the win (the conviction of the accused), and 2. the finality of the case (insuring that the conviction stand throughout the appeal process and there is an end to the case).

There are troubling and unfair issues with excessive bails, selective and vindictive prosecutions, and guilty pleas by way of plea bargains. This area of criminal law is notoriously being abused by both the prosecution and the courts.

The Eighth Amendment states that "Excessive bail shall not be required". This being the case, for some odd reason, the courts across America, who sets the bails for newly charged individuals, particularly the poor and African Americans, totally ignores this requirement of the constitution. Courts have systematically for years has set bail enormously high in non-serious cases, including simple drug cases.

Judges who set the bail are clearly aware that the accused can not post (pay) bail and therefore, the accused is forced to deal with a ~~profitable~~ money hungry bondsman, or just sit in jail waiting for his fate -his day in court when he is convicted and shipped off on the "early morning freight train hearing up state-the penitentiary. By the prosecutor being aware of the fact that 70 percent of individuals who are represented by state-appointed attorneys will pled guilty, the prosecutor will deliberately overcharge the individual with felony charges, including incorporating statutory sentence enhancing charges -three Strike Law, Career Criminal Acts, Habitual Offender Acts and so forth for those who have been formerly convicted of one or more felonies. In doing this, strategically, it forces the individual to "cop-out" to a plea agreement that his defense attorney and the prosecutor has worked out. Normally, as part of the plea agreement, the prosecutor will drop certain charges, including the sentence enhancing charges because of the individual accepting the plea agreement. But the reality is, the other charges that were dropped, in most cases, were nothing more than excessive charges that the prosecutor used as leverage (bargaining chips) in order to force the individual into taking a plea.

This plea bargaining tactic, in most cases, forces the individual to plea guilty to charges that the prosecutor should had only charged him with in the first place.

Now, if the individual decides not to take the deal, and go forward with a trial. If he is found guilty, the individual is almost guaranteed to receive a very harsh sentence than the proposed sentence in the plea agreement. With this in mind, out of fear of receiving harsher sentences -even if the individual is in fact innocent, he will take the plea agreement deal. The television weekly news documentary, Frontline, exposed this practice and how it was forcing the innocent, or individuals who had minimal involvement in a crime that they were charged with into taking pleas, because of fear in receiving very harsh sentences if they had taken the case to trial and were found guilty. In one case, Frontline had shown a very disturbing case of how a young sister, out of fear, took a plea on a drug case and was sent to prison, while her co-defendants decided to take their cases to trial and were all found not guilty. It is like playing the '70s popular game show with Montay Hall in "Lets Make a Deal". You can take door number one; door number two; or door number three. But remember, if you pick the wrong door, "That's your life".

In regards to the notorious case in selective prosecution. this is where the prosecution decides to charge one person, but not another for the same offense, with the same identical circumstances. Cases in which police officers are involved in beatings, shootings, murders, and other criminal behavior are a perfect example

of this blatant abuse. You and I have seen an incalculable number of cases for decades in which law enforcement employees have been involved in serious criminal acts, yet the district attorney each and every time find some lame excuse in not pursuing criminal charges against the culprit. Even at times when he or she has seen with their own eyes that a crime had been committed. I mean crimes that common citizens have been convicted of. There are other examples of this abuse. Take for instance two separate arson cases that happened in the early part of 2005 in Michigan. The first involved two caucasian older teens who were recent graduates of the high school that they had intently set the school's computer lab on fire causing damages in the amount of over \$300,000 -not including the current students' school project that was totally destroyed by the teens' prank. The teens were initially charged with arson and was released on house arrest, with ankle bracelet tethers. But for some strange reason, the prosecutor dropped the charges. And that was the end of the story. Now, at the same time this case was being publicized in the news, two children from Saginaw were charged with arson after setting an abandoned house on fire, and they were locked up with bail set at \$5,000 each. What is wrong with that picture?!

Then, there is the case with America's Catholic priests, the child molestation scandal in the church, and the massive cover-up. There were documents that were discovered of countless Catholic priests who were involved in molesting children that dated back over 60 years, and the catholic Church had concealed it, not only from the public, but also from the criminal authorities. Even though it has been revealed that the entire organization had collectively concealed the sexual abuse of children by the priests, no criminal charges -let alone a government investigation- has ever been brought against the Church and the Vatican City (The Holy See) where the organization is based. In fact, I recently heard a report on the news about the current pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI requested immunity from President Bush on the entire ordeal.

This is the same situation with a small closed community religious sect located on the borders of Utah and Arizona. This religious sect has old men forcing women, particularly young girls, into polygynous (polygamous) relationships and having an enormous amount of children. In fact, in some cases, receiving government aid (welfare) to take care of very large families with two or more dozen children. This religious sect that has incorporated itself in order to protect the leaders, its' members and their interests, and also to ensure its' daily practice their religious without any government intervening. The States of Utah and Arizona claim that they can not find a law in order to charge the sect with. Well, I will make some suggestions. First, they can start with the violation of the federal "Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO). Next, with the State of Utah's statute, Utah Code §76-7-101, which states: That a "person is guilty of bigamy when, knowing he has a husband or wife or knowing the other person has a husband or wife, the person purports to marry another person or cohabits with another person", child molestation and white slavery.

Now, while America has allowed these religious organizations to run free and rampant, being fully aware of their involvement in serious criminal activities, the government, when it comes to African Americans and their religious and political organizations takes on an entire different philosophy. The government has targeted and annihilated religious groups like Dr. Malachi Z. York's organization -that converted over 500 acres of land in Eaton, Georgia into the Ancient Land of Egypt- just for simple civil or criminal acts. Dr. York was sent to prison for a 123 years for alleged child molestation. I do not condone this behavior at all, but I believe that if you are going to come at Dr. York -if he is guilty- then, the government should be just as adamant in pursuing and convicting these other religious groups

who have not only been involved in child molestation, but concealing it as well.

Even politicians, businessmen and lobbyists in the United States found their way in escaping justice when they were involved in serious crimes, while African Americans politicians and businessmen find themselves in a prison cell. For example, the government went after successful businessman, Mr. Le-Van Hawkins of Le-Van Hawkins Food and Entertainment Group, L.L.C., and charged him with over a hundred odd counts including fraud, just by signing two personal checks valued at no more than \$10,000 and allegedly given them to an African American politician out of Philadelphia for political favors. Yet crooks like President George Bush, Vice President, Dick Cheney, and the Halliburton Corporation, which has been discovered in deliberately overcharging and overpricing taxpayers for items and services in the "so-called" War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq, has not seen their days in court for their obvious criminal actions in giving "no bid" contracts to Halliburton in exchange for political finance support at GOP political fundraising dinners to say the least. Even Ms. Sarah Rhodes of Air America acknowledged during one of her programs that the Bush brothers were bank robbers who now sit in the White House, Florida's Governor's Mansion and on some company's payroll. These Bosos want the world particularly African Americans and the poor to follow the law to the letter, and at the same time, they are twisting, breaking, or just simply ignoring the law.

If the case does go to trial, the individual is subject to more judiciary abuse and discrimination, starting with the jury and its selection process. There have been literally a substantial number of documented and reported cases in which the courts, themselves has been involved in a "in-house" clandestine project in systematically excluding certain groups, particularly African Americans, Hispanics and Latino Americans, Jewish Americans, certain economical and social classed women, and believe it or not, full figured women from being called to serve jury duty in criminal cases -and civil cases for that matter. The process is simply executed by the courts' clerk's office in failing to mail jury duty questionnaires to registered voters of those particular groups, thus eliminating them as potential jurors. Their goal is to carry out this unconstitutional act in eliminating all sympathetic and liberal fair-minded individuals from jury duty, because they are unjustly believed to be more favorable to the defense. In *BRINSON V VUONG*, 393 F.3d 1005 (2nd Cir. 2005) it revealed a violation which "The Plaintiff did not claim" and was Philadelphia's District Attorney, Office of the Attorney General effectively training prosecutors in eliminating African American potential jurors in criminal jury trials. In *RICE V COLLINS*, 126 S.Ct. 969 (2006), a young sister was dismissed from the jury during voir dire questioning just because she had "rolled" her eyes in response to a question from the court. Further, the court who dismissed her believed that she was young, single, lack ties to the community, and might be too tolerant of drug crimes. That was clearly racial profiling in the jury selection process. And, whatever happened to the Sixth Amendment protection which states in part: "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed..."? (I have included some other cases to read in regards to jury discrimination: *US V JACKSON*, 46 F.3d 1240 (2nd Cir. 1995) and *US V GONZALEZ*, 801 F.Supp. 966(D. COLO. 1992)). Studies has shown that in the majority of criminal convictions that were tried by jury, the selected members that served on those juries had most likely conservative views, and in most cases, were Republican supporters. That may sound crazy, but it is true. In Kent County -where I was convicted, it was recently discovered in 2004, that its clerks were systematically excluding over 75 percent of both African American and Hispanic

American eligible jurors from serving on juries in criminal trials. It was claimed by the clerk's office that their computers "so-called" failed to include the area zip codes and addresses of both ethnic groups in order to mail jury questionnaires for over 15 months. The discovery only came about after high school teenagers - of all people- recognized that minorities were not receiving fair trials and there were not African Americans and Hispanic Americans serving on the "all-white" juries.

It is amazing how children could recognize a problem that the clerk and the court "allegedly" could not. I do not know if the court's clerks are aware of this, but computers are programmed by humans. So, if the zip codes of these predominately African American and Hispanic American communities were not listed in the computer program, it was done, not by the computers, but by human failure. Computers are not racist, or have a mind of its own. With this in mind, African Americans start the jury process at a total disadvantage, and therefore, the defense will always find themselves in an unfavorable position in selecting a fair, open-minded, impartial jury. This is the norm with so many African Americans, including myself, -who had basically an all white jury, with only one female African American, and a Texas' death row inmate, Brother Miller-El, who had just recently received a new trial from the United States Supreme Court in regards to the trial court violating the Sixth Amendment in giving him a bias jury panel. In Brother Miller-El's case -who had been appealing his conviction for the last 20 years, the prosecutor had intentionally eliminated African Americans as potential jurors at his trial, thus following a procedure that was notoriously practiced by the prosecution office.

In the Supreme Court's decision, MILLER-EL V DRETTUS, 125 S.Ct. 2317 (2005), the Court found it very troubling that, "Out of 20 Black members of the 108-person venire panel for Miller-El's trial, only 1 served." The Court went on further by acknowledging that, "although 9 were excluded for cause or by agreement, 10 were peremptorily struck by the prosecution." The prosecutor had basically excluded 91 percent of the eligible African-American to serve on his jury. As the Court concluded in regards to the prosecution results, "Happenstance is unlikely to produce this disparity." With the make up of juries that both African Americans and Hispanic Americans receive across America, it should not come to any surprise of the conviction rate in cases that goes to trial. In Michigan, it has been reported that counties like, Genesee, Kent, Macomb, and Oakland has basically a perfect conviction rate in ~~cases~~ tried by jury. Cases that are being tried by jury

are not the ones that go on in everyday life in this America. Take for instance, a brother or a sister who has been charged with possession of a handgun -in Michigan, the charge is, Carrying a Concealed Weapon. The individual has never been in trouble with the law, but in that State in which the individual was charged, it is a felony to carry a handgun. The individual was carrying the handgun for their protection, because he or she works and takes public transportation in the early hours of the morning. The individual had been robbed once while waiting for the public transportation. Now, a conservative-minded person -who may live in the suburbs and never resided in the ghetto- would clearly convict the person based on the elements of the charge. But on the other hand, an open-minded jury member - who may or may not live in the ghetto- more often than not, will take the person's circumstances into consideration and not find the person guilty. Counties that are known to be conservative or ultra-conservative has a tendency to convict more often than, liberal or ultra-liberal type counties. And if you think politics does not play a role in jury selections, you need to watch a week of C-SPAN's Washington Journal and listen to the callers and their comments. These are the people who will sit on juries in America.

Unfortunately, Detroit's liberalism was attacked by racists and evil outsiders who have a deep hatred and vendetta of the predominately African American city.

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the appropriate amount of prison time or probation that will be issued under the sentencing guidelines based on the individual's character, prior criminal records -if they have one, the seriousness of the crime and so on. But for some odd reason, the investigators, who are required by law to gather truthful and accurate information, no matter how favorable or unfavorable the information is about the individual, often times amplifies only negatives and eliminates or deliberately fail to include in the report, positive information on the person the report is being produced for. For example in my case, the reporter deliberately failed to include the fact that the entire time I was on parole, I had maintained steady employment -until the day of my arrest, I had attended college and just registered for fall classes in paralegal, maintained clean urine drops -testing for drugs- throughout my entire parole, continued to pay my oversight fee and brought in my employment paycheck stubs as proof of employment. She had easy access to my parole file with all the documented information, including the documented information in regards to the paralegal classes that I was scheduled to start dated October 4, 1994. It was totally impossible for her to fail to discover this information, because the woman worked for the State's probation department -the same department that handles parolees' caseload. That is the same department. I mean none of this information was included in my pre-sentence investigation report even though she had access to the parole file and with no doubt in my mind, she had possession of it. The information was favorable and contrary to the picture that the court and she wanted to paint of me. Just like this racist, prejudice, and evil criminal justice system has done with all of us. I spoke more on this in the next chapter PEOPLE VS. KENNETH COLVIN, JR., CASE NO. 94-2732-PC. The "PSI" as it is called, paints these very fraudulent and at times, unwarranted nasty and evil pictures of a convicted person for the judge at sentencing and for prison administrators, including corrections officers, who take these reports as true and perpetuate the racist stereotypical beliefs that they have been accustom to believing from the America's propaganda machine, the media.

The sentencing process in America's court system is very much prejudice as well, especially when it comes to giving out time. Here are some fact that I had discovered from the Bureau of Justice statistics' web-site when it comes to probation. Caucasians are more likely to receive probation for crimes -sometimes violent crimes- than they are entitled to as opposed to African Americans. In the report released for year-end 2003, it stated that approximately 56 percent of the adults on probation were caucasians (2,298,600), 30 percent were African Americans (1,209,000), and 16 percent were Hispanic (491,700). Therefore, African Americans are not committing more crimes, as some believe. It is just that caucasians are more likely to receive probation than, African Americans and Hispanics. But that should not come to my surprise, considering the fact, that the justice system is predominantly controlled and operated by caucasians, mostly males. So, I could understand the logic in why the racist justice systems of Kent, Cuyahoga, and Oakland would unjustifiably attack Detroit's African American control and operated justice system, because those counties recognize that Detroit was doing the same thing that they were guilty of: "looking out for their own!"

In regards to the sentencing in drug law offenses, even though it has been reported that caucasians are eight times more likely than African Americans to use drugs, caucasians are more likely to receive probation for drug offenses than African Americans. In cases like *US V. ALLOW*, (60 F.3d 1065 (1995)), *US V. HIGHER*, (70 F.3d 488 (7th cir. 1995)), and *US V. SMITH*, (399 F. SUPP.2d 278 (D.R.I. 2005)), they explain the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986, which was established by Congress

in order to so-called combat the crack cocaine problem in America. Under U.S. Penal Code 21 U.S.C. §841 -which was amended- it mandates a 100:1 ratio in the quantity in crack cocaine and cocaine powder, therefore triggering mandatory minimum penalties in violating the Code. For example, the law established mandatory penalties in incarceration terms of five years for in the conviction of 500 grams of cocaine powder or 50 grams of cocaine base "crack", and a ten year term of imprisonment for the conviction of 5 kilograms of cocaine powder or 50 grams of cocaine base.

In essence, the law treats any amount of cocaine base as to the equivalent of a hundred times the amount of cocaine powder. It also equates 1 gram of crack cocaine to 20 kilograms of marijuana, but 1 gram of powder cocaine to 200 kilograms of marijuana. In the ALTON case it cited a 1993 Annual Report from the United States Sentencing Commission in which the commission conducted a study in regards to the penal code and how it has been unfairly applied. The report -that monitored periods from October 1, 1992, through September 31, 1993- stated that: "95.1 percent of the offenders incarcerated and subjected to the 1 to 100 ~~ratio~~ between crack and powder cocaine were either Blacks or Hispanics". In another case, US V. REESE, (60P.3d 660(1995)), Mr. J. Patrick Loofburrow, investigator from the Federal Defender's Office had conducted a study in regards to this same issue, and he had discovered in the Southern District of California, from 1989 to 1993, of the 193 defendants that his office represented, all but one were minorities (1-caucasian, 11-Hispanics, and 181 African Americans). The study also found:

"A report published by the San Diego Association of Governments suggested that law enforcement agencies concentrated cocaine base investigations in areas heavily composed of Blacks, even though they had also identified at least one white area with High cocaine base activity. Finally, the defendants relied upon statistics compiled by the California Department of Justice, which tended to show that whites were more often prosecuted in state court than federal court for cocaine base offenses."

In US V. ARMSTRONG, ET. AL., (517 US 456; 116 S.CT. 1480 (1996)), in Justice John Paul Stevens' dissenting opinion, he had acknowledged the unfairness and disparity in the sentencing practices when it comes to the drug offenses. Justice Stevens said in part:

"Finally, it is undisputed that the brunt of the elevated federal penalties falls heavily on Blacks. While 65% of the person who have used crack are white, in 1993 they represented only 4% of the federal offenders convicted of trafficking in crack. Eighty-eight percent of such defendants were Black. During the first 18 months of full guideline implementation, the sentencing disparity between Black and white defendants grew from preguideline levels: Blacks on average received sentences over 40% longer than whites." *** "Those figures represent a major threat to the integrity of federal sentencing reform, whose main purpose was the elimination of disparity (especially racial) in sentencing. The Sentencing Commission acknowledges that the heightened crack penalties are a primary cause of the growing disparity between sentences for Black and white federal defendants."

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I have discovered a couple cases in which African Americans were victims of this injustice drug policy.

First, the Infamous "CIA-Contra-Crack Cocaine Case" involving California drug dealer, Ricky "Freeway" Ross (US V. ROSS, 372 F.3d 1097 (9th cir. 2004)). Ross and his co-defendants, Leroy Brown and Curtis James all received Life terms in drug-trafficking offenses after being entrapped (set-up) in a reverse drug sting by an undercover Drug Enforcement Agency Special Agent, Pedro Penn and an undercover informant, Oscar Danilo Blandon -whom was later discovered to be a Nicaraguan citizen and had ties to the CIA and its drug trafficking activities with the Nicaraguan Contra Rebels in the United States. The case involved Ross and his co-defendants allegedly exchanging over a \$170,000 in cash, for a Chevy Blazer containing 100 kilograms of cocaine. While Ross, Brown and James, all African Americans, received Life terms for their alleged roles in the reverse drug sting, Blandon, on the other hand, only received a 48 month sentence along with a 5 year supervision release after he had pled guilty to a 1992 indictment to conspiracy to distribute a 125 kilograms of cocaine. Now people, what is wrong with that picture?!!! Here, you have a non-citizen, whom has pled guilty in trafficking hundreds (perhaps thousands) of kilograms of cocaine in America, during a time in which America has instituted some of the hardest, time-bolting drug laws in America's history, and yet, this man only receives 48 months in prison. But, there are tens of thousands of African American young men and women who are sitting in American's prisons with sentences ranging from 5 years to Life without parole just for being in possession of a few damn rocks -and Sister Ruth Bullock, whom I have dedicated this book to, was a tragic victim of this racist madness. In 1988, Sister Bullock was convicted under Michigan's mandatory "Life without the Possibility of Parole-650 Grams" drug law, after she and her co-defendant were arrested for being in possession of 15 kilograms of cocaine that was found in her co-defendant's luggage by police. Although the sister did not have any knowledge that the drugs were in the luggage, because she was just merely picking up the co-defendant from the airport, the sister was still convicted by a jury, and unfortunately died in prison. But then, I had ran across a Michigan "650 Gram" drug case that was heard in a federal district court under federal state habeas corpus, SATTERLEE V. WOLFENBARGER (374 F. SUPP.2d 562 (E.D. Mich. 2005)) that had totally different results at the trial court level. In this case, Wynn Satterlee was charged and convicted by jury in conspiracy to deliver more than 650 grams of cocaine, yet he only receives 20 to 30 years in state prison.

And what makes this case so baffling and bizarre, Satterlee, after a habeas corpus evidentiary hearing, received a conditional granting of his petition for writ of habeas corpus, based on an alleged trial attorney's error in allegedly not informing Satterlee of the prosecution's six to twenty year plea deal. Now, Satterlee paid David Dodge, a Michigan very prominent attorney, \$55,000 and Dodge allegedly failed to tell him about this plea deal. Especially when this man is looking at Life without the Possibility of Parole. Yeah, Right!!! Satterlee, whom is possibly on the street, had strategically escaped his delivery case, while Sister Bullock had died in prison, just for unknowingly being in mere possession.

Now, since the Crystal Methamphetamine (Crystal Meth) epidemic that has totally rocked some caucasians' communities, as crack has done in the 80's and throughout the 90's in the African Americans' communities, everyone including the racist politicians -who spearheaded the tough drug sentencing campaigns against African Americans- has a sudden change of heart when it comes to the Crystal Meth users and dealers. Instead of the unsympathetic "lock them up and throwaway the key" antics or stance, it is now all about "let's get them help with alternative programs, instead of prison". How thoughtful. As we all have seen, Meth is just as addictive,

violent, abusive, neglecting and dangerous as crack, yet it is not seen by law makers and get tough on drugs advocates as a violent drug as they have characterized crack, and the reason for this, Meth has become a caucasian epidemic in the rural and suburban communities, and therefore it is a fact that the law makers and advocates recognizes. It is troubling, but true.

The evil hands of injustice disparities are not just isolated with drug sentencing cases, but with all forms of criminal sentencing as well. Across the Nation African Americans are more susceptible in receiving disproportionately harsher sentences than caucasians for similar type crimes. I am quite sure you have heard of the recent stories in which judges had decided to sentenced child molesters - both men and women- to probation or county jail time, because the molester was too short, too pretty, or would not survive the monstrous and dangerous environment of prison life, yet they are sentencing our African American children, as young as 15 and 16 years old to these same adult prisons. BLAH! BLAH! BLAH! That is what prison protective custody is for. I had recently read a totally pathetic article in the August 8, 2006 issue of the Criminal Law Reporter (Vol. 79, No. 17) in which it revealed how one individual had received a three-month prison term for defrauding the government's Medicare system out of \$5 million, and another individual, whom was originally sentenced to a five-hour prison term -before the court of appeals overturned the outrageous sentence- for swindling a bank out of \$500,000. Can you believe that!!!! As I have said a zillion times brothers and sisters, "It's not about crime." Trust me, States have enacted laws that has given individuals drastically more time for simple cases. Laws like, the Career Criminal Act, the Habitual Repeated Offender Act, Truth in Sentencing Act and the most popular "Three Strike" law has significantly contributed to America's prison population growth.

In fact, California, with its three strike law has significantly overpopulated its prisons ten fold with "25 to Life" lifers. Individuals like Gary A. Ewing, who had received his third strike for shoplifting three golf clubs -each costing \$399, or Leandro Andrade, who is currently serving life under the three strikes law for stealing a \$150 worth of videotapes, had both unsuccessfully challenged their convictions in federal court under habeas corpus. The United States Supreme Court held in EWING V CALIFORNIA (538 US 11; 123 S.Ct. 1179 (2003)) and LOCKYER V ANDRADE (538 US 63; 123 S.Ct. 1166 (2003)) that the California's Three Strike Law was not a violation of the United States Constitution's Eight Amendment -Cruel and Unusual Punishment, thus making the law constitutional. The law -which was also known as, Proposition 184, came into existence in response to the national publicized senseless tragic kidnapping/murder of 12 year-old, Polly Klass by repeated kidnapper, Richard Allen Davis. I have noticed over the years, laws like the Three Strike law never seems to serve its intended purpose, as the laws only effect the destitute and African Americans -as you can see with the cases of Ewing and Andrade. It has been reported, California has over 8,000 prisoners incarcerated under this law, including a man who simply stolen a pizza. As cases and time has shown, the California's Three Strikes Law has done nothing in deterring monsters from snatching up, raping, and murdering children. This is the same story with the Federal government's counter-terrorist, "Patriot Act" -which since enactment, it has only been effective in invading everyone's privacy, attacking the homeless, and convicting a few drug dealers. But not surprising though, it has done nothing in stopping terrorism. And there is something else I have noticed about these laws. They only come into existence after a caucasian tragedy. This was the case with the Michigan's Parole Board after Lesile Allen Williams' case and Michigan's Prison Visitation Restriction Policy after a convicted child molester, during a prison visit, molested a child, while his wife watched. These laws has always been very harmful towards African Americans. So much so, I often ask myself, "Are African Americans truly citizens?"

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I sometimes ponder on that question, seriously. Especially, after I had read United States Supreme Court's Chief Justice, Roger B. Taney's opinion in the very controversial America's landmark decision, DRED SCOTT V JOHN F.A. STANFORD (60 US 393 (1857)) in which he said, "The word "citizen" in the Constitution does not embrace one of the Negro race --Negro cannot become a citizen... The Rights and Privileges conferred by the Constitution upon citizens do not apply to the Negro race. *** The provisions of the Constitution of the United States in relation to the Personal Rights and Privileges to which the citizen of a State should be entitled, do not embrace the Negro African Race, at that time in this country, or who might afterwards be imported, who had then been or should afterwards be made free in any State." Some say that Chief Justice Taney's opinion has been abrogated long ago, but I wonder sometimes. I mean, the way African Americans are treated in the justice system, today, are very accurate in the way we were treated in the past, and I have proof of it. In the Nation of Islam informative book, "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews", the researchers reveals historical facts of how unjust America was towards African Americans during the institution of slavery. For example, in 1797, three slaves were tried, but only one was convicted and hanged for allegedly breaking in a store and stealing \$500. In 1798, a sister named Polly, was sentenced to receive five lashes on her bare back and ordered to be branded on her left hand, just for allegedly taking a loaf of bread and sugar worth \$2.00. In 1832, a "free" brother was sentenced to five years imprisonment --which six months was to be spent on solitary confinement, because he allegedly stolen two watches that were valued at \$32.00. In concluding, I had found this fact very interesting from the book. It said, "The most extreme case on record was the murder of a slave by Joseph Cohen of Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1819, a crime for which he was indicted, tried and convicted --'although of course the penalty for the murder of a Negro by a white was much less severe than the penalty for a trivial misdemeanor committed by a Negro.'" Why am I not surprised. Especially considering the fact of all the African Americans living in prisons across America today for crimes based on economical reasons, while individuals can rob, kill and rape, never seeing a needle, let alone a prison call. And we don't need to go there about the injustices when it comes to sentencing individuals to death. The results are the same, with African Americans predominantly occupying America's Death Rows as well.

And finally the appeal process. There is a phrase that is well known among all prisoners across America when it comes to the United States criminal trial and appellate process, and that is: "It's easy to be convicted but hard as hell to get a reversal". In the criminal justice system a convicted person can appeal his conviction starting with the State's "Appeal of Right", and continue on through the appellate process, all the way to the highest court in the Nation, the United States Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. The process is somewhat simple for an individual who has sufficient comprehension in reading and forming strategic persuasive arguments on his behalf to the courts. But more often than not, the process also can be very complex, brain draining, and at times, time consuming for even the well educated prominent attorneys who have graduates from some of the most prestigious law schools in the world. In the end, if the results are favorable, it can be rewarding, because you have obtained your ultimate goal, your freedom.

In the U.S., there is a very important and historical procedure that has been mandated in the United States Constitution called the Writ of Habeas Corpus. The Latin meaning in the term according to Webster's New Encyclopedic Dictionary (copyright 1995) means:

"1. Any of several writs issued to bring a person before court; esp: one ordering an inquiry to determine whether or not a person has been lawfully imprisoned. 2. The right of a citizen to obtain a Writ of Habeas Corpus as a protection against illegal imprisonment [Medieval Latin, literally, "You should have the body" (The opening words of the Writ)]"

So, in essence, the Writ of Habeas Corpus gives the convicted individual the right to challenge his conviction in federal courts in order to determine whether or not if he has been illegally imprisoned under federal or state jurisdiction, pursuant to the United States Constitution, Article I; section 9; paragraph 2, which clearly states, "The privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it".

With this in mind, over the years, both the United States Supreme Court and the United States Congress has slowly, systematically chipped away at the privilege of the writ of Habeas Corpus with procedures, rules, standards and so forth, that has been nothing more than obstacles that has been confusing, frustrating and at times, mind draining to a prisoner who is simply trying to have his day in federal court in order to prove his innocence and illegal confinement. These obstacles has been put in place for the sole purpose in aiding the prosecution -who conveniently barricade themselves from exposing the truth and corruption that had been concealed by him and others, and annihilate prisoners chances in revealing the truth, and obtaining their freedom.

After 1994 when the Republicans had taken control of Congress, they along with then President Bill Clinton decided to attack the poor with a series of reform laws that basically came at civil rights itself. Two such Acts, The Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1996 that I had spoke on in Chapter One "The System/Matrix", and the other, The Anti-Counter Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 were both acts created with the sole purpose ~~to~~ to severely erode any rights a prisoner had during incarceration. The Anti-Counter Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, popularly known as, "AEDPA" was a bill introduced to so-call protect America against terrorism, but in reality (with the terrorist attack on America in September 11, 2001) like with all bills that pass through Congress, in the end, the laws in effects attacks the poor and defenseless. For the first time in the history of the Writ, a one-year statute of limitation for filing the writ was mandated in all criminal cases, state and federal, and this rule has been strictly enforced by the courts, as countless of prisoners have discovered, including a prisoner that I had personally knew who was denied a hearing of his writ because he allegedly filed three days after the one-year limitation. In *PRIGEN V SHAWEN*, 380 F.3d 721 (3rd cir. 2004) the court said, "Prior to AEDPA, it was generally understood that there was no limitation on a prisoner's filing successive Habeas petitions. Indeed, as far back as 1924, the Supreme Court had noted in *SALINGER V LOISER*, 265 US 224, 230; 44 S.Ct. 519; 68 L.Ed.2d 969 (1924), that the doctrine of res judicata did not apply to a petition for Habeas Corpus. Thus, res judicata did not prevent a prisoner from filing an endless stream of habeas petitions. AEDPA changed the landscape in 1996 by severely limiting the number of successive Habeas petitions a prisoner is entitled to file, as well as the time period in which to seek relief".

NOTE: In most civil matters filed in federal district courts the statute of limitations of that state in which the case was activated takes precedence. In Michigan, a plaintiff, or an injured party -depending on the case, has from one year, up to six years to file a claim. Yet, with the federal Habeas Corpus procedure, individuals only have one year to file a claim. This is troubling.

If an individual is fortunate enough to get pass the statute of limitation hurdle, he then have numerous of other hindering obstacles that he must encounter and

overcome before a federal district court judge can even review the merits of the writ -which is the entire purpose of the writ. Literally, there are numerous procedures, rules and standards that Congress has enacted against petitioners who are trying to prove their unlawful imprisonment that has basically placed constraints on the reviewing federal district court judge. For example, a petitioner must present all constitutional claims in state court, before bring them in federal court. If a claim is not properly raised in state courts -including in a timely matter, the claim will be considered procedural defaulted, and the claim will be dismissed without the merits of the case being heard. Before a petitioner claim can be heard by a federal district court judge, he must had created a record, through an evidentiary hearing, in state court in order for the federal judge to properly review the trial court's, or appellate court's ruling and the merits of the claim. The federal judge, when reviewing the merits must use the Congress created standard (1) "contrary to, or involved an unreasonable application of federal law clearly established by the Supreme Court" or (2) "based on an unreasonable determination of the facts". A petitioner may not receive habeas relief, if granting the relief would require announcement or application of a new constitutional rule of a criminal procedure. So in essence, if the constitutional rule did not exist at the time the petitioner's claim was heard by the federal judge, the court can not create a rule.

The only rules that the judge must follow, are the rules that were created by the United States Supreme Court before the petitioner's direct appeal became final.

If a petitioner presented a claim in federal court, but did not receive an or failed to obtain an evidentiary hearing, a federal judge can only grant an evidentiary hearing in federal court if: (1) the petitioner had requested an hearing and the state courts denied it; or (2) if the petitioner failed to request an hearing he must show "actual innocence" -which a petitioner chances in meeting this extremely rigorous standard is sometimes impossible- of his entire case. This means, if you presented a colorful constitutional claim in federal court, but you had simply failed to request a hearing on that claim, you are hit. The federal courts are totally restrained from hearing the case under the AEDPA, unless you can show that you are absolutely not guilty of the case. Even if the petitioner is granted a review of his claim by the federal court, under AEDPA, the federal judge must yield or defer to the state courts' decision, unless its decision ~~was~~ contrary to, involved an unreasonable application of federal law clearly established by the Supreme Court, or was based on an unreasonable determination of the facts. As I had pointed out earlier with the PRIGER case, the AEDPA has limited the number of petitions a petitioner can filed with the federal court on a claim(s). This mandate has been very unfavorable towards petitioners who proceed without an attorney -as extremely bias judges and magistrates decides petitions intentionally unfairly.

I will expound more on this issue with my case in the next chapter PEOPLE V KENNETH COUVIN, JR. The odds of a petitioner's writ being granted by the federal court is just as troubling. A few years ago, I had case across a case from the U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals which revealed that out of 2000 Writ of Habeas Corpus petitions that were filed in the Federal District Court out of Chicago in a particular one year period, only 14 petitions were granted in ~~the~~ petitioner favor. -

Here are more troubling numbers for any individual who will or who are currently in the appeal process. Out of all the criminal appeals that are filed in appellate courts each year, only one percent of the cases are heard. There are over 30,000 cases heard in the United States Court of Appeals Circuits, and out of the 5,000 cases that were filed each year in the United States Supreme Court, only 80 cases are selectively heard. So, as an individual's case advances through each stage of the appeal process, his chances of receiving a favorable decision is more and more slim -not because the case lacked merit, but the fact that the courts are totally

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bombarded with cases, and the law clerks are not going to spend too much time in reviewing a case, especially if the case lack representation of an attorney. And that is the reality. I have literally read hundreds of published opinions throughout the years, and I believe I have only seen one case in which an individual, who presented a Writ of Habeas Corpus petition without representation of an attorney, and received a favorable decision. So to successfully appeal a case without an attorney, is like trying to successfully find a needle in a haystack. Your chances are very slim.

In regards to the court's rulings, opinions and orders that are rendered in habeas corpus cases. Prisoners like myself have put in enormous amount of years in studying the law, both civil and criminal, and are considered by some to be Legal Beetles, Jail-House Lawyers, and Blackstone Lawyers who have perfected the craft in studying, as well as fully comprehending the law. Yet when prisoners submits petitions, complaints, beliefs, motions and so forth to the courts for a ruling, he is more likely than not to receive an unfavorable decision or opinion by the court. And when you read a lot of the court's decisions, you become sicken with appalling disgust, because of the court's blatant disregard for the law. I have read court rulings and opinions in which the law clerks and presiding judges had not only deliberately misinterpreted the law, but the case laws that they use in supporting their decisions, itself. There have been cases in which the courts had misinterpreted the facts, created facts that did not exist, or simply just ignore pertinent facts all together. There have been cases in which the judges will clearly know the law on a particular issue, but instead of following the unambiguous precedence in the case law, they will boldly give their illogical -and at times insane, opinions, or in my case with the courts, just totally ignore the ruling like it was never raised by the petitioner. Now, that is what I call an activist judge legislating from the bench. Prisoners put very long hours and time in researching the issues in their case and preparing a persuasive concise brief, only to receive from the court a one or two sentence response to their tiresome effort in obtaining his freedom which states: "Your petition has been reviewed by this Court, and therefore is DENIED". Just that simple. After while, a prisoner starts to wonder what did he do wrong? Was the argument persuasive enough? Was the case law not convincing? So, he means in frustration, anger and worry, because he knows that he only has "one shot-one kill" in raising his issue through the appeal process, and if he does not receive any favorable action from the court, he knows he is hit -for some like myself, for life. The next day, he regroupes and restructures his argument, but this time, preparing a more concise or lengthy argument, quoting verbatim the material points of law from the cases themselves. You figure by incorporating this strategic tactic, that the court could not possibly conclude the incorrect decision. And BOOM!!! Legal mail run, the officer gives you yet another dreadful court response denying you once again. In situations like this, prisoners just give up, thrown in the towel, become very bitter and angry, loose hope, and start chasing boys, isolate themselves from others and start losing their sanity. -if they have not done it before the finality of their appeal. But in some cases, like Brother Miller-El, who knew that he had to fight for his life, kept fighting despite the denials from the appellate courts. As one of the Supreme Court justices said, "...despite the strength of his claim, Miller-El's challenge has resulted in 17 years of largely unsuccessful and protracted litigation, including eight different judicial opinions, and 23 judges". As you can see, this brother, who sat on Texas' Death Row for over 17 long years, only receive action on the same issue after he and his attorney had presented the issue to eight different courts and twenty-three judges. Now and why does something like this happens? Simple!!!

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There are courthouses laced with judges who are very prejudice, corrupted, and evilminded. They all have this attitude of: "He might have something coming, but he won't get it from me." They know a prisoner's case requires a reversal, but still denies the appeal. The reality is, a judge can not be prosecuted or sued for giving bold or clearly repugnant bias opinions. I am a clear victim of this unjust practice. Fortunately for Brother Miller-81 though, he had the luxury in presenting his issue though the courts several times, before the Anti-Counter Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 was in enacted.

In closing, law has been characterized by some as like playing a game of chess. It is a profession and skill in which you must know how think, quickly, as well as strategically. It is like one lawyer once said in the Detroit Legal News. He said law is a system that you must think, think, think, and then think again. So, for an average convicted or incarcerated individual who is trying to have his conviction overturned, if his reading comprehension skills are below average, and he does not have the patience for studying law, along with considerable writing skills, that person will be basically doomed, unless he can obtain a reliable attorney, attorneys or a law school with bright-eyed enthusiastic law students who are more interested in "true justice", than in looking out for their corrupted friends who sit on the bench, in the prosecutor's office, or on the police force.

As you can see, there is clearly a desperate need for reform in America's Criminal Justice System, just as the politicians like President George Bush openly expressed an urgency for reform in America's Civil Justice System in order to protect the big corporations against class action lawsuits filed by Americans. The big corporations received their swift justice when Congress passed laws that made it more difficult for citizens to file class action suits. I wonder why Congress and State Legislatures do not see the need for swift reform in the Criminal Justice System as well. Especially, after Jerry Miller, who had been incarcerated for over 25 years for a rape that he did not commit and was recently freed by DNA -making him the 200th person exonerated by DNA.

In a nutshell, the justice system is basically like one of my comrades told me long ago. He said, "The justice system is like playing chess, except there is one big visible difference. While the government is playing with chess pieces -i.e. the judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, detectives, the juries, court administrators, and even the media being predominantly controlled by caucasians, they have given you checker pieces to play with. Now, how do you expect to win?"

In the August/September 2003 newsletter of Innocence Denied, they had published a statement made by former United States Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor that basically acknowledges the injustice in America's imperfect justice system when it comes to the poor and People of Color. According to the newsletter, Justice O'Connor said, "Attaining a good legal system is not easy. Corruption, racial and ethnic prejudice, disparity in legal representation, administrative delay, and process failure hinder even the noblest efforts to achieve reform. In the United States, where commitment to a fair and equitable legal system is deeply entrenched, justice still remains for some an unfulfilled promise, not a reality. And, disturbing, sickening events still occur".

As President Bush would proudly say after one of his administrators allow, participated or failed to stop, "You're doin' a heck of a job, America!!!"

EDUCATION

Wisdom is the flame. Wisdom is the brave
warrior who will carry us into the sun.

Lyrics from "Slave Song"
by Safo.

Education is a very important and precious tool in combating the enemy: "Ignorance" (in terms of not knowing). And a lack of it, is very detrimental to an individual's -or even to a society's- economical, social and physical welfare. In most cases, it is the cause to an individual's demise.

As we know in America's history when it came to slavery, one of the critical key points in its control over the slaves, was the slave "must" never become educated. That meant, they were not allowed reading and writing materials. And most importantly, under no circumstances, was the caucasian man to teach the slaves or encourage them to read or write. In fact, there were laws against it. Therefore, by keeping a person -in this case: the slave- illiterate, this enables the educated one -the master- to stay in control and thus, making the slave dependent on him. ~~It~~ is like being a defenseless baby who must depend on its mother for their total survival.

During the time of American slavery, a significant number of brothers and sisters were deceived, lied to, manipulated, and were used as the butt of someone's jokes because of ignorance. This was clearly to the master's advantage, because that way, he did not have to worry about an educated "so-called" disruptive negro disturbing and rallying up others while he or the overseers were not around. The slave master knew from the teachings of Willie Lynch and others -who considered themselves professionals in the art of breaking, controlling, and maintaining the control of slaves- that an educated slave, was in fact, a very dangerous slave, on all levels.

It was well known the capabilities of individuals from the African ancestral descent. The caucasians knew the African's history of being great rulers and governors, supreme intellectuals, masters of mathematics, astrology and science, excellent strategic military leaders and warriors, and fierce hunters. Most importantly, they had heard of the many bloody revolts and deadly rebellious uprisings at several plantations in America, South America and the Caribbean.

Remember the famous Haitian's liberation story of the educated former slave, the great Toussaint L'Overture and others who led the rebellion against France which the slaves had won and claimed their ~~independence~~. Haiti -formally St. Domingue- became the first independent western country of African descent. In fact, former President, Thomas Jefferson was so upset over the matter and the toppling of the country, that he -first as Secretary of State- tried to financially aid the caucasians in regaining control of the island. Additionally, once he became President, he unsuccessfully -because of the defeat of Napoleon's army in trying to regain control of the country- tried to destroy the country's new independence, but later decided to place embargo sanctions against the island and refused to grant Haiti diplomatic recognition.

Now, while the southern (and some northerners as well) caucasians were continuing in the business of maintaining control of the slavery industry, others were secretly teaching the fortunate sisters and brothers to read and write. In fact, I am quite sure you have read the autobiographies and biographies of brother Frederick Douglass, brother Booker T. Washington and many others who had received some form of teaching -whether former or infomer- from caucasians in America. Still other slaves had

■-it; ■-independence

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to use^d their God given thinking abilities in order to trick the unconscious caucasians -usually a child- to teach them how to read and write, if it was not but a word or two. But in all cases, the slave who wanted to learn, he or she made it their business in doing so. The most beautiful thing about the slaves' quest to learn, was the fact of their sheer determination to read and write, even at the risk of knowing that if the master -or in ~~some~~ case, any caucasian, man or woman, who had opposed it, would had them possibly killed. Think about it. They were put to death just for seeking knowledge. This is not a lie. This is the truth. I am quite sure you remember the racist southerners' infamous statement back in the 50's: "An educated nigger, is a dead nigger!" In fact, that was the case of this great brother, Mr. David Walker back in 1830. On June 18, 1830, Mr. Walker was found dead near the doorway of his place of business just after completing the third edition of his controversial book, "David Walker's Appeal: To the Colored Citizens of the World, but in particular, and very expressly, to those of the United States of America". It was believed that he was killed because of the first and second edition of the book that was released throughout America. It was stated, according to the publisher, that Mr. Walker was "the most controversial and most admired, Black person in America". The book was written at a time when slavery was "in full effect" in America. Mr. Walker, in his writings, gave his personal accounts of the racist American christian atmosphere and its atrocious doctrine of slavery, including American's position in the education of slaves and freemen of color. He stated:

"It is a fact, that in our southern and western states, there are millions who hold us in chains or in slavery, whose greatest object and glory is, centered in keeping us sunk in the most profound ignorance and stupidity, to make us work without remunerations for our services. Many of whom if they catch a coloured person, whom they hold in unjust ignorance, slavery and degradation, to them and their children, with a book in his hand, will beat him nearly to death. I heard a wretch in the State of North Carolina said, that if any man would teach a black whom he held in slavery to spell, read, or write, he would prosecute him to the very extent of the law. -Said the ignorant wretch, "A Nigar, ought not to have any more sense than enough to work for his master." *** "Georgia for instance, God has completely shown the World, the Christianity among its white inhabitants. A law recently passed the legislature of this republican state (Georgia) prohibiting all free or slave persons of colour from learning to read or write; another law has passed the Republican House of Delegates, (but not the Senate) in Virginia, to prohibit all person of colour, (free and slave) from learning to read or write, and even to hinder them from meeting together in order to worship our Maker!!!!!!"

(Now, that is something to think about my "Hip Hop" and "Bee Bop" brothers and sisters who feel getting ~~an~~ education or being educated is the white man thang!!! They felt you, my nigga, should only have enough sense to work for them and do that monkey dance!!! Dig that!!!)

So in fact, the Willie Lynch thinkers of the world were correct. One of the most dangerous individuals in the world is in fact an "educated African American

man and woman". That is the case with any man of color. But that should not come to any surprise considering the fact that Africa was the first and original nations in the world that possessed the precious jewels of knowledge. It has been written that Timbuktu was the place in which people from all over the world -including the Greeks who seen the Africans as Gods- would attend to obtain knowledge. In fact, it has been stated that the modern universities of today are emulated from the university of the ultimate school of knowledge in Timbuktu. Just think, the schools of Timbuktu were the world school of choice when it came to the excellence in education, like America's Harvard University and Great Britain's Oxford University.

These were our people that the entire world looked up to when it came to knowledge. Years ago, I had read an article in the National Geographic about Timbuktu, and I was very intrigued to discover this fact about it being one of the original schools of world knowledge that other great nations has structured their universities after. There is other proof to support the fact of our knowledge in this great book, Africa edited by Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O' Neara (Second Edition). In chapter four, "Aspects of Early African History" by John Lamphear, he stated:

"While most African people have a preliterate tradition, not all of Africa is devoid of written sources before the early twentieth century. In some areas, a literate tradition of great antiquity exists. Indeed, one of the earliest forms of literacy in the world, the Hieroglyphic writing of ancient Egypt, was invented in Africa by Africans by about 3000 B.C. These ancient accounts give a vivid and intimate picture of this great African civilization during the nearly three millennia of its existence.

South of Egypt, the Kushitic civilization, focused on the ancient city of Meroe, had its own form of writing five centuries or more before the birth of Christ, and in Ethiopia, Ge'ez, the classical language of ancient Axum, was being expressed in form by the fourth century A.D."

Since my incarceration on my first imprisonment term, I have learned extremely a lot of historical facts about Africa, our people of Africa and their contributions to the world, including America. During my research and studies of African and African American history, which played a very significant role in building my pride, my spirit, my soul, my confidence, and my consciousness and understanding -among other things- of our people, and the true facts of our glorious, great and mighty history, I had become more thrilled with excitement as I was enthusiastic to read more and more. I had become submerged in countless of books and literature from "Before the Mayflower" by Lerone Bennett, Jr. to "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" by Alex Haley, from "Go Tell It On The Mountain" by James Baldwin to "The Motown Story" by Dan Waller. And from my adamant studying, it had broaden my knowledge and intellect to read other books and literature from all walks of life. Now that I think about it, before my incarceration, I was not aware of the enormous history of Africans and African Americans. The history that I know now, was not taught to me in our schools. I believe this is very detrimental to an individual's upbringing when he or she does not know themselves. It is very important that a person knows their history, because it creates inspiration and builds positive and productive pride in that person. Most importantly, history gives a person guidance in how to conduct themselves because of the beautiful ancestral past that was paved by their forefathers. If you believe that history is not important, tell that to the offspring of the Rothschilds, the Rockefellers, the Morgans, the Kennedys, the Fords, the duPonts, the Waltons and many, many others who have engraved their names and legacy in the world's and American's history books and see what they have to say

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about that. See, they all know the importance of history because it was learned directly or indirectly from our forefathers. And to be truthful, I honestly believe that this is one of the reasons why so many children of color do not excel very well in the American's public school system and looses interest in studying. The system has incorporated a doctrine of European and American history with caucasian faces as heroes , achievers, inventors, explorers, and so forth, while excluding or limiting the people of color's contributions to world history as inferior or insignificant. The history of the caucasians written in their history books that I have read growing up in school gave me this impeccable and angelic image and view of the caucasians when they successfully made their voyage to America from England in November of 1620 on the Mayflower as God fearing good people.

One of the first myths that I was taught in school was that Christopher Columbus discovered America, when in fact, Amerigo Vespucci actually so-called discovered America. (How could Mr. Vespucci discover America when the Natives were on the land first.) Columbus had so-called discovered the present-day Bahamas.

I was taught from the school's history books that the Plymouth Pilgrims (Puritan separatists) who came to America were God fearing Christians who had left England because King James would not allow them to freely practice their religious beliefs, and that they had met the natives with an olive branch of goodwill and friendship.

But for some strange reason, the American's textbook companies failed to included the part about these God fearing christians, who were in fact unwanted citizens that were expelled from England because some of them were criminals, who later set in motion a plot on the friendly Natives by killing their leaders and men, paying rewards in exchange for their scalps, raping their women and children, poisoning them with alcohol, pillaging their God giving land, destroying their culture and so on. The textbooks never told me about this evil man, Sir. Jeffery Amherst, the genocidal commander-in-chief of Great Britain's military force and his atrocious assignment in annihilating the Native's population by giving them, as a gift (the gift of death), smallpox infested blankets, or how he felt about the Natives as being, "the vilest of beings that ever infested the Earth, and whose riddance from it must be esteemed a meritorious act, for the good of mankind." 'And should, upon capture, immediately be put to death, their extirpation being the only security for our future safety, and their late treacherous proceedings deserves no better treatment from our hands."

The textbooks never told me the fact that the Great Chief Pontiac organized a coalition of Natives tribes in order to defend their land against the enemy. No!

I had discovered these facts after reading, "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews -Volume One" by The Nation of Islam.

The textbooks failed to disclose the fact that the Framers of the Constitution like George Washington had slaves and was a marijuana smoker. That Thomas Jefferson was an adulterer and fornicator as he had children out of wedlock with women in slavery. That John Hancock was in fact involved in the illegal rum trafficking industry. That the man who yelled, "Give me liberty or give me death!", Patrick Henry was a slave owner. Or that they decided to consider slaves as property and exploited them as three-fifth a person in the constitution (Article 1; Section 2) in order to obtain more representatives in Congress for their states. The books never told me about Crispus Attucks -a man of African descent- was the first man killed by British soldiers during the Boston Massacre thus starting the American Revolutionary War, or the stories of African American great leaders like Richard Allen, Nat Turner, Marcus Garvey, Noble Drew Ali, Elijah Muhammad, Ira B. Wells,

Madam C.J. Walker and many, many others who fought for our independence, freedom and racial equality. During my studies in school as a teenager, I was taught about slavery, but it was never told to me who were responsible for it or the atrocious brutal behavior that was carried out by the savaged slave traders and owners. I was told about the civil rights movement, but the brutal murders of young Emmitt Till, Meager Evers, the government's backed ambush murder of Fred Hampton and others from the movement was never printed in those textbooks. Not in one chapter, one paragraph, one sentence, or one line. I had discovered these stories by watching movies, documentaries or reading books and law books that told the stories.

This is the reason why I support the City of Philadelphia's recent decision in making African and African American history a mandatory curriculum in its high school -as Mr. Lloyd Williams applauded the decision as well and urged other school boards across America to do the same. In Mr. Williams' commentary, "Mandatory Black Studies: A Way Overdue Initiative" that was published in the Final Call (August 9, 2005), he made several excellent points in the commentary including the fact -among other things- that America's schools continue to justify slavery in America. He explained:

"In order to sanitize the stain of slavery, the standard texts sell schoolchildren a wholesale bill of goods that suggest that Africa was an uncivilized, dark continent devoid of culture or tradition. This prevailing notion led inexorably to the rationalization that it was then okay to treat the natives encounters there as property to be captured and carted off, bought and sold, worked and whipped, and raped and lynched, all at the whim of guilt-free whites."

He went on further by stating:

"Furthermore, the process of propping up the founding fathers as sacrosanct, virtuous visionaries necessitates a simultaneous negating of the plight of the Africans deliberately excluded from participating in the spoils of the American Revolution.

This is why children don't learn that renegade Thomas Paine (a signer of the Declaration of Independence) castigated his fellow patriots as hypocrites, stating unequivocally that 'the slave-traders should be called devils rather than christians.'

I agree with Mr. Williams' assessment wholeheartedly. For too long, America has pushed this agenda in its schools by building the caucasian children's pride with its abundance of history, while at the same time, concealing and ignoring the African American's contributions to the advancement in world history dating all the way back to the first civilization of man. Mr. Carter G. Woodson -founder of Black History Week (which is now Black History Month) in 1926- had acknowledged this evil program as well, as he pointed this out in his famous book, "The Miseducation of the Negro". Dr. Woodson stated:

"The same educational process which inspires and stimulates the oppressor with the thought that he is everything and has accomplished everything worthwhile, depresses and crushes at the same time the spark of genius in the negro, by making him feel that his race does not amount to much, never will measure up to the standards of others."

After I had read this excerpt of Dr. Woodson from Dr. Conrad Worrill's equivalent column, "Education and Black Power" in the Final Call (August 3, 2005), I had thought

to myself, how could the opposition of critics like Mr. John Perzel -the Speaker of the Pennsylvania State House- opposed the Philadelphia School District's decision in making African American history a required course- possibly believe that America should be teaching students American history before they ~~are~~ ~~they~~ are taught African-American history. As Miami Herald's columnist Mr. Leonard Pitts questioned in his wonderful piece, "American History in Black and White" (dated July 3, 2005): "So how is the history of Black people not 'Basic American History?'" Mr. Pitts -which I totally agree- further stated: "The problem is, Black History lead us places we don't always want to go, show us things we don't want to see, teaches us lessons about the capacity for arrogance and inhumanity that we don't always want to learn."

The brother is absolutely right. Additionally, I might add, the world continues in the concealment of the truth in regards to history in the achievements, the advancements and the contributions that the people of color has given the world.

I will give you several examples. First, in the June 2005 issue of National Geographic, there on the cover was the sculpture of King Tutankhamun done by a French sculptress Elisabeth Daynes. The sculpture of King Tut -as you may have seen in the media- was depicted as a caucasian. Mr. Chris Johns, the Editor in Chief of National Geographic -in my opinion- tried to justify this blatant false perception of history. In Mr. Johns' editorial, he stated:

"What happens when 21st century technology -in this case a CT scanner- meets the 3,300-year-old mummy of an Egyptian Pharaoh? A lot. First of all, there's this cover image, a visualization of the boy King Tutankhamun. Then there is discussion, debate, perhaps even controversy.

We turned the CT scan evidence over to forensic anthropologist Jean-Noel Vignal. Guided by Vignal, sculptor Elisabeth Daynes made the reconstruction on our cover. Tut's features turned out to be predominantly caucasoid, colliding head-on with the opinion of some scholars that ancient Egyptians were Black Africans.

We may never know the pharaoh's skin color. 'Brown, Black, or middle Brown-Black, it's only supposition,' say Vignal. Our solution was to model the color on Modern Egyptian skin tones, which vary across a wide spectrum. No doubt readers reaction will follow a spectrum equally as wide.

Our cover image is a wonderful example of the power of science -and its limitations. Even the most stringent inquiry rubs up against cultural expectations, not to mention Hollywood's spin machine. For many people, Ramses II will always look like Yul Brynner, who played the Pharaoh in the Ten Commandments.

'A scientific man ought to have no wishes, no affections -a mere heart of stone,' Charles Darwin once wrote. Most of us aren't quite so rigorous. We harbor wishes and affections of our own."

I will admit, I have great respect for National Geographic and its many wonderful works in spreading truth in history, science, and culture for the many individuals like myself who are not able to see all of the beautiful and fascinating things that God has created for us in this world, but I take offense to the fact -as others should who thrust for knowledge- that National Geographic would publish this sculpture in their magazine, clearly knowing the fact, based on evidence that is indisputable, that the 18th Dynasty that ruled Egypt were people of color. And if there any naysayers to this fact, just look at the walls of King Tut's tomb and see the beautifully and astonishing paintings of the young King as he is being

accepted into the after life. A picture tells a thousand words. Not only was the painting of King Tut -that was richfully as well as colorfully illustrated by National Geographic in the informative article "King Tut Revealed" by A.R. Williams- depicted as a man of color -brown, but the God, Osiris, who accepts him in the afterlife is in fact, black. This deliberate distortion of history is apprehensively dangerous because as the time of history moves forth, individuals or groups of individuals will believe that the sculpture depiction of King Tut is in fact a true depiction of him, when in fact, it is not. A disclaimer should be explicitly attached to the sculpture when shown to any and everyone that states: "This sculpture of King Tut is a depiction of what the individuals who were involved in the project thought or believed it should be." And then, place Mr. Vignal's rationale in the distortion of the truth. (And while we are on the subject of Mr. Vignal's rationale.

I am still trying to figure out his formula and how he decided to depict the young pharaoh as a caucasian, when he had admitted himself that the pharaoh's hue may have been 'Brown, Black, or middle Brown-Black'. That is extremely a long way from being caucasoid hued. Moreover, Mr. Vignal's solution in patterning the young pharaoh to Modern Egyptian skin tones is absurd as well. He clearly knows that there are several hue skinned Egyptians who occupy Egypt, including very dark skinned Egyptians. So, it is totally impossible to come up with a caucasoid skinned tone sculpture, when the world knows that darker skinned people has the dominate gene and therefore, making it illogical for the pharaoh to be a caucasian.) This is the case with the article that was published in the national newspapers, "Young Pharaoh had a Baby Face -CT-Scan based Models Reveal What King Tut Looked Like" by Maamoun Youssef of the Associated Press. Nowhere in the article was Mr. Vignal's -or others who were involved in the sculpture's creation- decision revealed to the world as to why it was decided to portray the young pharaoh as a caucasian. Yet, the media had spread this false propoganda around the entire world as being true. What is even more appalling, in the conclusion of the article it stated:

"The French and Egyptians knew they were recreating King Tut, but the Americans were not even told where the skull was from and 'correctly identified it as a Caucasoid North African', the Council said."

The council being Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities. In reading this article that I have enclosed in the book, I believe this to be another attempt by the modern Egyptians and African historians to "whitewash" history and ultimately create "His-story". This is the same tactic that has been done with other historical figures of color including, Jesus, Mary, Moses, Nefertiti and Hannibal -among many others.

I had just recently seen a documentary on the History Channel about Hannibal called, "Hannibal: The True Story". In this documentary, the person who played Hannibal was a caucasian. I was appalled because the story maybe true, but the pigmentation of the skin is absolutely is not. In Dr. W.E.B. DuBois' book called, "The World and Africa" in chapter six, "The Land of the Burnt Faces", Dr. DuBois expounds on the leader. He said:

"Hannibal and his African troops must have brought a strong Negro strain into the Roman population. For thirteen years they dominated the peninsula from Naples to the Alps.

Hannibal himself, if we believe his coins, may well have been a negro with woolly hair."

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In this book called, "100 Amazing Facts About The Negro With Complete Proof" written by Historian, Dr. J.A. Rogers, Dr. Rogers points this fact out about Hannibal. On page 40 of the book, fact number 54 stated:

"Hannibal is usually depicted as a white man, but his coins in the British Museum and the Museo Kircheriano, Rome, show him to have been an African of purest type with rings in his ears.

Col. Hennebert, perhaps the leading authority on Hannibal, declares that none of the several differing portraits now exhibited as Hannibal is he, "We do not possess any authentic portrait of Hannibal," he says. (*Histoire d'Annibal*, Vol. I, p. 495, Paris, 1870.) These coins were struck by Hannibal while he was in Italy.

In the absence of other information the most logical argument is that they bore his own effigy, the more so, as the several kinds of them bear the same likeness. Above all, let us remember that he was an African."

Dr. DuBois from his book, "The World and Africa" showed other evidence to support the color of Africa. In the Book he stated:

"In Africa were great and powerful kingdoms. When Greeks poets enumerated the kingdoms of the earth, it was not only natural but inevitable to mention Memnon, King of Ethiopia, as leader of one the great armies that besieged Troy. When a writer like Herodotus, father of history, wanted to visit the World, he went as naturally to Egypt as Americans go to London and Paris. Nor was he surprised to find the Egyptians, as he described them, 'Black and curly-haired.'"

Dr. DuBois then described the Egyptian Queen Nefertari as a black skinned woman of Ethiopian descent. He stated:

"Her statute in the Turin Museum represents her as having black skin. She is also painted black standing before Amenotes in the Deir el Medinen tomb, now in the Berlin Museum.

This Queen with a black skin has therefore been regarded as a Negress, the daughter of an Ethiopian Pharaoh, or at any rate the daughter of a chief of some Nubian tribe..."

(For those who are unaware of Queen Nefertari. She was the wife of King Ramses II. Ramses was the biblical and historical Pharaoh who had enslaved the Hebrews (Jews) and Moses ordered them to be released. See the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament of the Bible about the historical story.)

So, this deliberate altering of history and science should be a hot button issue as some Americans has made with the Charles Darwin's theory, evolution of man and the recent counterattack, intelligent design. Not only as a serious controversial science and history issue in the public schools across America, like the evolution and intelligent design issue that everyone has been battling about, but a political and religious issue as well. If you think that this issue is not just as important as the evolution and intelligent design debate, then just imagine

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how history would turn out over 2000 years from now. George Washington, instead of him being a caucasian in history, he is portrayed as a Mexican. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., instead of him being an African American in history, he is portrayed as a caucasian. Now, you get the picture. I once read a proverb from a Mexican brother that rings so true. He said, "If the truth will set you free then, lies will enslave you. If knowledge is power then, ignorance is a lack of power." So, with this in mind, let truth shine so knowledge of our people prevails.

The state of America's public school system is in a world of trouble and it has for years. There are countless of reasons for this, starting with the administration and the funding of the public school systems in America. For years, continuous stories has been published in the news about the woes of poorly funded schools. In Michigan, it has been reported that in the last three years over \$450 million has been cut from the K-12 state school budget. The cuts has seriously crippled the Michigan's schools. So much so, that many schools has been asking parents for donations -ie. hand soap, toilet paper, headphones, computer disks, and etc., having children "to Play" in order to participate in school's athletic activities, or flat out just eliminating creative arts programs all together.

It still resonates in my mind of the heartfelt article that I had read in the Detroit News back in 1989 when successful businessman, former Detroit Pistons All Star and current NBA Hall of Famer, Mr. Dave Bing of Dave Bing Group was crying -according to the published article- during a fundraiser that was presented for the Detroit Public Schools' creative arts and athletic programs. Mr. Dave Bing was in deep sorrow because of the school board's possible decision in cutting some of the programs in some of the schools. I remember after reading the article, I became very angry because I could not understand, to save my life, how could the Detroit Public School system be in so much financial dire especially, when the state has this highly exploitative lottery system in Michigan which has reported that in 2004, it has given Michigan's schools over \$645 million. I have heard stories like the one in Los Angeles in which a new public school building has not been built in the last 35 years, but countless of prisons, county jails, courthouses and police stations has been built in the last 20 years. I have seen newly built schools in caucasian's rural and suburban communities with million dollar computer labs, like the one at Columbine High School -where in 1999 several children and adults had tragically lost their lives, literally or mentally, at the hands of two young teens, but then, heard reports of how children are attending urban schools that are nothing more than toxic hazardous waste dumps, supplied with old and out of date textbooks, with computers that are out of date, out of order, or just do not exist. There have been reports and studies done by organizations and think tanks like, The Education Trust, who have discovered that many states have fraudulently fudged up graduated percentage numbers in high school graduation in order to make the state appear successful when in fact, it was not. There has been reports of schools across the nation being involved in cheating or helping children cheat on federal required tests in order to meet the requirements and receive passing report card marks under the federal's No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. There has been reported cases of massive overcrowding in the urban schools. In fact, there was a report out of Los Angeles in which the popular Jefferson High School -the famous African American actress, Ms. Dorothy Dandridge was an alumna of the school- had serious tension erupted between the African American and Hispanic American children because of the overcrowding situation. The school's former principal decided to go into early retirement out of frustration over the problem and the fact that his superiors told him not to be concern with the children's welfare, just fill the seats. According

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to a report done by the Harvard University Civil Rights Project and the Urban Institute Education Policy Center, Oakland Public School system, as well as other California Public Schools attended by African American has been identified as a "dropout factory" and one of the worst school systems in the nation. I still remember vividly the interview that Mr. Ed Gordan had with Mr. Konard E. Gibbs, President of Vibe Magazine on his National Public Radio News Program, "News and Notes with Ed Gordan" dated March 3, 2005. Mr. Gibbs had pointed out that during a speech he had delivered at one of the Oakland Schools, he noticed that the 450 students that attended the speech, had the resemblance of veterans from the Vietnam War. People that is insane!!! And I know that the brother was not exaggerating. The following day, it was reported on Mr. Gordan's show during the roundtable discussion that only 43 percent of our African American men graduates from high school. This comes from the eyes of reality of our youth who has lost hope in seeing a prosperous future in America and we only have ourselves to blame for the end results, collectively. Trust me, the caucasian children in America are facing the same fate, as it been reported in Michigan that most parents do not push or even encourage their children to become college graduates -and that is because most of the parents are manufacturing workers, corrections officers or in other simple services or governmental jobs that does not require a college degree. It is just that simple: If the parents are not achievers, most likely the children will turn out to be the same. In fact, the underachievement factor is so prevalent in Michigan, that it has been seen by state politicians as a detrimental threat to the State's "Quality of Life" as they scramble to find solutions to remedy the problem including taking a portion of the tobacco settlement money -a billion dollars- that the state obtained from the tobacco companies back in the '90s to create job training programs and start up companies in order to create high tech employment in the State. The State has also encouraged children with incentive deals in attending colleges in Michigan.

Another factor that has contributed to the erosion of the public school systems and the decline of student enrollment that has lead to the massive growth in the criminal justice system and prison populations are the adults. That includes the politicians, the school board members, the school administrators, the teachers, and yes, the parents, themselves. Now please understand, what I am about to say is not directed towards the many hardworking, honest and caring individuals who work everyday to instill values, morals, good character as well as educational skills that will enable the children to become future leaders, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs and so forth, and not criminals. I am directing this towards the many individuals who has turned public teaching into a place of corruption and exploitation of precious youth, particularly African American children.

Politicians and school board members has used the schools to exploit funds from them by giving companies contracts (usually owned by caucasians) to those who backed them in political campaigns during elections, or to family members and friends.

Other board members just simply sit on the board for the title that could be used for their resume, or for social status when interacting with their comrades and associates at socialite gatherings. These people exploits the board for their own selfish reasons, and thus, not having any concerns in the betterment of the poor urban children who attends these failing schools. Failing schools that the members of the board would not dare sent their children to. There are individuals, like the former Secretary of Education from President George W. Bush's Administration, Mr. Roderick R. Paige whom has labeled the National Education

Association -the National Teacher's Union- as and I quote: "Terrorist", but Mr. Paige totally had a lost of memory when he failed to inform the public about the failure, if not fraud, in the State of Texas version of the No Child Left Behind program that was implemented by Bush when he was governor in the State. It was later discovered in an investigation conducted by 60 Minutes -CBS newscast- that some of the Texas public schools were systematically failing children intentionally one school year -but double promote them the following school year- in order to avoid the students in participating in the State required testing. It was said that this was done because some administrators and teachers believed that the children would had scored very low on the test thus possibly, hurting the school's overall testing score. So, this act was done in an effort to make the program appear successful. When I saw that report on 60 Minutes, I had said to myself, "Now, that is totally destructive in the productivity and the confidence of a ninth grader's mind". And the reason why I had said that, as you know, there has been a major problem in America's public high schools with teenagers dropping out of school.

It has been reported according to, show that I had seen on Oprah that over a million children dropout of school each year. So, to see this clandestine atrocious act being orchestrated by the very ones who are put in the fiduciary position of trust, is very damning. I mean this evil act was done on poor children, like the Mexican young lady that I had seen in the documentary, just for the sake of politicians and their slime worthless agenda. This was outrageous and appalling to say the least.

I wondered if anyone had ever took the time to think what damage this would cause to the children? I wondered if anyone had thought that by taking that selfish course of action, that possibly children like the Mexican young lady would had lost interest and desire in graduating from high school and dropped out. Now, you see why you have millions of very smart and wise, ~~parents~~ parents, like Mr. C. Madison Nabrit, and his wife Mrs. Paula Penn-Nabrit home schooling their children. You can not place your ~~precious~~ precious possession in someone else hands. Especially the government.

The Nabrit Family home schooled their three sons to Ivy Leagued schools. (I will talk more about the Nabrit Family later in the chapter.)

Even the National's No Child Left Behind Act has been challenged itself, as States across the nation has publicly complained and filed suits in court, because the States has not been properly funded by the federal government -which is among the many problems and shortfalls with the Federal Act. The same Bush Administration who, ~~only~~ only created the Act, but claimed to federally fund the program. What is so interesting about this, the nations' schools are having problems with receiving proper funding, but the Bush Administration has managed to finance with taxpayers' money, hundreds of millions of dollars that has been distributed to public relations consulting firms, like The Catching Firm which has been reported of receiving \$97 million just to create a favorable political public image for the White House's Bush Administration. Additionally, it was reported that the administration was paying with taxpayers' dollars, national news reports, favorable question asking White House Press Conference "scripted reporter 'plants'", and political talk show hosts, like our good brother, Mr. Armstrong Williams -whom was reported by the media in receiving \$200,000-in pushing favorable political spin on the Bush Administration's policies, including the No Child Left Behind Act. (This brother, Mr. Williams, truthfully speaking, has clearly destroyed his reputation and the little bit of trust and support that some African Americans had for him when it was discovered that he was paid to speak positively and supportive of the Act to African Americans.

When are African Americans learn to stop being a flunky for the man, because in the end, they are going to ~~make~~ make them appear as a harlot to our people.)

School administrators and teachers who are responsible for the children's welfare

①-a; ②-concerned;

③-sacred; ④-not

and safety are nothing more than educators who are training the youth to be future criminals. There has been countless of reported cases in which teachers and administrators have been involved in having children selling drugs, drinking alcohol and using drugs, stealing, assaulting students, and so forth. In one case, it was reported that a teacher -who was a sister- had a couple of her students involved in an insurance job by allegedly stealing her car and having it destroyed by fire.

Then, there are the child pedophile cases involving both male and female teachers.

In recent years for some strange reason, it has been a bombardment of these sexual adult/child cases in America's schools, especially among female teachers. I recently seen a case in Florida in which a married caucasian woman was criminally charged and convicted for having a sexual affair with one of her 14 year old students. The teacher had pled guilty, but only received probation, house detention with an electronic ankle tether, and had to resister as a sex offender. There was a negative reaction from the public in regards to the very light sentence that she had received from the judge. Some felt that she should had received prison time for her inappropriate behavior. To add salt to the wound, it was said that she only escaped prison time because she was a blond headed sex pot that and she would had a difficult time in prison. Dig that!!! Additionally, according to the 14 year old child's mother during an interview, she said that the judge said during sentencing that the child contributed some of the blame because he had lured the grown 30 something year old woman in having a sexual affair with him. Can you believe that. The judge blames the child for the teacher's actions. I remember when I was 14 years old with racing testoserone, I called myself being in love with a beautiful honor roll student named Vivian Clifton and my eight grade Social Studies and homeroom school teacher, Mrs. Maxine Anderson. I am quite sure Mrs. Anderson knew that I had the traditional schoolboy crush on her, but she also knew that it was nothing more than that. But teachers today, for some odd reason does not see it that way.

And, I do not believe that we need to go into teachers lack of concern for their students and their welfare, because I am quite sure you seen the results in that.

All I can say, look at your prisons, welfare and unemployment line across America. Need I say more.

Now, last but not least, the parents. This is where it all starts. For too many years, parents have not been responsible for their children and their behavior.

I am not just talking about African Americans and Hispanics, either. I am talking about caucasians and their children as well. Some parents believes that the purpose of schools and its teachers are to be substitute baby sitters and parents instead of their true intended purpose: to educate. Another problem with today's parents, they feel that teachers and school administrators should not discipline their children when they are disruptive and causing problems in the school. And guess what, parents?!! You are right. And you know why? Because that is your job to instill in your child the importance in behaving themselves when you are not around. It is just that simple. This is what my mother, father, and stepfather instilled in us. And I will admit; when my brothers and I got into trouble, my mother was on our behinds. My mother had me help my brother study their alphabets and mathematics with flash cards when we were at home. She had me help them with their reading and writing as well. I remember when my mother had my sister read out loud to her everyday in the family room. I still remember when I was a little boy my father and mother teaching me how to identify and count money. They had taped the coins on the back of carpet sample boards and written the names and the value of each coin. In fact, now as I think about it, I remember all the children's books and records my mother purchased from Walt Disney, Dr. Suess, Charles Schultz's "Peanuts" and others for our educational development. I even remember the 45s vinyl records

with the caucasian man singing along a catchy melody of multiplication time tables.

This is another problem with today's parents, they are not investing in their children's education or being involved in their studying like the parents of the past were. Just like Dr. Ben Carson's mother. According to his wonderful essay that he had recited on NPR's Morning Edition with "This I Believe..." series, he said that his mother would give him and his brothers books to read. And after they had read the books, their mother required them to turn in a report on the book. Even though the sister was educationally challenged, she still managed to review their reports. I had thought that was a beautiful story. I was in fact like that with my ex-girlfriend's children. Their mother and I would go to their schools and talk with their teachers in order to review their progress. I remember when the twins were not doing too well with the multiplication time tables, and I had explained to them and their baby brother -whom I considered a little whiz kid- that they must help each other with their homework, because that's what I did with my sister and brothers. Once the twins had learned their multiplication, they could not wait to tell me. I still remember the sight on their little beautiful faces. In fact, when their mother and I had separated, I would regularly pop in on them and see how they have been doing in school. I really missed them. They were my babies.

Parents need to be very hands on in their children's education, because the odds are against them not to succeed or become a success story. And please, do not say you do not have time or money to invest in your children's education, because the last time I had checked, Playstations, X-Boxes, and other electronic game consoles has been flying off the shelves and the Grand Theft Auto series are the hottest selling video games in the "Hood" among our youth. So, I believe if you would allow your children to convince you to buy game stations, phones, expensive clothes, and so forth, you can just as easy buy books and computer programs in order to further your children's education as well. Just look at it as an investment.

Which one you rather see for your child: a success story or another statistic.

Another problem with the public schools across the nation, and that is, the children are not being intellectually challenge with logic as Dr. Mansoor -an author who has written a fantastic book called, "Betrayal: By Any Other Name"- had pointed out during a speech that I had heard on an audio tape. Students, particularly in urban public schools, are being "dummy downed" with the same educational system that has been in place for over a 100 years. I remember reading a report that had ranked America's education system at 17th when it came to the rest of the industrialized nations' educational systems. In another report that I had seen on Oprah's Special Report: Schools in Crisis, she said America ranked 24th in math when it came to the rest of the industrialized nations. This is troubling facts coming for a nation whom pride itself as being the super power in everything.

I was reading an article in the June 3, 2005, issue of the Muslim Journal by Bernice Powell Jackson called, "A Real Crisis-Abandoning Our Children". It was an excellent piece I must say. But what really drew my attention to the article was the fact of what Microsoft founder and current CEO, Mr. William H. Gates -the ~~greatest~~ man in the world- had said during a speech that he had given to United States Governors that I had thought was so profound and right on point in regards to the serious problem with American's schools. According to the article, Mr. Gates said:

"America's High Schools are obsolete. By obsolete, I don't just mean that our High schools are broken, flawed or under-funded -though a case could be made for every one of those points. By obsolete, I mean that our high schools -even when they're working exactly as designed- cannot teach our kids what they need to know today."

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Ms. Jackson said that Mr. Gates pointed out the fact that America's high schools were designed for the world of 50 years ago -she placed in parenthesis (some of us might say 100 years ago), where only one third of graduates needed to be ready for college or work. Mr. Gates went on further according to Ms. Jackson's article by saying:

"The other two thirds, most of them low-income and minority students, are tracked into courses that won't ever get them ready for college or prepare them for a family-waged job, no matter how well the students learn or the teachers teach."

Mr. Gates concluded by saying: "This isn't an accident or a flaw in the system; 'it is the system.'"

Now that, Mr. Gates, you are right. And you heard that from a man who has been in the business, along with his wife, Melinda, in reforming this system, including through their philanthropic work from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which has given over \$1.2 billion to educational causes.

This is the same system that is currently in place today as it was in the past before the United States Supreme Court's historical landmark decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka which made an attempt to desegregate the public schools -as well as the nation, but in reality, nothing has really changed as it was pointed out by African American and other intellectuals, scholars, educators, and civil rights leaders during a formal panel discussion in the wake of the 50th Anniversary of the decision that was presented by Tavis Smiley that I had an opportunity to see on C-SPAN back in May of 2004. And for those who has doubt this, Oprah's Special Report: Schools in Crisis made it perfectly clear that nothing has changed in America's public schools when it comes to obtaining a quality education for African American and other minority children as opposed to their caucasian counterparts who lives in the rural, suburban and exurban areas of America. In the very shocking and eye opening report, Oprah had showed an actual situation in which students from two separate high schools -one from the intercity of Chicago and the other from a Chicago suburb- had an opportunity in visiting eachothers' school, and man, you should had seen the looks on those children's faces. Especially the suburban children. The children from both the suburbs and Chicago were totally shocked to see their counterparts learning environments. It was like night and day, literally. Starting with the school buildings, themselves. The suburban school was newly built, with everything in the school being in the state of the art form. From not one, but two olypic sized swimming pools, an excellent and well maintained gymnasium and weightroom, to an up-to-date music department, computer lab and very comprehensive educational curriculums that will properly prepare their students for college and most important, life. When I had seen the school and all the extras, it clearly reminded me of the campus of University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. If you ever seen that campus, you will clearly agree, that it is a beautiful campus.

Then, the report showed the Chicago's urban school and its conditions that its students must attend everyday. And I must admit, it was absolutely deplorable. I mean everything. The classrooms, the out of date and broken computer equipment in the computer labs, the music program without the appropriate or old and very worn out instruments, the weightroom with its very worn and broken equipment, the gym with its roof leaking and totally destroyed floor, and that terrible and totally destroyed swimming pool -that looked so old, Chicago's original gangster Al Capone's son most likely swam in when he was a child living in Chicago. It was very depressing

to sat the least. The report on the two schools clearly mirrored the segregated schools of the past where the caucasian attended schools were newly built, while the African American children would attend the wooded shack schools with the pot belly black cast iron stove that kept the children warm on those chilly school mornings. The thing that stuck me the most about the program, was the fact that one of the young sisters who had attended the urban school was an "A+" student in trigonometry, but when she had attended a mathematics class in the suburban school, the sister ~~admitted~~ that she was lost. That really hurts to see this, because you have these very opinionated, pseudo intellectual, feeble-minded individuals who claim that African American are receiving the same opportunities as everyone else in America, and there is no excuse for their failures, there is no need for Affirmative Action, and they are just looking for handouts and ways to get over without hard work. Every time I hear one of these "BOZOS" makes these remarks, I just want to come out and tell them, "If you think African Americans -or anyother person of color for that matter- and caucasians are equally playing on the same field of life in America -in fact, the world, when it comes to opportunities, receiving breaks, when punishment is given out, and so on, then allow the people of color to switch places with all the caucasians in the world so you and the rest of the BOZOS can get a feel of what we are talking about." See in reality, America is still playing with the same "Separate, But Equal" playbook from the past. This is just a part of what Mr. Gates, and other concern American leaders are talking about. This is the reason why University of Michigan did what it in its admission policies. Because they have realized the problem in urban schools -which is no secret I might add. The American schools are more segregated than ever with caucasians being reported according to a study that I had read in the University of Michigan's admission case, Gratz v. Bollinger, 539 US 244 (2003)(footnote 4) as: "The most segregated group in the nation's public schools;...where eighty percent of the student body is white." It stated that almost three-fourths of African Americans and Hispanic students attend schools that are "predominantly minority", with more than one in six African American students attending a school that was 99-100% minority and one in nine Hispanic students attending virtually all minority schools.

I became aware of this fact when I was a fourth grader at Duffield Elementary School on Detroit's east side. This was the same school the late Detroit's Mayor, Coleman A. Young had attend when he was a child. So, the school remained segregated throughout the long years.

This system Mr. Gates is talking about, is the same system that has allowed the poor and the people of color's children to graduate from high schools -or drop out- only to end up in the textiles factories in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia, the automobile plants and its supply companies in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, the meat and produce plants in Wisconsin and Illinois, and the many governmental jobs, like the prison industry in America. This is the same system that has deeply divided the poor and the working class Americans against eachother for over a century by supplying caucasians with the middle-class or living waged jobs, while African Americans and other "so-called minorities" compete for what is left in the middle-class, living wage and working class jobs that caucasians do not want. This system, that has a population of over 281 million, has created over 37 million people living at, or below the poverty level in America with the U.S. Census Bureau reporting the poverty status in 1999 for caucasians at 18,847,674 (8.4 percent); African Americans at 8,146,146 (24.4 percent); and Hispanics at 7,797,874 (22.5 percent). And I do not have to go into the poverty situation with the Native American. As you might guess, it is not much better.

This system has contributed to the 7.5 million Americans out of work, with African Americans accounting for 10.3 percent, Hispanics for 5.8 percent and caucasians for 4.3 percent of the total unemployment in June 2005.

The same system that I had read in a published report, "State Advocacy Groups Fight Food Stamp Cut", in the September 19, 2005 Michigan Lawyers Weekly which stated that a number of Michigan residents receiving food stamps had increased 56 percent from 603,000 per month in 2000 to nearly 944,000 in the last fiscal year, or a report according to Air America's talk show host, Ms. Randi Rhodes that said that 87 percent of American's women with children who are receiving government aid (welfare) are caucasian women.

Yes, this is the same system that has produced parents with young children who are working two or three jobs just to make ends meet, while their children are left home alone, running the streets, getting into gangs, committing crimes, making babies, getting high on drugs and alcohol, and not learning excellent study habits that will enable them to successfully compete with other children in K-12 schools, college and vocational schools. This was the case with the young 13 year-old brother, Devon Brown, who was shot to death by the Los Angeles police during a car chase.

This was the case -after I later discovered the truth from watching the Academy Award-winning documentary, "Bowling for Columbine" by Michael Moore- with the 1999 tragic shooting death of an elementary 6 year-old caucasian girl by a 6 year-old African American boy -who both were classmates. In both of these cases, the mothers were working one or two low paying jobs. And you know where the father of the African American 6 year-old was? In prison if I am not mistaken on a drug case.

O-yes!!! This is the same damn system that has systematically counted most of our precious African American children out as being a future success story in America and is destine for failure, particularly with African American boys.

Mr. Kevin Chappell perfectly expounded on this in his column in the September 2005 issue of Ebony's monthly column, "For Brothers Only". Mr. Chappell said:

"Educators say that while virtually all kids start out with the same natural interest in education, an examination of test scores reveal that by fourth grade, many Black boys are already falling behind in the classroom and have lost their desire to learn."

"A combination of peer pressure by fellow students and low expectations by many teachers often doom Black boys before they are even out of grade school. In fact, I'm willing to say that some teachers, on the first day of school, decide that Black boys aren't going to make it."

"The dropout rate for African-American males in many metropolitan areas is 50%. African American males are three times as likely as white males enrolled in special education programs. Eight percent of school enrollment, they comprise 22% of those expelled and ~~one~~ of those suspended."

As you can see, this system has basically (and continues) written off the African American young men as a lost cause, and a failure even before they walks in the public school door for their first day of education. The system claims that he is a behavioral problem, a slow learner who is hard to teach, very hyperactive and has the classic medical problem, Attention Deficit Disorder -ADD or ADHD, and therefore needs to be separated from the rest of the students and placed in a special educational environment. This is where the fall for the African American man starts.

In the educational system, and it continues this slowly erosion process, until it successfully destroys the African American man's confidence, creativity, leadership qualities, and the ultimate discovery of his stoke of genius. This has been the same results with our young women as well. Mr. and Mrs. Nabritt discovered this destructive tactic being used on them and their three sons as well. As she (as well as others) tells her story in Ebony's December 2005 issue, "The AXC's of

Home-Schooling: African-Americans Join the Circle of Parents Who Choose to Teach Their Children at Home" written by Shirley Henderson, she revealed that she encountered this problem not at a public school, but what she called, "a good, reputable private school." Mrs. Penn-Nabritt, who had written a book on the subject of home-schooling called, "Morning by Morning: How We Home-Schooled Our African American Sons to the Ivy League", explained in the article how the teachers told them that one of their sons needed Ritalin for hyperactivity, the next son was too arrogant, and their youngest son had a learning disability. In fact, she said, "~~She~~ brought it to a head" when her son's teacher assumed that her son had fabricated information on his family tree school project. Her son had included his father's uncle, James Nabritt -a brother who was an attorney that fought and argued along with Thurgood Marshall in the historical case, Brown v. Board of Education- in his school project. Mrs. Penn-Nabritt -who she and her husband are both college graduates- said, "it was inconceivable to them that a Black family would even be intact enough to go to college." Mrs. Penn-Nabritt and her husband had successfully home-schooled their three sons, and now, one is a Princeton graduate with a degree in Political Philosophy (he is the "too arrogant" one), the second one is a senior and honor candidate at Amherst College (he is the one with the learning disability), and the third son (he is the one who needed Ritalin), after completing his third year at Princeton, he and his Princeton graduate brother decided to spread the love by creating a Charter school in their home state of Ohio. See that. These brothers were written off as losers. No disrespect to the Nabritt Family, but if it was not for the "I ain't buyin' that nonsense" parents, these brothers may have lost their lives in prison. Especially in the State of Ohio. This is a lesson to us all: Do not allow individuals to destroy your precious youth with their worthless nonproductive nonsense.

Even though this system identifies these problems -ie. learning disabilities, hyperactiveness, and etc.- as a definite sign for failure and its solution to the problem is special education, studies has shown that these same exact problems as been discovered in some of America's successful entrepreneurs. In the January 2006 issue of Entrepreneur Magazine, Mark Henricks pointed out in his article, "Gray Matters" that Dr. Daniel G. Amen, a Brain Researcher recognized that many entrepreneurs has Attention-Deficit Disorder or ADD. Mr. Henricks reported in his article:

"There may be something special about entrepreneurs' brains. Many have a condition called Attention-Deficit Disorder, or ADD. 'There's a very high incidence of ADD among CEOs in small companies,' says Daniel G. Amen, M.D. 'These are people who take risks, need people to help them stay organized, don't like working for other people, have a lot of energy and are good at multitaskings'"

In another article that I had read in the October 2005 issue of Entrepreneur called, "National Treasure" by Sara Wilson, a clinical psychologist, Dr. John D. Gartner -who has written the book called, "The Hypomanic Edge: The Link Between (A Little) Craziiness and (A Lot of) Success in America", believes a medical condition called, Hypomania -(A person who has elevated mood and increased activity) has a connection to entrepreneurial success. Dr. Gartner describes a person with the medical condition as, "...People with tremendous energy, tremendous confidence.

They think fast, talk fast, make decisions fast. They're very driven, very creative. They're visionaries with a sense of destiny -they think they're going to make their mark on the world. And ~~they're~~ charismatic. They tend to excite others about their ideas. They want to accomplish everything yesterday, so they can be

be impatient and irritable. They tend to wear other people out."

These symptoms that were found in entrepreneurs by both Dr. Amen and Dr. Gartner, are clearly found in countless of our children -and adults for that matter. Yet instead of it being viewed as a positive with our children, it is considered a negative, and therefore, it is suppressed and eventually destroyed by the same individuals that you have entrusted with your child. While ~~some~~ children are identified as a sign of greatness, ours are viewed as very troubled children, who will find themselves in the criminal juvenile system, and on to the America's prisons, psycho-wards, or living in poverty. This upsets me very much, because we have allowed this same government, who have sent their children to the best prestigious private schools in the world in order to prepare them to be world leaders, both in politics and business, to make, time and time again, erroneous, and at times, egregious decisions with our children, that has done nothing more than destroyed their lives. I can not understand why the government has not simply applied the same system that successfully prepared their children into the one third category that Mr. Gates pointed out, to the unfortunate and doomed two third category or class of children. I mean, they have -or had- absolute trust and faith in sending their prize possession in that system of the one third.

In reality, children of color do not think any different from any other child.

They are capable of learning, creating and comprehending just like any other child. They may need different teaching styles that are conducive and comfortable for certain children, but all in all, they are capable in achieving their goals.

I absolutely agree with Dr. Amen and Dr. Gartner in their opinions. Everytime I see Don King, Mark Cuban, owner of NBA's Dallas Mavericks and Pat Croice, former owner of NBA's Philadelphia 76ers, they all have that same positive energetic spirit with confidence. Even individuals like Percy "Master-P" Miller, Russell Simmons, Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter, Damon Dash and LaVan Hawkins -just to name a few- who all came up as street hustlers, are now respectful Chief Executive Officers, their or other companies that has made them worth over hundreds of millions of dollars plus, because they all have that confident energetic spirit, therefore finding that stoke of genius in themselves, and I believe that is a beautiful thing.

Believe it or not, there are countless of individuals who are incarcerated that has this same energetic confident spirit that would enable them to be successful entrepreneurs and CEOs if they were given the opportunity. But the problem is, since the '90s, Congress -with the backing of then President Bill Clinton- had eliminated educational program funding, including Federal Government Pell Grants to the entire American prison system, therefore creating a new American problem on its citizens: A cluster of uneducated men and women who are being released back to society unprepared for a successful and productive life. In *Halbert v. Michigan*, 125 S.Ct. 2982 (2005) the Court revealed that 68 percent of the state prison population did not complete high school, and many had lacked the most basic literacy skills. It went on further by stating: "Seven out of ten inmates fall in the lowest two of the five levels of literacy -marked by an inability to do such basic tasks as write a brief letter to explain an error on a credit card bill, use a bus schedule, or state in writing an argument made in a lengthy newspaper article.

Many...have learning disabilities and mental impairments." In another study reported by the Michigan Department of Corrections, it said that prisoners who do not have a high school diploma or GED on average has a fifth-grade reading level and the math skills of a sixth grader. These are the products of a failed American public school system in which billions upon billions of dollars has went down the drain -or in the pockets, while these incarcerated men and women who once attended

these schools as a child has been disappointed and denied the proper education that was promised to them through policies, rules and laws, like Brown v. Board of Education decision. And here are some facts that were published in the May 2004 issue of an advocacy newspaper, "Citizens Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending" (CAPPS) that gives reality to Michigan's prison educational and vocational programs when compared to their neighboring states. In the newspaper, it reported a study that was conducted by the Urban Institute's Justice Policy Center and it ~~from~~ from the seven Great Lake States, Michigan's prison population was the largest with its incarceration rate per 100,000 being the largest as well. But at the same time, Michigan came in fifth among the seven states when it came to prisoner educational participation (23.8 percent) and fourth in vocational program participation (4.7 percent). Now, that is reality. So, it should not come to any surprise to see the uneducated prisoners being exploited once again with the prison's "so-called" correctional academic and vocational programs. In Michigan, in a letter written by MDOC's spokesperson, Russ Marlan to the editor of the Detroit Free Press dated July 20, 2005, he said that Michigan has spent \$34 million on educational and vocational programs that were provided to more than 12,000 prisoners, and that nearly 2000 prisoners has passed their GED in 2004. When I seen those figures, I had said to myself, "Someone really needs to investigate where exactly this money is going, because it can not possibly be going to education. Especially, the way these programs are being ran." I am surprised that anyone could successfully manage to obtain a GED of any kind here, in the Michigan Department of Corrections. Just about every school day, the classes are for some odd reason, I have not quite figured out, by the teachers. In fact, in 2004, a comrade of mine told me that his teacher told him that there would not be any classes for a few days because she had to be in Lansing to help President Bush's campaign for re-election. I was totally shocked when I had this and responded by say, "Man! Are you serious?!" The management of the program itself, is a total farce. The program does not maintain transferable records on the prisoner's progress in school, period. When a prisoner transfer from one facility to another, he must take a test first, before he can continue working in obtaining his GED. Now, I can understand the need for the test, because the fact that several facilities are very poorly ran, but what I can not understand, why the school facilities across the Department do not a transferal record -and prisoner's school transcript- of each school prisoner so the new school facility's personnel will know exactly where each prisoner stands academically. I mean, it makes good logical sense. Considering the fact that transferable record system is being used in all American schools.

Then, the cost in maintaining the program, \$34 millions. Look, I do not have a problem with a person obtaining an education. In fact, this is one of the reasons in me writing the book, I support. But \$34 million a year, just to so-called educate 12,000 prisoners, that is outrageous!!! The Federal government in 2004 had awarded \$13.5 million in Pell Grants to only five million applicants. If, I remember correctly, the grant that I had received in 1992/93 was only \$2,400. The Department's program has clearly paid two and a half times of what the Federal government has paid in its program, but the only difference, the Pell Grant Program has substantially produced more graduates with career type jobs. While the Department on the other hand, has only produced 2000 prisoners with GEDs who will be lucky if they can muster up a job at a local carwash. With the money that is being invested in this program, the Department should be producing honor scholar graduates from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Stanford University or Harvard University. This is a total rip-off, and everyone knows it. This is nothing though.

Read what Mr. Marlan had to say at the conclusion to his letter that he had written to the editor. He said that, "Funding correctional education not only makes good

fiscal policy, it enhances public safety." I am trying to figure out how does the Department and Mr. Marlan believe that spending \$34 million each year for a total of 12,000 prisoners, only to produce a minuscule 2000 prisoners with GEDs, is good fiscal policy and enhances public safety. What about the other 35,000 prisoners who are incarcerated in Michigan's prisons -who may have GEDs and high school diplomas? I agree ~~with~~ funding education and enhancing public safety, but the Department and Mr. Marlan do not seem too enthusiastic in taking the \$12.5 to \$13.5 million that it take in each year from the swindling of family and friends of incarcerated individuals who accepts the collect phone calls at outrageous charges, and start funding the college and vocational programs so that other prisoners, including the 2000 new GED graduates can continue their education like other states have done including Minnesota -which has been reported in the August 2001 issue of MI-CURE that the State has taken a portion of its money in order to fund college and vocational programs. If Michigan and other states start doing this, not only will it enhance public safety, it will also prepare a person for a career type job of the 21st century, and possibly, producing entrepreneurs who could create additional jobs in their communities -which States like Michigan desperately needs a hand in. In fact, in the Michigan Governor's State of the State Address that Governor, Jennifer M. Granholm delivered February 8, 2005, she addressed the major urgency in creating employment in Michigan and how important a college and technological degrees are in the 21st century. She said that all children must know that they must have a college or technological degree. She also recognized that States that had educated people had "lower crime rates" and "high income growth".

But during that entire address, she did not ~~about~~ correcting the situation with the recidivism rate of released prisoners, or the prison educational problems.

She did address the fact that 950 repeated violent offenders were incarcerated once again. But I am trying to figure out how is she going to successfully manage her goal in lowering the crime rate in Michigan if she and her constituents continues to ignore the dire issue of prisoners being released back to society uneducated and not properly prepared for a prosperous adaptation in society. In her 21st century high technological, safe and high income growth society. It has been a proven fact that prisoners who receives college and vocational training during incarceration reduces their chances in returning to prison, considerably. By allowing post-education in the prison system, this will drastically reduce the recidivism rate -which has been reported at over 70 percent nationally, and 85 percent in Michigan.

There is a desperate need for African American -and other people of color-entrepreneurs to start profitable businesses in their communities and else where in America, and the world. I believe the loins share of the problems that has terribly effected African Americans, particularly with our youth, is the enormous lack of employment in middle class living wage type jobs in and around their communities. This had contributed to the increase in the prison population, as most African Americans have been incarcerated for economical reasons. I have seen time and time again of former prisoners, who became self-employed through entrepreneurship turn out to become better and more prosperous individuals than, former prisoners who were not entrepreneurs. In fact, I had read an article in the April 2005 issue of Entrepreneur called, "Honor Roll" by Mark Henricks which supported the fact about the success in educating individuals in entrepreneurship programs. In a 2003 published study, "Impact of Entrepreneurship", according to the article, it compared a 105 graduates of the University of Arizona's Entrepreneurship Program with other business degree graduates, and it discovered that the entrepreneurship grads were

"three times as likely to be self-employed and three times as likely to be somehow involved in forming new ventures." The article additionally reported, "not only do entrepreneurship students start more companies, but they are also more successful at it." Entrepreneurship programs are also excellent in teaching individuals how to keep cool under stressful situations, how to manage time and how appreciate and value things that he has created through hard work -just to name a few. It is a total "win, win" situation for everyone, including the government, the citizens and the taxpayers -who do not have to fund the program because it ~~is~~ totally funded by the profits that are generated from the prisoner's phone use and other sources, like the prisoners' "Inmate Benefit Fund". Yes, the same Inmate Benefit Fund that the State Legislature is considering a 30 percent price hike on all store items in the prisoners' store in order to fund the Michigan Police Academy -along with an additional six percent sales tax on the already sale taxed prisoners' store items.

What is most disgusting about this, the government knows this. Yet, they continue to play the politic game with its citizens, and fraudulently making claims and decisions as ~~if~~ they are experts and they knows what is best. I do not know about you, but I have yet to hear a success story from a prisoner, the Department, Mr. Marlan, the media, or anyone else for that matter about a prisoner, or prisoners leaving prison after obtaining a GED while incarcerated and became very prosperous for himself and his family. And the Department and Mr. Marlan has not, either. While the Department and the Legislature (who had passed a law in 1998 requiring all prisoners who are capable in obtaining a GED, must have it before he or she receives a parole) are talking in the mind-set of the '50s by preparing prisoners for society with GEDs, individuals like Michigan's Governor Granholm, Bill Gates and others are shouting from the mountain tops, ordering that all Americans must have a post-secondary education, period. Now, you do the math. I am curious to know if Mr. Marlan, MDOC and Michigan's Legislature are telling their children that they can make it in this fast pace global economy with only a GED? America, these BOZOS are preparing and sending former prisoners to war with butter knives. Now, you wonder why America's state and federal governments are having problems with ~~the~~ the budget, making intelligent decisions for common Americans, fleecing taxpayers, aiding corporations in corporate welfare with taxpayers' money while tens of millions of Americans are medically uninsured, just to name a few of America's problems. You have some of our America's finest political intellectuals managing it.

Here is another problem with America's prisons and when it comes to education: that is the continuous hindrance from the prison system in allowing the prisoner to rehabilitate himself or herself through self-education. Malcolm-X once said, "The best education, is self-education." And I am a firm believer in that philosophy. In fact, I am living proof of it. I have met prisoners who are so abundant with knowledge that it would even amaze world scholars. There prisoners who can identify and explain every part of the human body. Some can explain and break down the solar system, the atom, the chemical elements, and other fascinating things in science. Others are very knowledgeable in law, politics, government, history and business -just to name a few. And they can strategically debate an issue, on any subject, intellectually, as well as eloquently with any world leader, including Dr. Condoleezza Rice. Even though I do not agree with all her policies and decisions, I clearly can not deny the fact that this sister is an extremely intelligent and an eloquent orator. In fact, Mr. Tony Brown of PBS's Tony Brown Journal and Oprah Winfrey has spoke on the intelligence and knowledge ~~of~~ ~~of~~ prisoners.

Mr. Robert Smith, founder of Robert Smith & Associates acknowledge the innovative skills in individuals in prison in an article called, "Time's Up" by

Geoff Williams in the March 2005 of Entrepreneur. Mr. Smith -who himself had a brush with the law- said, "Some of the most innovative people in the world are in prison."

He concluded by saying, "You cannot hang around in that environment and not become a better and more strategic thinker." And Mr. Smith is right. An individual can waste his time doing nothing, or he can make the best of it, by studying, learning, and preparing himself for society with the tools and knowledge that he had obtained while incarcerated. But in recent years, the prison systems across America has systematically -as well as collectively- instituted laws, policies and rules, just as it was done in the past during slavery and the Jim Crow era, that are clearly design to hamper an individual's intellectual growth. For example in Michigan, the Department has placed countless of books on their Departmental Restriction List for all kinds of reasons, including their most popular one: "A threat to security and order to prison". This reason for restriction has been used so much, that I now identify it as a parallel to the Federal Government's infamous excuse when they do not want the public to discover something, or trying to restrict its citizens from certain freedoms, or simply when they have just ran out of their excuses: "It's a National Security Threat". Such books like, "48 Laws of Power" and "Art of Seduction" both by Robert Greene, "The Art of War" and "Mastering the Art of War" both by Sun Tzu, "The Complete Art of War" by Sun Tzu and Sun Bin, "The Illuminati" by Eric L. Leavitt, "The Psychopolitical Indoctrination of America" by Lt. Col. Gordon Mohr, "Guerrilla Capitalism" by Adam Cash, "How Computer Works" by Ron White, "How the Internet Works", "The Computer Idiot's Guide to Online Investing", "PC's for Dummies" and "Illustrated Computer Dictionary for Dummies" all books written by Dan Gookin, "Digital Electronics" by James Bignell and Robert Donovan and "An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary" by E.A. Willis Budge are some of the books on the restriction list. As you look over the list, some of the books as you can see are informative and educational books. In fact, 48 Laws of Power and The Art of War series are read by some of the most powerful and influential people in business and politics. These books only creates critical thinking in individuals who are in the transformation of their ~~lives~~. Turning a negative situation into a positive one. These are life changing books, just like the Wisdom of James Allen series, including Mr. Allen's classic work, "As A Man Thinketh". Yet, prison administrators deny prisoners access to these types of great books. I really believe this is done, to keep brothers in the mode of a non-critical thinker. I noticed that brothers who involve themselves in both educational and intellectual studies while incarcerated has a tendency to carry themselves in a positive self-confident matter and they are much more better rationale decision makers, than the ones who do not involve themselves in studies.

Then, there are books like, "Blood In My Eye" by George L. Jackson, "The Coldest Winter Ever" by Sister Souljah, "From Nigga to Gods" -Part One by Akil, "If They Come in the Morning" by Angela Y. Davis, "Revolutionary Suicide" by Huey P. Newton, "One Savior Has Arrived" and "The Supreme Wisdom" both by Elijah Muhammed, "Brotherman: The Odyssey of Black Men in America" edited by Herb Boyd and Robert L. Allen, "Independent Black Leadership in America" Castillo International, "The Prince" by Niccolo Machiavelli and "The Rose That Grew From Concrete" by Tupac Shakur are all on the restriction list for various reasons. In fact, at one time, the Department had "The Black Bible", "Isis Papers: The Keys to the Colors" by Dr. Francis C. Welsing and "Message to the Blackman" by Elijah Muhammed on the list as well. These books are viewed as social enlightenment as well as nationality culture building books which encourage philosophical critical thinking in African Americans. But to the caucasian administrators the books are looked at as nothing more than a security threat which advocates racial supremacy, violence, insurrection, male homosexuality, prison rape and criminal activities. In looking at some of the

authors of these books, for those who are not aware, these people were the same individuals that were on the infamous FBI's Contra Intelligence Program (CoIntelPro) watch list who fought against the establishment -the U.S. Government, who advocated racism, violence, discrimination, police brutality and white supremacy -to name a few. So, it should not come to any surprise seeing such authors' works on the list.

Finally, the Department has a counter-productive policy that clearly does not support education or rehabilitation of prisoners. Individuals at their own cost can participate in mail correspondence educational courses, but if the individual is placed in segregation for disciplinary reasons, he can no longer participate in the courses that he or someone other than the Department has paid for. Therefore, an individual will have to forfeit hundreds of dollars. These people have really lost their minds with power and control of man's life.

As you can see, America's educational system -the public school system, as well as the prison "so-called" educational system, is a system that has clearly contributed to the continuous failures in America's society, particularly in the African American communities. This is one of the reasons why America's society has so much dishonesty, deceit, corruption, murder, and so on because it is a culture that is taught directly and indirectly in its American schools. In a federal court case, *Amatel v. Reno*, 156 F.3d 192, 198 (D.C. cir. 1998), the Court had acknowledged a fact that was recognized by the Supreme Court in regards to the importance of public schools and instilling values in its children. The Court said:

"The Supreme Court has in fact taken the position that a democratic society depends on inculcation of democratic values. See, e.g., *Ambach v. Norwick*, 441 US 68, 76-77 (1979) (stating that public schools are important "in the preparation of individuals for participation as citizens, and in preservation of the values on which our society rests."); *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 US 483, 493 (1954) ("[Public education] is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment.")"

Well, I guess America is that system in which it eats its young and destroy the spark of genius in us all. But as Bill Gates said, "this is the system."

Before I move on from this chapter, I really want to touch on something that has concerned me for some time. This goes out to all my very young sisters and brothers who has this belief that being educated, receiving excellent grades in school, studying and working hard, and forever searching for knowledge is "acting" white or uppity is naught. Absolutely, flat out, naught. It is not a "white thang", but in fact your forefather's "thang". The attribution of education, intellectual studying, searching for knowledge, and so on was not originated in Europe, but in fact in Africa -in the lands of Babylonia, Egypt, Ethiopia -just to name a few.

This is a fact. These were your brothers and sisters. Intelligence represents power and respect. Remember, Egypt, Timbuktu and Jenne were the world's original educational and intellectual centers. So in all actuality, the young brothers and sisters are not acting white after all, it's who is not acting Black. Remember: "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." So start studying!!!!!!

■-institutional; ■-a;

☞-you

FAMILY

"If our children can't change the environment, then the environment will ultimately change our children."

Quote by Minister Louis Farrakhan

"I'm afraid that we are losing our culture, and now our children are crying out."

Quote made by a Native American Tribal Leader after the tragic school shooting at the RedHead Reservation in Minnesota -2005

Trees are considered the oldest and strongest living plant on earth. It has been said according to a forest organization, American Forests, that the oldest living tree in America is a bristlecone pine tree named, Methuselah located in California, and it has been estimated to be over 4,700 years old. And the world's largest known living tree, which weighs more than 6,167 tons, is a giant Sequoia located in California. Trees such as these have clearly withstood the test of time, as they stood strong and mighty, weathering all acts of God, as well as the acts of man. It has fought and stood through the mightiest storms, the powerfulest winds, the coldest winters, and the brightest and scorching heat from one of God's noblest creation, the sun. It has withered in the cool quiet gentle rain, the peaceful and gracious days of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. And in the night, it has relaxed all so humble under the bright stars and glowing moonlight as a soothing breeze passes about it. The tree has provided protection and life for all God's creations.

It has seen millions of days and millions of nights, and it has a story for each one that is not like the next. What stories it could tell from those annual rings that are located within its trunk. The wisdom of the tree, that has been firmly rooted in the rich black soil by the hands of God and nurtured by the unselfish, compassionate love of Mother Nature, is seen in each of those rings. Each year and each season, it tells a beautiful story.

As a child -and still today- I enjoyed watching the trees go through its yearly cycle of producing its leaves. To me, the cycle and the seasons symbolically symbolizes the cycle of man's life. Spring -the beginning of the cycle, the tree will produce buds on each living stem that will eventually bloom into young green leaves, and depending on the tree, it will produce edible fruit. This symbolizes the birth of man. Summer. This is the season when the leaves are strong, bold and lively. This symbolizes the youth of man. Autumn -which is my favorite season, displays the tree at its most beautiful, as the leaves change into a variety of colors. With the richest reds, the brightest yellows and the darkest browns.

At this stage of life, the leaves are weathering as they detach themselves from the tree and floats to and fro into the autumn wind. This stage characterizes the elderliness of a man's life. And finally, Winter. The tree stand bare and appears dead, but in reality, it is not. It is very much alive and well, waiting to create life all over again. This symbolizes the end of man -the completion of life, and the start of a new generation. Even though the leaves has died, the tree, the foundation that is planted in the rich Godly soil, still lives on. In reality, the leaves are in essence the complete cycle of a generation of man, and the tree is the genealogy of man. This is what we call a family tree.

Scientists believe that all mankind had come from that one family tree located in Africa over 150,000 years ago. It is believed that the subspecies Homo Sapiens Sapiens or the modern human race started in the ancient fertile crescent, once called Mesopotamia. Today, it is the occupied land of Palestine, Israel and Iraq. According

to Dr. Jared Diamond, who had written the Pulitzer Prize winning book, "Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies", and produced a documentary of the same name, said that men of the fertile crescent had migrated into the masses of land in Africa, Europe and Asia. In Dr. Diamond's very informative documentary that was aired on PBS, he showed how and why people of some cultures were able to advance over others. He believed that the domestication of wild animals -i.e. goats, sheep, cows and horses, the use of steel and gunpowder in war, and the land geography played a role in the advancement of certain nationalities over others. And I do must say after watching his documentary, Dr. Diamond's theory is on point. From the documentary, it had given me extraordinary insight as it answered a lot of the questions in regards to what can be done about our situation in America and abroad.

I strongly advise everyone to read Dr. Diamond's award-winning book or see the excellent documentary.

In this book called, "Ethiopia and the Origin of Civilization" by John G. Jackson, Mr. Jackson had put together historical information with accurate evidence from reliable sources of past historians of the original origins of civilization, including the fact Ethiopia was the first civilization of man. On page 9 of the book it said, "Ethiopia was the first established country on earth; and the Ethiopians were the first who introduced the worship of the Gods, and who established laws." Further on page 17, it said, "The earliest civilization of Mesopotamia was that of the Sumerians. They are designated in the Assyrio-Babylonian inscriptions as the black heads or blackfaced people, and they are shown on the monuments as beardless and with shaven heads'.... Sir Henry Rawlinson concluded from this and other evidence that the first civilized inhabitants of Sumer and Akkad were immigrants from the African Ethiopia." Over hundreds of years as Europe became powerful, nations in Africa failed to regain its power, and were defeated by nations in Europe. It was believed by Europeans that Africans, as well as natives in North and South America were subhuman and savages, and therefore, considered them to be fair game to be exploited for bartaring purposes, money and free labor. Because of greed, Africans who were captured and sold in the slave trade were wrongfully stripped of their true culture. As you know, culture is very important to everyone, because it gives you a sense of identity. And without it, you are lost. This is the reason why so many people of different nationalities heavily embrace and cherish their precious culture. From Mexicans to Italians. From Jews to Chinese. You name it, we all value culture. I remember I had a discussion with a correction officer -who was Italian- about the Italian born businessman, Mr. Amadeo Giannini, founder of Bank of America, because I could not understand why would a caucasian man in America settle for a correction job, when he could become a multi-millionaire or billionaire like Jack Welch, former Chairman and CEO of General Electric, Mr. Richard S. Dell, Founder and CEO of Dell Computer Corporation, Mr. William H. Gates and Mr. Paul Allen, Founders of Microsoft Corporation, or even Mr. Joe Frances, Founder of the sexual videos, "Girls Gone Wild" -who is reported to be worth over a \$150 million. The correction officer told me of his great great grandfather -or uncle being a general for the former Fascist Leader, Benito Mussolini of Italy. (For those who are unaware of Mussolini, he was an Italian Political Leader who organized the Fascist political group called, "National Fascist Party", and took power of Italy from 1922 to 1943. Mussolini also declared war on Ethiopia -in which men, women, and children were slaughtered at the hands of Mussolini.) I could not help but noticed that during the conversation, he was very proud in telling me about his great, great grandfather -or uncle, and their family name. I had later reflected back on that conversation, and I had thought to myself, that our people, African Americans, have all been stripped of our birth rights. We do not know our true and personal

forefathers, our culture, or our religion. I mean, we do not even know our real names. We have been literally stripped of everything. I do not believe not one nationality of people has experienced our circumstances. Not even the modern-day Jews, with their tragic holocaust. Now, that is something to think about. You may be a descendant of a royal family, a great and prominent family, or even just a simple common family in Africa. And what is even more worse, we may never trace our family trees back to regain that lost estate.

Recently, I was watching a very important and interesting documentary on PBS called, "African Americans Lives". This beautiful documentary was produced and hosted by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Professor and Chairman of Harvard University's Department of Afro-American Studies. In the documentary, Dr. Gates had on an interesting and intensive journey in tracing back the family genealogy of nine famous and prominent African Americans, including himself, and I must say, I loved every minute of the two-part documentary. In fact, I had decided to miss a large portion of the 48th Annual Grammy Awards' ~~television~~ televised show, because I did not want to miss the conclusion of the documentary. (Sorry, Mariah Carey and Kanye West, but I did not have TiVo.) Dr. Gates, with both modern and ancient technology and the aid of other educated and expert professionals investigated the history of Oprah Winfrey, Woodi Golberry, Chris Tucker, Dr. Ben Carson, Rev. C.L. James, Quincy Jones, Dr. Al Ronsavon, and himself. ~~George~~ Dr. Gates' quest, as he set out to trace back most of the brothers' and sisters' genealogical history back to Africa, including Oprah's, who was believed to be a descendant of the Apelle tribe of Liberia. In fact, Chris Tucker and Dr. Gates had took a trip to Africa in order to meet the tribe that was believed to be the family that Chris came from. Even though there has been critics who questions this method in using DNA technology in the search of discovering a person past, this technology may be an excellent avenue in a person quest in finding their origins. For anyone who have not seen this very informative documentary, I deeply advise you to order a copy of the program from PBS on its website, especially if you are in search of your family history. Dr. Gates' documentary will assist you in finding avenues that could help you in your search. It is very important that we as African Americans, all discover our ancestry.

We are a lost tribe, and now, we must find our forefathers and claim our lost estate. This is another reason why reparations are very important, everyone.

Recently, there has been a large number of reported shootings from small urban cities, like Flint and Saginaw. Most of the shootings involves street gang disputes, robberies/homicides and neighborhood spats. But there was one particular shooting that really concerned me, though. The incident involved the robbery and shooting death of a senior citizen African American couple who had been married for over 50 years. The mid 70 year old couple were killed in their own home, allegedly at the hands of two teenage African American men. After seeing the news report of the tragic and senseless incident, I had said to myself, "Our young brothers are all the way gone". "They have lost total respect for life, period". The more the news reported the tragic incident of the senior couple, the more upset and baffled I became about the situation, because I could not understand what were these young brothers exactly thinking. How could a person become so desensitized to life. Why couldn't these young men see that this was somebody's grandparents, great grandparents. Someone's mother and father. A love one to somebody. I, quite sure that these young men had grandparents of their own. Have they forgot the love, care and protection that their grandparents gave them. Had they had any precious, pleasant and sweet memories in the coziness of their grandparents' home. Did they remember

getting those big hugs and kisses from them. Have they forgotten the very pleasant aroma of their favorite meals and desserts that were prepared by their grandmother, or all the funny jokes and stories that their grandfather told. I mean, had these brothers' hearts had gotten so heartless from the madness of the streets, that they could not recollect the warmth that they had felt inside when they seen their grandparents' smile, with opened arms, as they told them, "come here baby, and give me a hug". My God!!! Did it even cross the brothers' mind to say, "Damn man! This ain't cool man. Those people are old, and somebody's grandparents!" I guess not.

Because if they had, we would not have two of our elders' lives cut short because of the madness of the streets, the evil of America's culture, and the senseless mentality of our society invade their nose. This was the alley of the young brothers' mind that over took their thinking. Not only were these brothers stood accused in the death of the Christian elderly couple, they were also accused in the death of a Caucasian senior citizen as well.

I know everyone is so baffled as to why so many of our youth has gone completely astray, and obsess with the urge in killing each other, committing crimes, disrespecting each other, and just having totally no sense or value for life. There are several answers for this: 1. America's culture; 2. Parenting; 3. A person's mentality.

Now, the reason, because it started in the home, I remember that I was a child, and the times when my brothers, my cousins and I had gotten into trouble, would always tell us, "You know what? I don't blame you. I blame your parents".

Now, when I was a child, even though I heard the never-ending comments made by grandfather, I could never seem to grasp, in what he had meant by it. I mean, every time I did anything wrong, I was punished (grounded), whipped, beaten and so on by my mother, stepfather and father. I know he possibly could not be talking about that, because my parents were clearly not lacking in that department. In fact, I still remember the leather belt straps, the iron cords, the extension cords, sticks, fist and feet beatings. And a telephone receiver here and there. I am quite sure other children had experienced it at some point in their life. It took me awhile to really circumscribe and decipher what my grandfather meant when he blamed parents for the mischievous acts of their children. I mean, it really took me some years, but I finally got it now. It was simply parents lack of involvement in their children's life. This is what is extremely lacking very much in America's families.

Not all, but some. I think back on all the children that I had seen running the streets, unsupervised by their parents, or a responsible adult. See, that is a prevalent recipe for trouble. You must remember, children has undeveloped minds.

They are full of energy and with racing curiosity. They are very easily influenced and extremely impressionable running the streets, unsupervised with other misguided children. Think people. This goes on in every urban neighborhood in America. You do not think that children are not susceptible to juvenile delinquent behavior if left alone, unsupervised? Of course. I would know. I was once one of those children.

Now understand, my parents were not bad parents. My Christian church going father has worked his entire life, and has never been to jail. My Christian faith mother and step-father were both employed at Chrysler, before they were permanently laid-off, because of the restructuring of the automobile manufacturing company with former CEO, Mr. Lee Iacocca in the late '70s and early '80s. Our family lived in a big house that my mother and step-father owned. We had three automobiles - a Cadillac, a Lincoln, and a custom van. We had mopeds, before other children in the neighborhood had them. We had the bikes and big wheels. My mother made sure that we had the big and best memorable Christmases, with all the trimmings. We had the video games, arts and crafts, a pool table, and a table tennis (ping pong) set.

Basically, my brothers, sister and I had the child life as any other working or

middle-class family in America. And when my parents were laid-off, they both went to school and obtained certificates in cosmetology and automobile mechanics. They had hustled on the side by selling baked goods -i.e. cakes and pies; arts and crafts -i.e. latch hooked rugs, string art, sketches, drawings and paintings, ceramics, African and regular clothing, styling hair and repairing automobiles. As I sit back and think about it, my parents were American Entrepreneurs. When my brothers and I were at home, it was very discipline. But when [redacted] we were not around home, we all were into things, whether following others, or on our own. This is reality.

And, this is where the problem lies with America's youth -all across the color lines. A lack of parent supervision. If responsible adults are around the children, it creates a "Big Brother" barrier around them at all times. If this simple system was in fact instituted in our urban communities across America, we would not have the problems of teen pregnancy, gang bangin', dope dealin', drug and alcohol using and abusing, and other hair raising problems that many parents in America are having with their children. America need to wake up and realize this. These issues are not just happening in the slums, ghettos, and trailer parks of America, it is also taking place in the rural, suburbia, and affluent aristocratic gated communities in America as well. It is just more prevalent in the lower income communities, because of the lack of positive productive options for the children to do in their spare time, and their parents work and very stressed work schedule that denies the parent(s) quality time with their children. If America's children had a positive productive outlet when they are not in school, in which they could work with their creative minds, and not aimlessly raving and hanging in the streets, we would not see the senseless behavior. Also, if parents would be parents, instead of being merely their children's homeboys and homegirls, we would not have the many problems as well. Case in point: On the Art McCoy's Black on Black radio talk show out of Cleveland, Mr. McCoy had revealed an encounter that he had with a couple of children and their mother, involving a simple dispute that could have possibly ended Mr. McCoy's life. Mr. McCoy explained that he had told the children, who were playing basketball in a parking lot area where several automobiles were parked, that they had to move. But instead of the children moving, they responded by using disrespectful inappropriate profane language towards him. So, Mr. McCoy took the children to their home in order to speak with the mother, and when he had explained the incident to the mother, according to him, instead of the mother having an adult dialogue about the situation -and disciplining the children for their behavior, the mother responded by ordering him to leave her children alone, and then, called her brother in order to cause a senseless and unnecessary rancous. As you can see, this was totally handled inappropriately by the mother. First adults, if they have a dispute and it involves children, it should be discussed outside the presence of them, because of obvious reasons. Children has a tendency to think that it is okay to behave negatively towards adults, and so forth, especially when their parents take their position on a situation. Therefore, once a parent -or parents allow this to happen, they are basically giving the child the green light, or a pass to be disrespectful and use profanity towards anyone, including adults. And this should not be the case. In essence, the first response that should have came out the mother's mouth to the children, was did they in fact used foul language towards Mr. McCoy.

Once, that was taken care of, [redacted] she should have gotten to the story of the incident. Secondly, we as adults need to slow down, and stop getting so hyped and emotional about a problem, dispute, or encounter. This is what led [redacted] to the shootings, the beatings, the fighting, and uncontrollable anger and rage. If you think back on some of your incidents in which you may have become angry, nine times out of ten, the situation was not that serious. It only became serious, and escalated to a real problem once everyone became emotional, and therefore not thinking

rationality. In a rap song that I had wrote years ago called, "Just Think", I had written a catchy hook that states the point of a person thinking before reacting in adverse situations. The hook says:

Just think, A five letter word;
 could change the minds of the whole entire world.
 There would never be any wars, Only peace.
 And all a man has to do is, Just Think.

This is so true. If we just start using our brains -with reason- in situations, instead of reacting with emotions, we would not have, what Huey Freeman -the young political and social conscious animated cartoon character from Brother Aaron McGruder's very popular cartoon script, Boondocks- calls, "A Nigga Moment". (For those who are not aware of this term, A Nigga Moment. It is a term that is described by Huey in the Boondock's animated series -that I love very much- in which two, or more African Americans has a simple encounter or dispute that turns into a major confrontation, and possibly, with guns ablazin'.) In the case with Mr. McCoy and the children's mother, a nigga moment was about to transpire, when she decided to call her brother.

In reality, when Mr. McCoy did in what we all would be doing: being responsible -and supervising- a situation that involves children, this is something to think about. Let say that the children had damaged an automobile in the parking lot. Now, the mother is responsible for the damages, and she could be out of hundreds of dollars because of it. But instead of the mother thanking Mr. McCoy and commending him, she wants to bring the nauceus. And for what? Because Mr. McCoy told the children to stop playing basketball in the area where cars were parked.

Now, you see why adults do not want to get involved in situations when they see others' children misbehaving. Because, if the children are out of control, you can believe that the scorn does not fall far from the tree.

Here is another mistake that we all are guilty of. For years, parents has made this crucial mistake in telling their children, "you better not let nobody put their hands on you! And if anyone hit you, you better hit them back." This free pass has schooled in the homes of African Americans for years, and ~~it~~ it has haunted us all.

I mean to the point, that children are not only hitting back, they are now stabbing and shooting as well. Those two statements made by our parents, has caused a serious backlash in our communities. It has been the contributing factor in the death of our youth, as well as the filling of the prison and death row cells. We never seem to tell our children that there is a better way in handling a heated confrontational situations, before they become ~~violent~~. But parents like the sister in Saginaw, who went to her daughter's high school, not to see how she ~~was~~ was performing in school, but to retaliate towards a 15 years old girl -by cutting her with a razor- because her 17 year old daughter had lost the fight with the young lady, or the pregnant sister from Cleveland, who fatally stabbed another young mother after a dispute between two children who had gotten into a fight, needs to realize that their job as parents is to defuse and resolve confrontations with children, and not take a simple situation -such as a spat between children- and turning it into a penitentiary case. This is the results of children, raising children.

Here is another case that you will find shocking and appalling which involves totally irresponsible parents. Oprah Winfrey had a caucasian couple who were guest on her show. During the show, it was revealed that the parents had treated not only their teenage sons, but their sons' friends to a teenage birthday party with an adult strippers. While the parents were at the party, that had taken place in their home, they had allowed the boys to be involved in sexual acts with the stripper, while their young son took photos. The parents were reported to authorities by the

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photo developers after they developed the photos that the mother brought to them for development. The parents were later prosecuted and convicted about the ordeal.

Oprah during the program questioned them about their judgment in allowing the stripper to be at the party, and from the father's demeanor and conversation that he had with Oprah, he seem to be very remorseful about the matter. Where as his wife, was not. She felt that she did not do anything wrong, and believed that the photo developers were wrong in reporting them to the authorities. Note, [redacted] the other boys parents were unaware that their children were invited and involved in a birthday stripper party. These parents are a prime example of why children turns into major problems later in life -and in this case, not having respect for women.

This mother does not seem to understand, that this is one of the ways that leads boys -and men for that matter- to disrespecting and demeaning women in sexual perverted behavior. It is parents like her who starts the process in which young boys and men later finds themselves in, by violently abusing and raping women.

This is what leads to drugging and gang raping women. This is some of the reasons why America finds so many of their blond headed, blue-eyed caucasian women nude, raped and dead in abandon fields, on the side of ditches and in shallow graves, because of the irresponsible behavior [redacted] the parents. Plain and simple. First and foremost, she was clearly in violation in having other children at this party, especially not to say the parents aware of what type of party it would be. It is hard enough for parents to keep their children focus on the right road without America's overpowering pop culture that has heavily influenced America's youth.

But to have parents that allow children, or condone and encourage children to be involved in inappropriate criminal behavior has absolutely cross the line. This is another reason why children ends up in juvenile delinquent behavior. Most parents just assume that the parents of their children's friends are responsible adults, who have the same values as theirs. So, they just do not question the parents. Most parents do not know eachother, yet they will allow their children to go to the homes of total strangers. That is very strange to me. A parent will not allow their child to go away with a stranger, but will trust their children's judgment when associating themselves with friends and they are totally in the dark about the parents. This is not only happening in the projects and trailer parks, but in middle-class America as well. Parents need to understand that you can teach your children what is right and what is wrong, but reality is, if you do not have reinforcement barriers in the community in which they roam, everything you preach and teach them day in and day out will just go into one ear and out the other. It is just simple as that.

This is what the African term means: "It takes a village in order to raise a child". There are very great parents who come down hard on themselves when their child or children grow-up and turn out to be a problem. They asks themselves, "where did I go wrong?" But parents must realize, that they can do all the right things possible and their children will keep their heads. I can not explain exactly why children or our youth sometimes make the wrong decisions, other than the fact they may succumb to the forever obstacles of peer pressure and pop culture. Some may be self-esteem issues, and still others may want to make a rebellious statement.

But what ever the case may be, children need very visible dominant influential positive adults and peers around them and the community in order to keep their heads straight. Most people blames the juvenile delinquent and criminal behavior on the fact that children are raised in single parent homes by mothers, but I disagree.

For years, especially among African Americans, children turned out to become great positive productive people were raised in single parent homes. The problem and its breakdown in the urban communities, which has led to some many African Americans being incarcerated, mental hospitals, unemployed, or in the cemeteries

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today, was not single parent homes, I was "crack" cocaine. It was guns. It was massive unemployment. And believe it or not, integration. Before crack, guns, massive unemployment throughout the '80s and '90s, and integration -all responsible for ravaging urban America- African Americans had unwritten codes and rules that raised our children. There were the big brothers and big sisters who stayed on the youth and kept them out of trouble. There were the big aunts who sat on the porch, the project's bench, or just looking out the window and watching over our youth. There were the many African American entrepreneurs in the communities that had the teens working for them and encouraging youth to become business owners. There were the cousin people, family members and friends who encourage youth to stay in school, keep excellent grades and stay out of trouble. These individuals were clearly out and about where children could see them. When a child or children had gotten out of line, there was the strong structure of the community that immediately put them back in line. The community was the big family unit. There was the issue of teen mothers and single parent mothers, but before the devastation of crack, guns, unemployment and integration, there were other dominant figures -i.e. grandparents, uncles, aunts and others, who had a positive and powerful influence in the children's upbringing. The community worked together in raising children. But with the proliferation of crack cocaine, the very best part of my culture, the strong structure that raised our children, the very best part of my culture, the very best part of my culture do not have time to be a mother. The grandparents are too old and sick to keep up with the children. The uncles and aunts do not have the time to step in and be that positive figure, because they are too busy with their life in trying to make ends meet, incarcerated, chasing drugs and alcohol, and careless about the children.

So, many of the young mothers must raise the children alone, unless a good disciplined brother is involved in their lives that would bring positive structure in their world. These sisters do the best that they can, and I tip my hat to many of them, considering their circumstances. I still remember the sisters in the hood, including my ex-girlfriend and how they had struggled, daily in raising their children. It was not easy for any of them, but they still managed to move on. I will be the first to say, it was not easy for them. I remember once explaining to a young sister who was my co-worker at Burger King about the dilemma of being a single parent mother after she had told me about her boyfriend pressuring her into having sex. I had told the young teenage sister that if she was my daughter, I would have advised her not to get involved, because she was not ready for the responsibility that came with it. I then explained to her about all the problems that my girlfriend -at the time- was having in raising her children. Finally, I had told her that she needed to sit down and talk to her mother about the situation.

Before I move on, I really want to touch on something that I believe parents need -and in fact, obligated- to discuss with their children, and that is the matter of sexual intercourse. For too long many parents has avoided this issue, and therefore allowed their children to learn on their own, and by someone that they may not approve of. This is an act of nature that was created by God, but most people perceive it as something dirty and taboo, not considering the fact, that is now over 3 billion people came into existence in this world. My father talked to me about sex when I was a child. My mother did as well, but she was more direct about the matter. She simply told us flat out, "You better not bring no damn babies home." That is how she solved the problem. I still remember when I was about 13 years old and my girlfriend, who was about 12 years old, would literally chase me around her grandmother house in order to have sex with her. In fact, the first sexual encounter that I had was with her, and it was about a couple weeks before my 18th birthday. I believe the sex talks from my parents, the fear of child support, and

the fact that I was very shy of girls prevented me from having sex and having babies at an early age. Forgive me for taking it a little off course, but I felt it was a need that made that point about parents talking to their children about sex. Now, we are back on point. People in America really do not understand the seriousness of the introduction of crack cocaine and how it caused a major breakdown of an already fragile family unit in America. In fact, caucasian families in America today are having the same devastating effects with the deadly drug, Crystal Meth.

I am going give you some facts to ponder on. When crack came and invaded urban America, it was about 1984. Now, I am not talking about freemazing. I am talking about crack cocaine. During the introduction of the drug, America's unemployment rate for 1982, 1983, 1984 and 1985 were 9.7, 9.6, 7.8 and 7.2 respectively, according to the United States Labor Department. So with this in mind, labor statistics has confirmed that the unemployment rate among African Americans is double to the national unemployment rate. It is also a social scientific fact that has been recognized by both the psychologists and sociologists communities, that when a massive group of people are unemployed, with no means of income, they become very stressful and therefore fall into depression. When depression occurs, people turn to drugs, alcohol, sex, and crime in order to escape depression. Still others do the ultimate, by committing suicide, and they do not have to commit it by placing a gun in their mouth or using a knife on their neck. It can be accomplished by other reckless means such as, getting into a shoot-out with the police, or a so-called street enemy. Once crack was instituted in the urban communities, it totally changed the mentality of our people by mass portions. It completely destroyed the moral principle values that were instilled in the family unit every since the South. Before crack, there was a moral system intact in the community among everyone.

You knew not to bother the young and the old, period. You did not sell dope to children. You did not commit immoral acts in the presence of children. And believe it or not, there were codes among the criminals and law breakers as well. But crack changed that. Drug dealers, drug users, and others stop following the codes. The "Silent War" developed in the communities, and African Americans were unaware of it. African Americans were wrongfully under the impression that it was just another phase of the drug culture coming from heroin, mix jive and raw. No one realized that heroin, particularly mix jive was just the precursor to the real battle that would be in stored. With the crack problem, it took the brothers and sisters for a ride and everyone was affected by it, including the children. The same children that we see in gangs today. The same children who are involved in very heinous crimes. While these young children's parents were on crack binges, the children were home alone, with no food. Seeing strange people in their home. Seeing the drugs, crack pipes, dealers, and their mother, father, big sister and big brother on crack, looking very deranged. They have witnessed strange men coming in and out of their mother's bedroom. Their family members stealing and selling everything in the home, including the food stamps, and the food itself. Their homes were turned into a crackhouse or a smokehouse. These same children were embarrassed because they were teased by other children who seen their family members on crack and behaving like crack addicts, or they were unable to wear the latest fashionable clothing, because the mother smoked her check up on crack. This is what led the children to become very heartless, bitter, angry and desensitized by their actions towards others.

This is why our youth do not have respect for anyone, because they are the aftermath and the survivors of the urban battlefields of the '80s and '90s from the crack era. This is why the youth loved Tupac Shakur so much. He felt and

■-I; ●-not; ■-actually

recognized their pain. Pac preached it. He lived it. And he died because of it.

RuPac was the representative of the children, men and women who all survived the Silent War of the '60s and '90s. And those from that side of America just do not have a clue. America believed that they are lazy, when in fact, they are not. They believed that they love the lives that they live and do not want to better themselves, when in fact that is a myth. If this was the case, you would not see so many of our people trying to find their way out of the ghetto and slums of America - from attending college and vocational schools, to becoming professional entertainers and athletes. Even individuals who are working two or three minimum-wage jobs, drug dealers, welfare recipients and many, many others who live in the never-ending war zones of urban America want to find a way out of this living hell. Brothers and sisters in the hood want a better life just like the Caucasians who live in the trailer parks and rural America. But the problem is, so many of our people has been losing, or lost hope from the years of disappointment, lies and broken promises from the civil rights movement leaders and others who claimed that they would correct the many problems that has forever crippled us every since our forefathers came to America, that now, many of our people has come to the realization that the civil rights movement, integration, affirmative action and others so-called social equality programs that were instituted during the '60s and '70s only resulted in a selective few, and the rest of us, many of our brothers and sisters are still in the struggle of finding for themselves and forget the rest. Most feel trapped in this never-ending cycle that many has found extremely hard to break. But some of our good brothers like Dr. Bill Cosby, Mr. John McWhorter from the Manhattan Institute - and who written the book called, "Winning the Race: Beyond the Crisis in Black America", and Rev. Jessie Lee Peterson, founder of the Brotherhood Organization of New Destiny and others for some strange reason do not get it. They seem to believe that the solution to the African American problem in America is to get on a "soap-box" with a megaphone for the media, go on conservative, neo-conservative, and right-winged think tanks platforms and stages, and foolishly rant and hurl ignorant nonproductive epithets about -and towards- African Americans' daily struggles and misfortunes, or making worthless challenging arguments that attacks liberals' sociological theories or analysis of the forever ailing plight of African Americans, instead of taking it to the streets, prisons, jails, homeless shelters, and so on -where the African Americans' problems are- and express their concerns to them directly, along with a positive plan and fruitful solutions in remedying the many problems in the hurting communities. I mean, this is what many of our grassroots organizations are doing in our communities, including the Nation of Islam and Jim Brown's Amer-I-can. The same organizations who are not receiving the same air time or invitations in the media and think tank's stages in order to express their disgust as well. But do not get me wrong. I absolutely agree -as well as others- with some of their positions and arguments, but the problem is, number one, they are addressing their concerns to groups of people who really do not care, and number two, what drug dealer, drug user, wino, armed robber, harlot, stripper, welfare recipient, dead-beat parents, teenage mothers and fathers and so forth that you know is taking the time out in their day to watch C-SPAN and the FOX News Network in order to hear the concerns that Dr. Cosby, Mr. McWhorter and Rev. Peterson has about the inappropriate behavior of many African Americans in urban America. They must go to the streets, just like Jesus did and help the sick, poor and wounded.

And, I am still trying to figure out how Dr. Cosby believe that by giving your child names like Kevin (my brother Kevin's daughter's name), Jerrisa, Tyvon, or other names that identifies with African American independence and pride has to do with raising a child in America. I mean NPR's News and Notes co-host, Ms. Parai Caldeya's parents did not seem to have a problem with the name that she

● -who are not; ● -of; ● -recipient;

● -like

has, and Ms. Caldeys turned out to be a great person. This is the same with Serena and Venus Williams, Beyonce, Mia Long, Lisa Price, Kobe Bryant and Mehki Phifer.

I believe parents should have the absolute freedom in raising their children, without the criticism from Dr. Cosby, and bigotry from others. Ceci Connolly a journalist from the Washington Post has the name that many of our African American sisters in the hood has - "Ceci". Ms. Connolly's name has not held her back, or allowed her to end up on welfare -with children out of wedlock, unemployed and without a high school and college education. And Ceci is a caucasian woman. In essence, the names that African Americans has given their children as a symbol of identity has not contributed to the many problems that has ailed African Americans for years. Racism, bigotry, ignorance, selfishness, cowardliness, and self-hatred has. I noticed when other ethnic groups, like Jews, Arabs, Irish, Italians and even caucasian Americans see their people in adversity, they do not go to the media and think tanks to belittle and criticize them. No. They go to the source of the problem and correct it. Remember, they came from the ghettos and slums as well. What I do like to know from Dr. Cosby, his supporters, and the media outlets, like the FOX News Network, who has been holding Dr. Cosby up as a leader for the African Americans' poor: Where have they been? Minister Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam has continuously been addressing the problems with African Americans for years.

The Nation of Islam has addressed the problems of African Americans in correcting many of the problems with African Americans, but the Big Boy community has as well, including Chuck-D of Public Enemy and KRS-One of Boogie Down Productions. Still others like Minister Elijah Muhammed, Malcolm-X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, Noble Drew Ali, Booker T. Washington, Marcus W. Garvey, Bob Marley, Madam C.J. Walker, Bobby Seale, Huey P. Newton, Angela Davis, Assata Shukur, Afeni Shukur, Stokely Carmichael, Comrade George Jackson, Fred Hampton, Michael Clark, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Maxine Waters, Connie Rice, Davis Smiley, Tony Brown, Rev. Al Sharpton, and a slus of others has pointed out our problems for over a hundred years, or so. I mean, even the drug addicts, alcoholics, used teenage mothers, incarcerated brothers and sisters, homeless individuals, and the mothers and fathers of dead sons and daughters have all addressed their concerns. My God, Brother Bill, even the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacy groups recognizes the problems in the hood. These problems have not just started.

Teenage girls have not just started having babies out of wedlock. People have not just started becoming drug addicts, drug dealers, pimps, harlots, murders, gang bangers, welfare recipients, unemployable, and so on. This has been going on in America for over two hundred years. In fact, Jews, Irish, Italians and other European ethnic groups has been -and some continue to be- involved in the same acts that African Americans are going through today. It is just some agents seeking racist ultra-conservative right-wingers do not believe that it would be in their best interest to expose and harp on the problems day in and day out as they do with the problems of African Americans. They had -and still do have- the massive street gangs who were involved in everything illegal, from mass murder, to petty thief. Even some of America's wealthiest families and their forefathers were arch criminals, including the once oil rich and powerful Rockefellers -which I had discovered while reading this very enlightening book by Matthew Josephson called, "Robber Barons". Mr. Josephson revealed that John D. Rockefeller, who started Standard Oil, father was a petty criminal out of Cleveland, Ohio. If you take the time and watch the History Channel, Arts and Entertainment (A&E) Channel, and other channels that reports historical documentaries on America, you will find that the criminal behavior that you see in the poverty stricken neighborhoods of African Americans today, is very much similar to the criminal behavior of caucasians in America from the past. Documentaries like A&E's "Street Gangs", History Channel's,

"History on Illegal Drugs", "Organized Crimes", "Bootlegging" and many others showed the true actual history of America's criminal life committed by caucasians when they had came to America. What do you think the movie, "Gangs of New York", starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Cameron Diaz was about? It revealed the true life of the past of European immigrants who came to America and involved themselves in gangs and in vile criminal behavior in the "Five-points" in New York. How do you think NASCAR auto racing was started? By southerner illegal bootleggers who had "soup up" cars with their moonshine out running the law. How do you think a lot of these multi-billion dollar distillary corporations were started? They were started by breaking the law, making, and distributing their moonshine. According to the history Channel's documentary, "Bootleggers, Runners and Moonshiners" not only were the infamous Detroit Jewish mobsters, The Purple Gang pushing illegal alcohol from Canada by way of the Detroit River, one of America's founding fathers, John Hancock was an illegal rum runner, who was clandestinely shipping cargo-loads of illegal rum through America's ports, just like the modern day big dope dealers -i.e. the CIA and FBI. How do you think Las Vegas and Hollywood were built? They were built by illegal money and the heavy influence of the mobsters. Why do you think these gangster papers have taken the names of the actual American criminals of the past?

Some gangsters are youth. Names like James Brown, Slim the Slim, Al Copans, Lady Smino, Pretty Boy Floyd, Bonnie and Clyde, and John Dillinger, and organizations like Murder, Inc and The Purple Gang are now American legends and forever embedded in the fabric of American history, as Hollywood continuously glorifies and keep their names and their bloody criminal deeds alive. America refuses to put the silver bullet in these notorious criminals and organizations like they have with the Detroit drug gangs, Y.S.I. and Posey, Inc. and the Jamaica Posse. In reality, our youth has emulated some of these criminals, as others cheer them on, like the poor poverty stricken caucasians had done in the past. They see it as being free and rising against the establishment, just as they did in the past.

I mean our youth has now took on the attributes of the American criminals, to the point that they have created a "Stop Switching" campaign. How where do you think they had learned that from? You guessed it. From the mafia, the police departments with their code of silence and other agencies of government. It is well known, in the entire world that nobody like a rat, including the police, so, why would everyone get so upset with urban youth when they are just doing what American society has been accosted in doing, all the way to the White House. They are not doing anything different from what the wealthy caucasian youth have been doing for years. Look at the alleged rape incident with the Duke University's lacrosse team. It was reported an African American female college student who was moonlighting as an exotic stripper, was allegedly brutally rape by three members from the lacrosse team. The visibly injured female college student had injuries that were consisted of a rape victim, but the wealthy caucasian young men who allegedly hurled racial slurs at the African American woman and threatened to sodomize the woman with a broomstick, had immediately "lawyered up" before saying anything. (And I am wondering why would an all caucasian boy frat house would request for African American strippers, instead of caucasian strippers? Please, forgive me for asking. I was just curious.)

With this in mind, Dr. Cosby -and people like him, must realize that this is an American problem, and not just solely a poor African American problem.

There are caucasian young women who has a problem with keeping their clothes on and are sexpots. The evidence is the Girls Gone Wild videos. These young women are children and they all say the something, "If my parents see this, they will kill-me". America sees porno-stars like Jenna Jameson as a sex-goddess.

Marylin Monroe as the American legendary sex-goddess. Yet, they can not understand why African American teens are having babies. Caucasian teenagers are having just as much sex -if not more. It is just most of them use protection, and are into oral and anal sex. It is the same with marriage. Of course, with the problem with African Americans and commitment -let them tell it, I am trying to figure out just who are the 50 percent of Americans that decide each year to end their marriage in divorce?

Take a look at the usual mother abortion figures. According to the 2002 World Almanac and Book of Fact, the nonmarital childbearing percentage rate in the US in the years of 1970 and 1999 -based on the live birth per 1,000 unmarried women between 15-44 years of age-for African Americans were 95.5 percent in 1970 and 71.5 percent in 1999, and for caucasians, 13.9 percent in 1970 and 38.1 percent in 1999.

And the total number of abortions in America for the years of 1992, 1995 and 1996 were 1,528,930, 1,363,690 and 1,365,730 respectively. So, is America trying to say that African Americans are killing all these babies?

Dr. Cosby, and his followers who believes that African Americans are causing America's problems need to check the facts and get out of the percentage number businesses and get into the world of hard numbers of what is really going on. This is America's problem, not an African American or Hispanic American problem. I had thought the African American and Hispanic American were the main social ills? If that is the case, why in the hell everyone is singly African Americans out? America has over 18 million caucasians living in poverty. It has over 36 percent of caucasians incarcerated in jail and prisons, with over 56 percent and 40 percent of them on probation and parole, respectively. I would like to ask the conservatives, neo-conservatives and bigots, "Why do you continue to claim that African Americans and Hispanic Americans are the causes of America's problems. The last time I checked, African Americans and Hispanic Americans were not responsible for the \$200 billion that were stolen, the hundreds of thousands of jobs that were lost, or the hundreds of millions -or more- dollars and other personal property that were [redacted] from the hardworking and faithful employees by the major corporation scandals of Enron, Tyco, WorldCom and others. You do a great injustice to caucasian Americans -in fact, all Americans." This is an American problem. I totally do not support what is going on in the African American communities, and I am not justifying it either. I would love to see a major clean up effort in the communities. Lord knows I do. But in order for this happen, people like Dr. Cosby must recognize that this is an American problem. Because, like Juan Williams once said, "If white America don't feel the heat. To them, it is not a fire".

William Bennett, who was the former U.S. Drug Czar and U.S. Secretary of Education for Former President George H.W. Bush's administration, during his radio talk show back in 2005, [redacted] made a comment to the abortion of African American children in America on the heels of the New York Bestseller, "Freakonomics" by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, who suggested in their book that by children being aborted through the 1970s, possibly the abortion could have contributed to the reduction in crime in the 1990s. Bennett decided to take it a step further by asking his racist suggestion that if all African American children were aborted, crime in America would had significantly decreased. He did admit it would be wrong to abort African American children, but crime would drastically decrease. You know he does have a point. Logically, the abortion of African American children would - in fact, crime, but crime will still be committed because caucasians in America commit just as many crime as African Americans, if not more. I believe that was something that Bennett never took into [redacted] when he had made the pseudo-intellectual comment. - In fact, the [redacted] can be said about him, and people like him. If they had been aborted, the world would ultimately be a much better, pleasant and peaceful place. The world

■-taken; ■-to; ■-decrease
 ■-account; ■-same

The music and lyrics of old school Hip Hop were fire, passionate and on point.

But over the years, African Americans have allowed "The Enemy" to infiltrate what was good, positive and respectful, and turned it against us. I mean to the point where we have created a culture of self-hatred towards our people. Our brothers are now killing each other in the streets in rap rival disputes. Our sisters are being degraded and treated like whores, as they debase themselves below the class of harlots in rap videos and behind the scenes of the rap industry. And our older brothers and sisters who are not part of the Hip Hop culture do not understand - or care to understand for that matter- the true and pure essence of Hip Hop that was brought through the music and culture of RunDMC, Eric B & Rakim, KRS-One and Boogie Down Productions, Chuck-D and Public Enemy, EPMD, Planet Patrol, Proceso Force Marley Marl, D.J. Red Alert, Afrikan Bambaata -just to name a few. Everyone has mistakenly taken Gangster Rap, Crunk Music, and other popular forms of rap music that is shown in the media, played on the radio and heard in the urban streets today as Hip Hop, when it's not. Now do not get me wrong. I love that type of music as well, but it is not Hip Hop, period. It is like saying Marvin Gaye, Sam Cooke, Otis Redding and Michael Bolton are Soul singers, Chicago, Lynyrd Skynyrd and Metallica are Rock groups. If you are aware of any of these soul singers or rock groups, you will clearly agree that they are not the same. Marvin Gaye was a "other sound" soul singer, Sam Cooke and Otis Redding were soul's southern style soul singers, and Michael Bolton, he is a white pop soul singer. This is the same distinction with the rock groups. Chicago is what you call a soft rock group. Lynyrd Skynyrd is southern rock, and Metallica, they are a metal rock group. So, there is a clearly a difference if people want to recognize it, or not. Everyone believes that Hip Hop and rap are responsible for the madness in our people, when in fact, Hip Hop -as well as rap, has been infiltrated by "The Enemy". When Hip Hop originated, the lyrics were not laced with violence and sexually explicit content. If you listen to the songs of the Hip Hop music from the early and mid-eighties, you will see it was not laced with lyrics boasting about guns, murder, rape, or even the bama, nigga.

Back then, major record companies did not have any interest in Hip Hop, and most believed that it was a fad that would eventually go away. With that in mind, it gave smaller independent labels like Profile, Def Jam, Sugar Hill, Tommy Boy and many others a golden opportunity to not only exploit a virgin market that was basically ignored by the major record companies, but it allowed the MC -as the writer of the lyrics and producer of the music- and the label total control of the creative process, therefore not being pressured by board of directors, shareholders, and others who are more concerned with the bottom line, than integrity. By MCs and Hip Hop groups having that total creative freedom in writing their lyrics, who were more concerned in building and maintaining a fierce street creditable lyrical reputation, while making some money, enable them to create material with wholesome family upbringing integrity. What I mean by that, lets take L.L. Cool J for example. If any of you know about upbringing, you will know his grandfather played a very significant role in his upbringing, and he will proudly tell you this. With this in mind, he could not imagine in a million years, writing and reciting lyrics that totally degrades women. Listen to L.L.'s classic love song, "I Need Love". This was the case with others in the pioneering stages of Hip Hop, including RunDMC, who family members were working middle-class individuals.

In fact, in the mid '80s, RunDMC received a warm acceptance from the N.A.A.C.P. and it president at the time Rev. Benjamin Hooks. But rap acts like 2 Live Crew, Too Short, N.W.A. -Niggas With Attitudes, and Ice-T -the Original Gangster Rap Godfather all had pushed their lyrical creativity a step further with racy sexually explicit and/or urban street reality charged lyrics. During, what I call, "The Great Battle Between Hip Hop and Rap", a war emerged between the two. Hip Hop was at a

stage of media dominance with politically and socially conscious lyrics from Public Enemy, Boogie Down Productions, X-Clan, Poor Righteous Teachers, Queen Latifah, MC Lyte and Eric B and Rakim, or with entertaining lyrics from Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince, Dougie Fresh and Slick Rick, Fat Boys, Whodini, Biz Markie, Tone Loc, Young MC, Big Daddy Kane, EPMD, Beastie Boys and MC Hammer -who was the first rap artist to sell over 10 million units of his "Please Don't Hurt Me" album. Gangster rap and sexually explicit rap was essentially ignored or attacked by mainstream media, politicians and concerned citizens, which became a major critical mistake by those who tried to publicly attack them in the media, and a major accomplishment for gangster and sexually explicit rap, because of the free publicity that it received from the major media outlets. Organizations like Parents' Music Resource Center (PMRC), according to M. William Krasilovsky and Sidney Shemel, the writers of this very excellent and informative music industry book, "This Business of Music", convinced major record labels to place warning stickers on albums that contained controversial lyrics. This is what led to the popular Recording Industry Association of America's (RIAA) "Explicit Lyrics-Parental Advisory" warning stickers being placed on CD's and cassette tapes' covers. In reality, the warning stickers basically pushed gangster and sexually explicit rap to new heights, thus over-shadowing Hip Hop, as both the white and African youth -to their parents and other white- showed no respect unless it pertains to them and they are controversial music. It was like among the streets, that if the artist's or rap group's album did not have the warning sticker, it was considered garbage or soft. And what solidified gangster rap and its dominance, is when Billboard and its magazine of the same name had discontinued their traditional source in gathering weekly record sales of released material, and instituted SoundScan -an electronic system that relied on bar-coded entries of accurate and actual customer retail sales. Within the first month of its installment of the program, Easy-E's Ruthless Record gangster rap group, 2Pac, with their 1991 newly released album, "REPERCHED" -niggas for life spelled in reverse- had entered Billboard's Top Pop Album chart at number 1, in its week of release, thus dethroning Paula Abdul's newly released album, "Spellbound". This was the defining moment for gangster rap, as major record companies tapped into the market by giving distribution deals with the small independent labels. Gangster rap labels like Rap-A-Lot, Priority and the mighty powerhouse, Death Row Records became America's youth labels of choice when it came to gangster and street rap. In fact, the "Infamous" Death Row Records headed by ex-bodyguard, Marlon "Suge" Knight, during the early and mid '90s had totally dominated the rap music market, and was said to be the fastest money making label since Berry Gordy's Motown Records. At one point, before the Las Vegas' brawl -which allegedly involved an entourage of Death Row members including Mr. Knight, beating an African American young man named, Orlando Anderson after an earlier dispute- at the Mike Tyson vs. Bruce Seldon bout that was hosted by MGM Grand Hotel and Casino, and the shooting death of Tupac Shakur, the label was worth \$200 million. After the death of Tupac, the incarceration of Mr. Knight, and the criminal investigation into the deaths of both Tupac and Red Boy's rap artist, Notorious B.I.G., the label had taken a disastrous nose-dive that they have never seemed to recover from.

Today, with the infiltration of the modern-day "Steppin' Fetchin'" niggas in the rap and Hip Hop industry, they have allowed themselves to be used once again by the enemies who gives less than a 2% about them, and other African Americans.

It is all about forever perpetuating that "Steppin' Fetchin'" image that is burned into the minds of the world, and making a dollar, no matter how much of a damn fool you look or act. These Steppin' Fetchin' characters who claims to be street in front

of the census of MTV, BET, music award shows, and in rap magazines are in fact total frauds. When I see these clowns talking and looking pathetically stupid during interviews, it reminds me of Hollywood's African American character, Stepin' Fetchin' who was played Mel Watkins back in the early 20th century. Watkins, an African American, when on screen, portrayed himself as a stereotypical ignorant, talking foolish, broke backed cowardly buck-eyed shine, coon, saabo, fool - a character that has for years entertained and perpetuated the fraudulent image of the African American man in racist white America, but off screen, he was a very educated, well lettered, highly paid and well lavishly living man. While Watkins played and profited off this obviously degrading character, that plastered the false inferior negative image in the minds of the world, many of the African American men were catching hell, partly because of the fake image that he had instilled. This was the same with the sisters who played the sunt Je'mona and prostitute roles. These are in essence the same characters that African Americans are playing today in the rap industry. Most of these individuals who portray the modern day Stepin' Fetchin' "so-called" keeping it real or street, come from middle-classed, two parents in the home background, along with an excellent education. Yet, they will go on television and other media sources, and become a total moron at enormous portions.

Misguided individuals believes that these poor characters exist in everyday life in the hood and in ghettoes, and in fact, it does not. It may be that some African Americans do speak slang, but it comes natural. These clowns who claim to be street, work too hard, and it makes them look fake. Individuals who see these characters are absolutely misinformed. They believe our sisters are slutish women because they see these rap music videos with sisters shaking their behinds in clad outfits allowing brothers to slide credit cards between the crack of the behinds, and we want to blame the brothers for our sisters' behavior and choices that they make, when in fact, it is the fault of our sisters. They have control of their bodies. Furthermore, we must realize, that we have women, including African American sisters who in-charge in many of these music and video companies and would not dare play these roles or even allow their daughter to belittle themselves, yet they will allow other sisters to degrade themselves for little or no money, and sell it to the world just to meet the corporation bottom line. The reality is, if our sister loves do not feel uncomfortable in their actions, then it will continue. Without the video videos, the only available "bitches" for the Fallas' videos would be the champion breeds from the Westminster Kennel Club's Dog Show. This is the same with the brothers. Without their bac' dancin', the industry will clean itself. African Americans must understand that we are all victims of this madness. People outside of our circle, and who are not very familiar with the sub-culture of rap or Hip Hop believes that all African Americans addresses eachother as Snoop Dogg and others in the industry. The world believes that we all call each other "niggas" and "bitches" as a form of endearment, but this is totally untrue. The truth of the matter, I advise anyone who believes that it is okay to call an African American a bitch or a nigga -nigger- to proceed with caution. This is a sub-culture that some of our youth has foolishly embraced, which is not the accepted culture among the majority of African Americans. For most conservative traditional African Americans, it is very much taboo to use the word nigga or profanity in their homes or in their presence. In fact, even my father does not allow profanity, or the use of the word nigga to be used in his presence. These are misconceptions about our people. I still remember when Oprah told the story of when she went to South Africa to visit Brother Nelson Mandela, and one of the South African brothers greeted her by calling her a Nigga, or when I seen the caucasian woman on Ice Cube's executive produced show, "Black and White" called the sister a bitch out of the misconception that all African American women "sisterly" addresses each other. These misconceptions

comes from what and how the world perceives us on Television, in the music, and other media outlets. Most African Americans failed to realize the power of influence that we have on the world. God has blessed us with this power but we have not exploited the power for the good our people, as well as the rest of the world. We have the world following us like the lemming rats followed the Pipe Piper. The world love our music, they love our swagger, they love our fashion, they love our soul food, and they even love our slick slang language. We see that wearing our crowns, braids, hair extensions, and ear and nose rings. Our forefathers and mothers in Africa had worn these items thousands of years ago. It has been said by ignorant individuals who are completely unaware of our history, that African Americans who wear those items are "ghetto". But if this was the case, then the Kings and Queens of Africa, including Nefertiti, Nefertari, Akhenaton, Ramses II and Tutankhamen were guilty in being ghetto as well. Even the world famous poet and playwright, William Shakespeare in his portrait painting, is seen wearing an ear ring in his ear. It is the same with our slang. Just take the ghetto term, "bling". This term that was originated from the urban streets, describes the glistening shine that comes from diamonds. I have heard everyone, including prominent individuals like Diana Sawyer and Barbara Waters described jewelry as "bling". In fact, the word "bling-bling" has just recently been included in the Oxford English Dictionary.

We have been over and over with our culture, and we have yet found a way to wholly capitalize from it. The enemy has recognized this fact, and that is why the world is only fed the negatives in our music and videos. Just think. Now, the enemy does not have to call you a nigger, have your sister behave like a slut, or demean your people. They have come to the realization that they can now use us to degrade, demean and belittle ourselves in the media, while they can collect the revenue. The enemy has recognized the labels pimps, shores, gangsters, niggas and other negative stereotypes offend African Americans, yet they will continue to boldly push it because it sells and they know that the Caucasian youth loves it. It is like what comedian Paul Mooney said, "Everybody wanna be a nigga, but don't want to be a nigger".

The reality is - you agree with it or not, the Hip Hop and rap culture has helped African Americans, and Reverend Sun's (from SunFNC) family is proof of it.

On his MTV's reality show, Sun's House, he has allowed the world the opportunity to see his positive home and family, who has been raised in a traditional Christian and Hip Hop culture. He and his beautiful, intelligent, cool-headed wife, Justice are great positive role models for young African American parents. Their children are great positive individuals. In fact, their daughter Angela, who is a college-bound, straight "A" high school graduate, had recently decided to start her own teen magazine. The family are the "Bible family of Hip Hop", and you better believe that there are countless of other brothers and sisters who are associated in the industry that are also living in that same wholesome positive environment. You may see Rev. Sun, his brother, Russell Simons, R-Ditty and Master-S wearing loose baggy clothing, with their pants sagging - something that most people do not agree with - but one thing is for sure, these brothers are well respected businessmen, who has contributed significantly, to the America's economy and are very positive family men. Most important, they have provided a safe positive protective living environment for their wives and children. These are the positives that are not revealed in Hip Hop. This clash with Hip Hop and the African American traditional culture has created a deep division among African Americans. And this division has in essence placed hatred, discord and unconcern for each other as African Americans. So much so, that not only have we shamed our brothers and sisters in the ghetto, but we have totally alienated the unfortunate ones in these American prisons.

Over the years, the only individuals that I have seen raise any concerns about the disproportionate numbers of African Americans being placed in these modern-day plantations besides the Nation of Islam, ~~and~~ individuals like Randell Robinson, Harry Belafonte, Angela Davis, Walter Mosley, Ed Gordan, and a few others. But over all, the wholesale in the incarceration of African Americans has not concerned the majority of African Americans, and I find that very troubling and disheartening.

African Americans, and others do not seem to comprehend that the American Prison Industrial Complex, is in fact the matrix of the Slavery Industrial Complex of the past. African Americans has mistakenly looked at this issue as men and women being punished for committing crimes and breaking laws, and therefore, they must be labeled as criminals. But this approach is very counterproductive and in fact, very detrimental not only to the condemned individuals, but to our society as well. This is the time when society, particularly African American should be assisting prisoners, not ostracizing them. It is bad enough once brothers and sisters are incarcerated, they are shipped hundreds -and at times, thousands of miles away from family and friends. Most, who are long hour working, and indigent people, who can not afford in taking the trip to see their love ones. This has totally destroyed the family cohesiveness, which is extremely viable for everyone involved, including the children -who are never considered. By prison facilities being located far away from metropolitan areas where most African Americans are from, some family members are not too enthusiastic in traveling countless hours to rural areas for fear of being lost or stranded in areas where the community may not be too friendly towards them. Additionally, weather conditions plays a major role in family members decisions in traveling, because in states like Michigan where the bulk of its prisons resides both in the upper lower and upper peninsulas, the weather conditions can be very brutal in winter, and traveling on the five mile Mackinac Straits Bridge (one of the world's largest suspension bridge) can be especially dangerous for any person who is not a regular user of the bridge. It was reported back in the late 80's that a woman, while driving a small Yugo, was blown off the bridge by a great gust of wind. (NOTE: A Yugo automobile was not any larger than a BMW Mini Cooper.)

So, travel can be considerably dangerous.

Because of visitation times and scheduling at the prison facilities, families and friends who can afford it, sometimes charter a small plane and stay over night at a hotel in order to visit their love ones during the appropriate visiting hours.

Visitors are at times subject to abuse by unprofessional prejudice prison guards and administrators during shakedowns and throughout the visits. By their actions, most visitors become extremely uncomfortable and succumb to their actions, and decides not to visit again. Some state like Michigan has implemented strict policies in the visitation of prisoners, including limiting the number of visits and visitors a prisoner can receive. Prisoners are only allowed to receive ten visitors on a visiting list, and can no longer receive visits from minors, including nieces and nephews, unless the minor is the prisoner's child. If a prisoner has been found guilty of a substance abuse misconduct -drugs, sud juice and etc., he will be banned from receiving visitation for ~~at least~~ at least two years. The ban, as well as with other issues in the Michigan's MDOC Visitation Policy were challenged in federal court -*VERTON V BAZZETTA*, 539 US 126; 123 S.Ct. 2162 (2005)- and the United States Supreme Court held that the two-year substance abuse violation ban was constitutional. In fact, back in 1995, some state legislatures had considered having all visitors fingerprinted like they were criminals, but that proposal was rightfully aggressively challenged.

As you can see, both the location of the prisons and the policies like MDOC's visitation policy are intended to separate and destroy family and friends relationships with the prisoners. This atrocious strategy creates myths and stereotypes among everyone including feeble-minded prison guards and administrators

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who believe that the prisoner is unwanted and not loved by their family and friends, when this is simply not the case. This is a common practice with the system. The fact is, with the massive incarceration of individuals throughout the '90s, correction departments across the nation had to find alternatives in drastically reducing the visitation of visitors. These are the very same tactics that has been instituted with incoming mail and telephone use. I have known prisoners, including myself, who have not physically seen their family members in years -in some cases, decades. This is very common with prisoners. So, prisoners, family and friends only viable option in keeping in-touch with one another are through mail, telephone and photos. Fortunately, some facilities in Michigan allow prisoners to record video messages on DVD which can be sent home to their family members -especially to the incarcerated children, who can have some connection with their parent. It is very difficult on prisoners and their families, both emotionally and at times physically when they are unable to physically see, feel, or hear from one another. I remember reading Winnie Mandela's (whom I call "Mother Africa") very poignantly written autobiography, and how she described the heartfelt struggles that she went through just to see her husband, Nelson Mandela during visits. The hell she went through just to send or receive a letter from her love, Mandela. I even remember when Mother Africa spoke on the fact that when she met Mandela, she was very young, not really concerned with the native South Africans' struggle against the European Afrikaans, and was very madly in love with him. But her attitude changed when Mandela was taken away from her. The experience of incarceration can change both the incarcerated and the family, particularly parents, spouse and children forever. Incarceration can also be very difficult on spouses and paramours because of the fact they can be unable to maintain a meaningful romantic relationship, or even procreate and raise children. In fact, in *GERBER V HICKEY* (291 F.3d 617 (9th cir. 2002) appeal denied 537 US 1039 (2002)), a prisoner and his wife were denied the opportunity to procreate through the artificial insemination process. The court said the prisoner's right to procreate is fundamentally inconsistent with the nature and goals with incarceration. I found the court's reasoning in denying the married couple God given right in procreating very troubling, but not surprising -as it has been acknowledged for years among African Americans that the massive incarceration of its young males was nothing more than the equivalency of racial generational genocide or as I call it, "Americas' Black Man's Birth Control". The GERBER's decision has ultimately solidified the "so-called" conspiracy theorist's position that America has used the criminal justice system to control the African American general population. Now, they have the evidence to back their argument.

Long years if incarceration can wear heavily on an individual, as they become very lonely and at times, isolated from not being with family and friends, or having some form of companionship from the opposite sex. Therefore, prisoners, who are able, turn to websites and pen pal agencies in order to fill that void. Still others find themselves in clandestine relationships with prison guards. This is very common place in penitentiaries across America. In fact, loneliness is the guilty culprit in why paramour relationships between prisoners and guards blossoms in the first place. But this should not come to any surprise, considering the fact, that most of America's population are very lonely people.

Incarceration also can be very stressful on a person, especially when there is a death in the family. And it can be severely heart-shattering when the death involves a prisoner's mother or child. Lord knows that I dread the day when I will receive that call from home informing me that my mother has passed from. That will be an extremely bad day for me, for sure. I still can not forget the day when my

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comrade received the message that his mother had died. We were both residing at I-Max. During his heartfelt remembrance of his mother, he had told me that his mother had just come to see him, but a racist guard denied his visit after he had refused "to bend over and spread his behind, so the guard could see what the comrade has never seen". This is an example of the homosexual behavior that these caucasian corrections guards are into, among several other acts of sick perversion, claiming that they are "only just doing their job". The reality was, the lo'fied indolent guards did not want to escort the brother to the visit, and decided to come-out of their homosexual bag, by wanting the comrade to "bend over and spread", knowing the fact that the brother was not going to comply. These perverted clowns knew that brother like my comrade and myself are not homosexuals, and unequivocally not into caching things in our behinds. The fact that I-Max at the time was a "Supamax", all visits are "non-contact", with the prisoner remaining in belly-chains and leg irons throughout the entire visit. So, why would this punk want to look at a man's rectum? As I have stated on numerous occasions, I do not have anything against homosexuals and homosexuality. But I do have something against individuals who are in the closet, trying to carry on a persona as if though they were not one. The comrade, not being able to see his mother that one last time, on account of some punks has made the brother even more colder. I love the comrade, but he is for no games. And this is the case with a lot of the solid brothers.

When a brother loses a love one, especially his mother, he becomes very much cold and desensitized. It changes him forever. So many individuals in society can not phantom the fact, that the incarcerated deeply love their families. Like myself.

I really love and miss my family very much, including my ex-girlfriend's children, whom I was extremely close to and particularly fond of before my incarceration. Over the years, I foolishly thought that the children had forgotten about me and moved on with their lives, until I had received letters from them, after they had searched and found me on the internet. I really thought they had forgotten about me. I really did. But after receiving their letters, not only did I discovered that they have not forgotten about me, I seen that I had really a positive impact in their lives.

Many people may not realize it, but a letter, a card, a photo and a visit extremely a lot to a incarcerated person. You just do not know the impact that you can have on a person's life by simple correspondence. It saddens me very significantly when I see African Americans who will not take the time out just to simply write and send a letter, a greeting card, a photo, or just simply visit a love one. When an individual does not receive any form of correspondence from his family, others wrongfully perceives this as an indication that the person had did something very vile, and thus been ostracized from the family, when this was not the case. Most African Americans are very native about prison life, and are simply unaware in what a simple letter can do to a person's day. That one letter, that one card, that one photo, or even that one visit, could in fact change that individual's life for the better. So, if you have an incarcerated family member -which most of us do, write them, visit them, accept their collect phone calls.

My God!!! This is your family. That is the sad difference between us and caucasians. Caucasians will stay in-touch with their incarcerated love ones, no matter what had happened, or what had led them to prison. Where as African Americans on the other hand, we just cut off our love ones, with the "out of sight, out of mind" mentality, until a tragic situation happens to them and money is involved.

Now, it is all about: "My baby!!! You people killed my baby!!!", while counting the blood money all the way to the bank. It sickens me very much when I see this.

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Where were the brother's family when he wrote and told them that these racist animals were beating on him, starving him, denying him water, freezing him in his cell, degrading him. They did not even bother to send the brother a letter to see how he was doing, how he was feeling, what was his mental and physical state. Some people believe that incarcerated men and women should be treated as such, because they have broken laws and committed crimes against others. When I hear such feeble-minded absurdity, especially from caucasians, and right-winged Christian conservatives, I think to myself, "Where were these "lily-white" so-called Americans at when criminal acts were being committed towards both African Americans and the many caucasians who supported human equity and humanity for all, including African Americans. Where were these law-abiding citizens at when over thousands and thousands and even more thousands of African Americans were being lynched, burned, raped, tortured, and dismembered, all at the hands of good God-fearing law-abiding caucasian Christians. And what I really would like to know is; "When did racist conservative caucasian America started having concerns and interest in the public safety of African Americans, and Black on Black crime?"

Brothers and Sisters, WAKE UP!!!! We all are living in Modern Time Slavery.
All of us!!!

Family is very important, and we must embrace it. No matter if we are blood or not. We all must remember, we are a lost tribe, and we all have some form of relation to one another. So, if we are not going to hurt our own blood, then we should not be so willing in hurting another brother or sister, because like one of my favorite R&B groups, Frankie Beverly and Maze had once said, "We are One".

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"What you're gonna do when you get out of jail..."

Lyrics from "Genius of Love" by Tom Tom Club

I believe this is a very interesting subject that is worthy of deep discussion. This is what I call the so-called emancipation -the individual's release from incarceration (imprisonment) or as I call it: "The Belly of the Beast". This beast basically release or regurgitate an individual that has been physically and psychologically abused by The System. I had expounded on this in earlier chapters. The individual, depending on the length of time he or she does and the type of environment the person resides in, sometimes determines the monster the correctional system will release back to society particularly, to the African American, Latino and Hispanic communities in America. The most dangerous and troubling fact about this, most of free society members do not know that these monsters exist. Now, you would think that by incarcerating individuals for inappropriate behavior, that once the imprisonment term is served, the person would be released to society as a reformed and rehabilitated citizen therefore, correcting his prior behavior that lead him to prison in the first place. I mean, you as a taxpayer is paying hundreds upon hundreds of billions of dollars each year on this investment, and you would at least expect a return on the investment. But as you can see, this investment has "bellied up" -at least for you as a taxpayer. It is absolutely ridiculous for America not to expect more from the government when it comes to the correction departments. Especially, when you are pouring more and more money in a system that has not truly and legitimately served its purpose, and that is correction through rehabilitation. If you remember in the earlier chapter, The System, I had explained and showed not only did the United States Congress eliminated the philosophy of rehabilitation in its American's prisons, but moreover, a court agreed that the American government has not even established a true plan in the rehabilitation of its prisoners. People should be appalled when hearing this. Everyone is clearly aware that before you make an investment, you must have a plan, a strategy, and a team of experts who has the vision in carrying the plan out. For years, America has been literary throwing billions of dollars down the drain and it has been little or no opposition to it. Each year, the prison population has been steadily growing, but at the same time, hundreds of thousands of prisoners are being released each year, only to be rearrested within three years. It has been reported in an article, "A Shot at Redemption" by Arkida McDowell in the September 2005 issue of Essence (magazine) that 70 percent of the 660,000 prisoners who are released from prison each year, are rearrested. Accordingly to the report, the reason for the high recidivism rates is that prisoners who are released to society after serving their time find it very difficult in finding employment and therefore, turning back to crime. Believe it or not, there is truth to this troubling fact. In the July 11, 2005 issue of Jet, I had came across an article, "White Ex-cons Get Jobs Faster than Blacks with no Criminal Record, Study". In the article, it reported a study that was conducted by Princeton University's Sociology Professors Deven Pager and Bruce Western who concluded that newly released caucasian job seekers has a better chance of obtaining employment than African American with or without criminal records. The article -which was funded by the National Science Foundation, the JEHT (Justice, Equality, Human Dignity and Tolerance) Foundation and the Policy Research Institute for the Region at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs- stated in part:

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"White job seekers, fresh out of prison, have a better chance at gaining employment than Blacks with no criminal record, accordingly to a Princeton University study of nearly 1,500 private employers in New York City."

'The study, 'Discrimination in Low Wage Labor Markets', investigated discrimination against young male minorities and ex-offenders by employers.' *** 'According to the study, a criminal record reduced positive responses from employers by about 35 percent for white applicants and 57 percent for Black applicants.' *** 'Even without criminal records, Black applicants had low rates of positive responses, about the same as the response rate for white applicants with criminal records.' *** 'The study did find that minority employers were more accepting of minority applicants with prison records.'"

With this in mind, how can a man crawl before he walks. Especially, if he does not have a starting foundation to crawl on. Every man needs a start in order to build and established himself, and it is evident that Illinois' State Representative Honorable Constance A. Howard agrees. Ms. Howard had successfully pushed a bill through legislation -which the law took effect in June 2005- that would seal and block employers access to records of nonviolent misdemeanor individuals with convicted records from prostitution to low-level drug offenses. This is clearly a start but a drop in the bucket, because this will not help the mass majority of African American men and women who are convicted of felonies.

America has systematically ostracized African American men, particularly those who have been convicted of crimes, from the fabric of American's society. It has been successfully done by the implementation of laws that has considerably limited the rights of former convicted individuals. Once an individual is convicted, he or she forfeits the right to vote (in 15 states including all former slave states), he can no longer participate on juries in any court of law, he can no longer be in possession of a weapon -firearm or bullets, he can not apply for a license in profitable professional career fields -ie. barbering, cosmetology, law, medicine, and so on, he can no longer apply for government school aid if he was convicted of drug trafficking, he can not apply for some comfortable housing, obtain credit or loans, and he is placed on government's web-sites in which everyone, including potential employers have total access to the person's criminal information (web-sites like Michigan's Department of Corrections, who reported of receiving over a 125,000 hits a day).

Then there is the propoganda system, that forever cast a negative image on the person, not to be trusted, not worthy, and unreliable. He is forever tagged, tarnished and easily susceptible to incarceration especially, if he is on parole/probation -as some call it, "Paper". This system is the same system that was mandated in the South just after slavery called, "The Black Codes". The Black Codes were laws that were put in place in order to restrict the rights of African Americans.

There are several books that gives accounts of the Dixie law. First, in the vary informative book, "Black Reconstruction" by W.E.B. DuBois, Dr. DuBois written a detail account on the codes that were enacted into law. He stated in part:

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"The whole proof of what the South proposed to do to the emancipated Negro, unless restrained by the nation, was shown in the Black Codes passed after Johnson's accession, but resenting the logical results of attitudes of mind existing when Lincoln still lived.

Some of these were passed and enforced. Some were passed and afterward repealed or modified when the reaction of the North was realized.' *** 'The original Codes favored by the Southern legislatures were an astonishing affront to emancipation and dealt with vagrancy, apprenticeship, labor contracts, migration, civil and legal rights. In all cases, there was plain and indisputable attempt on the part of the Southern states to make Negroes slaves in every thing but name. They were given certain civil rights: the right to hold property, to sue and be sued. The family relations for the first time were legally recognized. Negroes were no longer real estate.'

'Yet, in the face of this, the Black Codes were deliberately designed to take advantage of every misfortune of the negro. Negroes were liable to a slave trade under the guise vagrancy and apprenticeship laws; to make the best labor contracts, negroes must leave the old plantations and seek better terms; but if caught wandering in search of work, and thus unemployed and without a home, this was vagrancy, and the victim could be whipped and sold into slavery' *** 'The negro's access to the land was hindered and limited; his right to work was curtailed; his right to self-defense was taken away, when his right to bear arms was stopped; and his employment was virtually reduced to contract labor with penal servitude as a punishment for leaving his job. And in all cases, the judges of the negro's guilt or innocence, rights and obligations were men who believed firmly, for the most part, that he had 'no rights which a white was bound to respect.'

'Making every allowance for the excitement and turmoil of war, and the mentality of a defeated people the Black Codes were infamous pieces of legislation.'"

Finally, in this book called, "The Great Wells of Democracy" by Manning Marable the author briefly spoke on the Black Codes as well. It stated:

"'Across the South, the ex-confederates were initiating new legislative measures of their own, called, 'Black Codes', which severely restricted Africa Americans' rights. South Caroline, for instance, passed a law stating that African Americans would have to obtain a court license in order to be employed as an artisan, mechanic, or shopkeeper anywhere in the state. In some states, Blacks were still forbidden to testify in court against whites, were not allowed to own weapons, and were forced into signing labor contracts with former slaveholders.' *** 'But only ten years later, after the Compromise of 1877, when the federal government abandoned its promises to the newly freed Black community, the Black Codes would return under the informal name of Jim Crow.'"

So basically, what we have here is a new established form of modern day Jim Crow laws -Neo Black Codes- that has been put in place by the government and the general public's perception of former prisoners, to forever destroy the lives of African American men as its ultimate goal is to annihilate the hopes and dreams of these men and women who have paid their debt to society. In the heartfelt movie,

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Soulfood, the character, Lem Harris -Tracie's (Bird) new husband- was an excellent example of what a brother actually encounters once he has been convicted of a felony.

The character that was played exceptionally well by the great actor, Menki Phifer was a good, strong and resilient brother who loved his very beautiful wife -who was played by the always attractive and splendid actress, our Sister Love, Ms. Nia Long- but he was continuously encountering obstacles that put a strain on him as well as his wife. He was having a problem in finding and maintaining employment as he tried to make his wife proud of him. He wanted her to see him as a focus, ambitious and goal oriented brother. He also seen himself as an independent man, rich with pride. While the brother tried to hold on to the only things that he had: his pride, his principles, his dignity, his self-worth and most important, his woman's respect and love for him, he had to deal with reality that his criminal record was holding him back. Holding him back from a job. A living wage job that would comfortably provide for him and his wife. And he wanted to earn it on his own merits, without the help of his wife -who secretly gotten the job for him by going to her fake ass ex-boyfriend and asked him to hook Lem up with a job at his place of work.

I clearly understood what Lem was going through, because I went through it myself. When I was paroled back in July of 1992, I had an experience of my own.

First, the Department had paroled me to a motel that was nothing more than a drug infested, crack den of drug addicts, prostitutes and ex-felons. The condition of the facility was clearly substandard for appropriate living for anyone. Yet, both the state and federal governments were paying tax dollars to house recently released parolees in this dilapidated slum. In fact, next to the motel was a burnt out, abandoned and unlivable apartment building that was occupied by homeless people -who lived there, drug dealers -who peddled crack there, and drug addicts -who comfortably use their drugs without the interruption from the Detroit Police who refused to enter the building for fear that they may be killed by the occupants.

I still remember many days when recently paroled brothers would go to the building in order to get high, and before long, they were sent back to prison. I would often asked myself -and tell others, "what was the government thinking about when it decided to finance a program that is surrounded by drugs, alcohol and harlots".

You must agree, that environment was a toxic recipe for disaster. Yet, the government thought otherwise.

Second, I had to pay a monthly "oversight fee" for being on parole, which was \$30.00 a month. In order for me to obtain some form of legitimate employment, I must have an state identification card and social security card. But before I can apply for the identification card, first, I must obtain a copy of my birth certificate -which at the time of my parole cost \$14.00, obtain a social security card from the social security office, and obtain a canceled postage envelope with my name and current living and mailing address. These three pieces of information are needed in order to fill out a W-4 form for the employer, and without it, you can not receive a legitimate job, period.

Third, by me being homeless and living in a shelter -where the food can be very unhealthy and unsanitary because of the rodents and pests that occupy some of the shelters and some of the unclean residents who prepares the meals- I must apply for food stamps or starve.

Fourth, because some shelters can be very unsanitary, I must keep a supply of cleaning and toiletry including, clothing detergent, bleach, cleaning disinfectant, Pine Sol and toilet brush. I know that may be hard to believe, but God is my witness I had it and I used it.

At the time of my parole, I did not have any clothes, other than the state tan

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colored khakis that I had on when I had paroled. I did not have transportation or money for transportation. And most important, I did not have a job or income in order to get these necessities. Fortunately for me, I had family, friends and strangers who helped me with my adjustment. My father, stepfather and mother gave me food when I was hungry, money when I needed it and a phone number for employers to contact me for employment. My baby brother gave me clothes including, a brand new pair of Nike's Cross Trainer gym shoes, food when I was hungry and transportation. He was 17 years old at the time. Mr. Herb Taylor -a Burger King franchise owner- gave me a job at one of his restaurants. Ms. Elevelyn Gardner -who worked for the state government's employment office, Michigan Employment Service Commission (MESCC) and the Job Pact program- helped me obtain employment, from general labor to a seasonal job working for Ford Motor Company's landscaping division, Fairlane Grounds. Mr. and Mrs. Vaughn and Mr. and Mrs. Graham -homeowners from Southfield- helped me by allowing me to work in their beautiful homes, from painting, doing yard work, to their garages and swimming pool, and doing work at their friends homes as well. They all trusted me in their homes. Even when they were not home.

And of course, I did not violate that trust, under no circumstances. I still remember when Mr. Vaughn wanted to employ me at his accounting firm, because at the time of him asking me, I was attending classes including, accounting at Wayne County Community College. I had thought that it was very thoughtful of Mr. Vaughn wanting to assist me by giving me employment at his company, but I had decline the offer because I did not do too well in my accounting class and I did not want to be a burden to him or his company. I really hate that I did not take that offer.

Ms. Johnson -who was my college counselor at Wayne County Community College- helped me through my first semester in college. I was majoring in business administration.

Mr. George Pinley, III -my best friend who worked at Burger King as a shift manager- and his family gave me temporary shelter in their home when I got off of work on those very blistering cold nights, because the city's bus system stop running about the time I had gotten off of work.

At the time that I was living in the shelter, my ex-girlfriend, Ms. Tulisa Brantley would bring me a hot meal everyday, and I did not asked her to this.

I still remember when I would get off of work at Burger King, I would walk countless of miles on the dangerous city's streets between 2:00 am and 6:00 am in order to get to my second job -which was a meat packing company, Throne Apple Valley- to school after I had quit working at the meat packing company or to stay warm and not fall asleep at the city's bus stop shelter or bench. Detroit -like with all major cities- has some very dangerous streets at night, and I had walked on them.

Woodward and Calvert, Davison and Linwood, Fenkell and Wyoming, and one of the most dangerous corners in Detroit -in my opinion- Cass Corridor's Park and Henry street corner. Those who are familiar with these street corners would agree, that they are some of Detroit's most dangerous streets.

I remember one early morning after working, I had just gotten off the Fenkell bus in Cass Corridor and started to proceed walking along, pass the prostitute's trick house as the tired and narcotics harlots, johns and drug addicts were sitting on the porch in the early hours of the morning looking on, in their own little worlds, a brother was hiding in the dark of an apartment building. At the time I was walking along, in a positive mood, but fully aware of my surroundings, the brother -who was high on crack at the time, and was looking for victims to rob-

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had recognized me and called me. I had recognized the brother from the neighborhood and previous encounters. He had asked me with curiosity why was I walking the streets that early in the morning, and that I could have been seriously hurt if he had not recognized me. I had explained to him that I was just getting off the bus and I was on my way back to the shelter. At the time of this encounter with the brother, another brother was unfortunately beaten to death with a stick or baseball bat.

I was never really afraid of walking the streets that early in the morning, except when I see a pack of stray dogs -a pack of stray dogs will attack you like their cousin, hyenas or wolves, or after hearing very quick movement in the grass -usually done by rats- of empty lots. But one morning, I had encountered a very serious incident in which I could have possibly lost my life. This morning, I was walking from Woodward and Calvert to my ex-girlfriend's house -who stayed on Keating Street and State Fair Avenue on the northeast side of Detroit. I had just came out of a gas station from purchasing some junk food. As I proceeded to walk up the street, about two or three brothers had jumped out of a hooptie (that is a car that needs to be in a junkyard for those who do not know term, "hooptie") and called me by saying, "Hey!!! Let me hollar at you!!!" It was very dark. So, I could not really recognized them, as I continued to walk. Once, they knew that I was not going to stop, they started yelling as they proceeded to chase me. Fortunately for me, I had gotten away, but after the incident, my father had given me his car and he had brought a new one.

So, as you can see, I was going through continuous obstacles. By working and attending school -at times working two jobs on school break, I was a very tired brother. I was not making a lot of money working at Burger King -on an average I was earning \$150.00 every two weeks. I was not earning enough money to have my own place, and once I had started school, I had to move in with my aunt.

The average brother most likely would not have went through what I did, but I was determined to succeed. When I was incarcerated, I had set goals for myself which had changed my life. I had went through a transformation by stop smoking cigarettes -I never used drugs or alcohol when I was incarcerated, I started reading extremely a lot of books in order to broaden my knowledge and strengthen my reading comprehension -that included studying the dictionary, I learned to maintain positive thoughts, and prepared myself for society and what I wanted to do once I was released. I had in fact, purchased a navy blue scrapbook from a prisoner's store, and the reason why I gotten it, not to put photos in it, but to put my short and long term goals in, positive inspirational quotes and success stories of individuals lives. I still remember the inspiring article that I had placed in the scrapbook of Detroit's successful businessman, Mr. Porterfield Wilson. Mr. Wilson came to Detroit as a shoeshine boy, but ended up with one of the most successful car dealerships in the Detroit area.

In my goal book -as I called it, I had listed my goals in it, which were starting and owning a record company, a movie company, a clothing line, restaurants, and believe it or not, a car company. I even had a name for the sports car. I had written over three hundred songs for R & B and rap acts. I had written three screenplays.

I had written schools like Wayne State University and a school in Atlanta for performing arts and business. These schools had majors in business administration with emphasis in the music industry of business. I was very focus and determined.

When I was incarcerated, I had written record companies and other talent agencies that I had seen in the classifications of Billboard and Rolling Stones magazines,

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and I did received some responses, including from a gentleman who worked for Columbia's A & R division of the direct mail service. That is the place where you can buy 10 tapes for a penny. His name was Mr. Aurther Cunnington. He was a Princeton University alumnus. Mr. Cunnington had sent me a lot of information on starting in the business including, writing -computer printed- a very long informative letter of how the business worked. I was deeply appreciative of him helping me. I remember in his first letter, he told me that the agency that I had written to was about to discard my letter but he had intercepted it. I had thought that was very cool of him, and I thank him for it.

When I had gotten back to society, i had tried to pursue a career in the music industry from Detroit -while on parole. That means that I could not leave the state to areas where the music industry was actually hot. Detroit, even though it was considered the powerhouse for African American music starting with the legendary Motown Corporation, by the 1990's, the city was considered dead when it came to the music industry. In 1992, there were a few production companies and recording studios, like the Recording Institute of Detroit's Sidestick and Disc Studios -where I had recorded once, R.J. Rice Studios -founder of the R & B's '80s group, R.J. Leastest Arrival, who recorded the 1984 smash hit "Shackles...(on your feet)" and "Baby, I'm Sorry", super Detroit Techno and House producer Kevin Saunderson's RMS Studios -ne with his techno partner, Juan "Magic-Man" Atkins created the dance music of Detroit Techno with '80s electronic funk classics, "Cosmic Cars", "Clear", and "Alleys of Your Mind".Cypotron and "Technicolor" by Channel One, Billy Meadow's personal home studio -which I had the pleasure in recording at a few times, and former Detroit Pistons' Bad Boy and current co-host of Fox Sports' Best Dame Sports Show, John Salley's Hoop Sounds Studio -which I was told by one of R.J. Rice's employees that Def Jam's first lady of gangster rap, Detroit's own, BOSS had started her recording career there, just to name a few. I even met a couple of Artist and Repertoire (A & R) people from Def Jam Recordings and Luther Campbell's Luke Records, but at the time I had met them, I was just coming home from prison and I did not have a demo tape prepared for them. So, that killed that opportunity. When I did have an opportunity to make a demo, the pre-recording basement studio that I had gotten involved with, turned out to be lazy and totally unprofessional to say the least. In fact, what made matters worse, when I had tried to get my money back, because of my dissatisfaction in their work, these clowns had the nerve to file a fraudulent complaint with the Detroit Police -which got back to my parole officer because the clowns knew that I was on parole- claiming that I had threaten to cause serious injury to them if the money was not returned. Now, I will admit, I did wanted my money back, but I did not threaten them. I did get the money back, which was a hundred and twenty dollars that I had slaved for at Burger King, and I eventually did get the demo tape done by my ex-girlfriend's cousin, Ken Ken at his home studio.

I then started sending copies of the demo tape to countless of recording companies and received the famous rejection letters. But I did receive one favorable and encouraging letter from brother producers Mark and John Penn. These brothers introduced to the world the '90s R & B's male group, UNV with their classic hit, "Something Going On" on Mandonna's -new label at the time- Maverick Records. The brothers had explained to me in the letter that they had liked the demo and was interested in me sending them more work. While I was in the process of putting together some material, I was arrested, charged and incarcerated but later acquitted by jury of the wrongfully accused unarmed robbery case. That case really set me back, because during the six months I was fighting the case, I had received a call from a mail carrier for an interview for a better paying job. I will admit, I was sick about that. I had grind and sacrificed a lot just to stay out of trouble and

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accomplish my dreams. And BOOM!!! I am incarcerated. I was on parole for about two years and one month, and I only had five more months left on parole. Even after I was released after the acquittal of the unarmed robbery case, I started working at a video manufacturing and distribution company that produced products for Walt Disney Studios and Touchstone Pictures called, Technicolor. I additionally enrolled in a paralegal school in hopes of becoming a paralegal within a year to eighteen month from starting the program. A comrade of mine who was in the county jail had thought that I had received my paralegal certificate when I was incarcerated on my first bit and he explained to me that I should pursue obtaining the training in that field, because the pay was much more better and I did not have to school for years trying to get it. So, I did some investigating once I was released and discovered a reputable school that would almost guaranteed me a career type job once I had completed the program. In fact, I was about to start classes just one month before I was arrested on this case that I am currently convicted of.

Beside the unarmed robbery issues, I did not have any problems while I was on parole. But by me being convicted as a robber, I will forever be labeled as one regardless if I am reformed or not. That is reality.

In fact, I remember once applying for a job at a Taco Bell downtown Detroit when I had first came home on parole. At the time I was filling out the application, I had over heard two sisters -who were employed at the restaurant- discussing a robbery that had turned deadly at another Detroit area Taco Bell. After I had their conversation, I had immediately got up from the table and walked out, because I knew that they were not going to consider me for employment being a recently released felon. I am on parole for robbery -which were fast food restaurant robberies I may add. So, once the applicant reviewer seen the block, "Have you ever been convicted and/or imprisoned of a crime in the last five years?", and next to it, they see "ROBBERY". That is it. Also, I could leave the block blank, or lie and say, "no", ~~but~~ if I did that, I clearly ran the risk of the employer finding out later that I have in fact been convicted of a crime and I would have been immediately terminated and possibly reported to the authorities -the parole agency- for making a false statement on an employment application. Remember, most application clearly states ~~that~~ ~~the~~ the application, that a person could be immediately terminated and prosecuted if any information in the application is later discovered to be false.

Moreover, by lying, it will also send a red flag because of the fact that there is a major gap in the last employment section of the application as well. In my case, I have been incarcerated for about five years and therefore, it will have that noticeable unemployment gap. The reviewer will clearly come to the conclusion that I may have been incarcerated.

So, as you can see, the road is not easy for a brother or sister once they are released from prison. Especially, if they do not have any formal skills that will help them along the way. There are countless of brothers and sisters who faces the same, or even more severe predicaments that I had encountered while on parole or probation. In reality, once an individual has been officially branded with a convicted number, he is easily and forever susceptible to be pointed to crimes that he or she has not committed, or even aware of. They will be looked upon as an outcast as others excluded them from their circle, because he or she are looked at as being a stained individual. So, the individual never escapes or so-call pay his debt to society, and therefore, his chances in staying in society are slim to none. At the time I was writing this book, I have seen several brothers go home from this particular facility, only to return within six months. In fact, two has came back within sixty days and another has came back for the third time for a parole

violation. People say, "Well hell. They need to keep locked up." NO!!! People need to wake up and realize that prisoners need help. It is just that simple. College, vocational and other programs must be provided once again in America's prison system so a prisoner can at least have a half a chance in becoming a success story, instead of being another tragic statistic. And as I have explained before, not only do they have the money -i.e. from the prisoner's telephone yearly revenue, but they can additionally raise and properly continue the funding of the post educational programs by way of the prisoner store. I mean the Michigan State legislatures were considering increasing the store prices in the prisoner's store by thirty percent in order to fund an academy for the Michigan State Police. I know you as a taxpayer does not see a problem in that.

Today (December 12, 2005), I had over heard two officers discussing an inmate who was about to be released from prison at another facility in Jackson, Michigan.

During the officers' conversation, I heard one say, "I bet he won't make it to March". And the other responded by saying, "You're given him too much credit. He won't make it through next month". Now, this is even more evidence that buttress my deep concern and the continuous problem that ails America's prisons. It is so transparent, that even the officers recognizes the problem, but to them, it is an inside joke, because it is job security. It also goes to show you, how caught up these people are with our lives. Here you have a prisoner at another facility, miles away from this facility. Yet, they are all in his life. Now, that is ridiculous.

It is evident that they were on the internet being nosy. Instead of trying to assist the man, by advocating for programs in order to prepare him and others for a successful and prosperous journey back to society, they are betting on his down fall. How sad. What sense does it make to call personnel or the department for that matter "Corrections" when you as a taxpayer has sent a law breaker to the department to be corrected and reformed of the behavior that led the individual in the department in the first place, and all you can get from it is a team of so-called professionals and experts that almost guarantee you that the individual will return to prison after he or she commits another crime. These are the people that you hired to make your streets safe. This is what we are forced to deal with everyday, evil minded individuals who forever wish, predict and pray for the destruction of ex-convicts. I know that may be hard to imagine, but this is the reality of an abnormal environment that produces abnormal behavior, both in the prisoners and the employees as well. Officers and administrators do not concern themselves with the physical and psychological abuse that they have placed on the very angry, and at times, psychologically imbalanced individuals, because they all know this: once the prisoners are released from prison -what ever condition they are in, they are returning back to their own communities to victimize, rape, steal and pillage, kill, destroy, and whatever else evil that is known to man, to their own -or as they say, "Their own kind". And once the deranged rampage is over, the individuals are sent back to prison for another amount of years (or for life) of abuse and to secure a job for the officer's children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews who decided that the life of pursuing a college degree and being years in college student loan debt is not really rewarding. Especially, when they can take the easy route of life by being a correction guard and make a paycheck with benefits. While the officers and their families lives "somewhat" happy lives, the prisoners, their families and friends, the victims that they have victimized and others in their community on the other hand, continues to struggle and suffer in poverty, unemployment, racism and discrimination, disenfranchisement, despair and so forth. What a hell of a plan that has been put in place for rural America. You can now be a "card" carrying prejudice caucasian man or woman, that can work in the department or law enforcement, and beat, torture, rape, and even kill (I mean, whatever your heart desire), a man

or a woman of color, on any day of the week, for any reason -that means, all of the above including, just having a bad day, for eight to sixteen hours with pay and benefits, and still make it home just in time for dinner with the family, without worrying about the person or people they have victimized retaliating or the government pursuing the matter in order to terminate and/or prosecute them. What a great job for klansman or klanswoman. They no longer have to do the dirty work and look evil to the public and media, by going into the African Americans' communities and lynch, burn, shoot, or rape. They have left that in the hands of the ones that they have tortured in America's "Corrections" departments, on the government's watch. If you think that I am lying, think back at what happened in the case of the fifteen year-old African American young man who was savagely beaten while he was in handcuffs by police one summer day in 2002 at a gas station after placing a order for gas and getting a snack in Inglewood, California. The defenseless young man was savagely slammed on the hood of a police car and viciously punched in the face by Officer Jeremy Morse. This animal act was caught on tape by a caucasian man -who the police went on a manhunt in order to arrest him and seize the video tape in aims to cover up the evil act of Morse and the lack of the other officers intervention as they stood there and watch. Fortunately, the gentleman was able to personally hand deliver the video tape to CNN's news network personnel so the entire world could see Morse emotional ass attack a defenseless child. Morse and his comrade, Officer Brian Darvish -who made a false report both- were charged and tried by jury, but the jury was deadlocked on Morse's case -which ended in a mistrial, and Darvish was acquitted. It was stated later that a jury member said that he would never convict a cop of anything. (I wonder if he would feel the same if Morse had viciously punch his child in the face?) But what was a total shocker, after what we had seen in the video, Morse and Darvish for their flawless professional behavior and performance, were awarded according to a published article, "Insufficient Evidence cited in Police Beating of Black Man" by Charlene Muhammad in the February 15, 2005 issue of the Final Call, \$1.6 million and \$810,000 respectfully for wrongful termination and discrimination. These worthless clowns hit the jackpot. It is just like what I had read in an article, in the January 2000 issue of publisher Larry Flynt's "COGE" magazine. The klan does not wear sheets.

Now, they are protected in the new taste in klansmen and klanwomen gear: government's issued uniforms from the police and corrections guards across America.

Now, you can not understand why so many men and women comes home angry and psychologically messed up in the head. They are in prison as "open and defenseless" targets, just like on the streets.

But we as African Americans, Hispanic Americans and caucasians have only ourselves to blame, because we have for too long allowed a few to make the decisions for others who ultimately must live with the consequences of their decisions when it comes to the discipline and the lack of rehabilitation of men and women who will eventually be released back to society. Your community, and not the communities of the policy making think tank groups, politicians and others who created, advocated, pushed, and supported these counter-productive laws and policies that has clearly destroyed the lives of our people. I keep and continue to explain to anyone who will listen that these battle scared convicts are coming back to their communities and not the communities who created these monsters. And that is reality.

I still remember watching on the news when I was at I-Max of two separate incidents that had taken place in Michigan -both incidents turned out to be very deadly for two families at the hands of two brothers, who were clearly not thinking in their right minds. One brother was home no more than a couple of weeks and he had allegedly killed two people in a home, set the house on fire, and then, placed the children

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in trunk of a car that was parked in the driveway next to the burning home.

The next brother -which the Michigan Department of Corrections had made a mistake in releasing him early because of the resentencing in drug law cases in Michigan, was accused of killing his ex-wife and children. After seeing these stories on the news, I could not say anything but shake my head because I knew that it was nothing more than pinned up raging anger and frustration, all bottled up from the years of racism and abuse from the correction guards and administrators. The brothers, like thousands of other prisoners who are released, did not have anything to loose.

They considered their lives lost because of the years of incarceration, sometimes for decades. They basically have lost hope in everything, because of the time that has been taken away from by the outrageous and unjustified sentences that were imposed on them and the prejudice parole board system that continuously deny them paroles. I have always believed that if you want to create a man to the point in which he has nothing to loose, destroy his hope and I guarantee you, you will have some real problems on your hands.

Sometimes when I confabulate with brothers who I dialogue with, particularly young brothers, who has an opportunity to get out of these bunks, I often times pose two questions to them. One, "If the correction guards came to your cell right now, with a bus ticket and \$75, and said it is time to get out. We don't care where you go, but you got to leave here. Do you have a plan, right now, of what you're going to do once you're out?" And two, "If you died right now, do you have a place to be buried?" For the first question, I would get all types of answers, from they don't know, to going back to what lead them in prison in the first place, because that is all they know. I even gotten a few future inspiring pronos stars and rappers.

But during those conversations, I had never heard any of them say, "I'm going to college or a vocational school and learn a trade", or start something that will create them some legitimate wealth. Now, I will admit, I have met brothers who had created great realistic plans and goals for themselves once they were released back to society, and you could see the fire in them. And I know, because I had the fire in me, before I was convicted of this case that I am currently serving. For example, I had the pleasure in meeting a brother everyone called Slim. Slim had plans of starting his own landscaping company once he was released from prison. I mean this brother had his plans together. He not only had the name of the company, he also had a pretty catchy slogan as well. Slim had his sister create some professionally printed business cards and company's letterhead stationary. He had all kinds of books and catalogs relating to landscaping including, the catalogs for all of the equipment for lawn care and books on lawn chemicals and its application of them.

He was studying to obtain a lawn care chemical license. I mean Slim had everything.

From registering the trade and service mark, to the tax publication manuals. This brother was trumped tight. I really enjoyed his presence. In fact, I had put him up on some things that I had learned myself when I was employed at Ford Motor Company's Fairlane Grounds in Dearborn, Michigan. I was so sold on his plan, that I had told him that I had wished I had \$10,000 so, I could had given it to him in order to finance the business. My God is my witness, I had in fact told him that.

And I was dead serious, because I seen that fire in him. That fire to succeed.

I had the pleasure in meeting another good brother named, Tony Jenkins. This brother not only written a novel, but he also created an invention that I had explained to him that he should apply for a patent and pitch the idea to QVC (Quality Value, Convenience) Home Shopping Channel or Home Shopping Network in order to have his invention sold. (Yes! I am a QVC junkie. I love watching the channel, because I have learned extremely a lot from watching the channel -in regards to marketing, pitching the product, demographic of their target consumer, how to successfully take an idea and turn it into a profitable product and etc. Also, I have a crush

OUTLOOK AND CHANGES

"I got myself a start by given myself a start."

Quote by Madam C.J. Walker

"Only in America" is the great ~~word~~ that has been made famous by one of America's sports entertainment icons, no other than, Mr. Don King. Mr. King is famously known in making his trademark phrase after a highly intensified big prize-winning fight with a star-studded gathering of some of the world's rich and famous. A great fighting event that he had exclusively promoted at some of the most fabulous and lavished hotels and resorts in the world. Every time you see Mr. King, he always speak so eloquently and with sheer conviction that what you are about to see is nothing but the best entertainment that only he, "The Showman" can offer.

I will admit, I really love and enjoy hearing him speak. And after the conclusion of each interview or press conference, I began to laugh and say to myself, "Don King has struck once again with spoken words of wisdom, as only he can." Mr. King always manage to put a smile on my face every time I see him. Whether it is ring side at one of his events, sitting next to real estate billionaire extraordinaire, ~~Mr. King~~ as they deliberate and enjoy the main event, or under the ring that proudly, as well as boldly displays his trademarked symbol in bold capital letters, "DK" with the royal crown at the top, or when he is talking to the sports press, wearing his very expensive tailor-made black suits with his "bling-bling" which consist of an enormous eye-blinding diamond pinky ring, along with his diamond trademark Don with the crown necklace medallion. And O-yeah! Lets not forget his natural god-given trademark, the crown -his hair that he forever has pushed to the top of his head like blazing flames- that he once described during a 1999 Superbowl weekend interview on ESPN's Up-Close with Mike Myers, as a pyramid that is reaching to God in Heaven. For a long time, I often wondered how did an African American man of his stature become so powerful in a profession of sports that has been known for decades to be controlled by the underworld. The position that Mr. King controls as a successful and popular boxing promoter is a symbolic position of a puppet master. He controls all the strings in that one night event that will bring tens -and even hundreds- of millions of dollars from around the world. This is a very powerful position for a man who has been incarcerated, not once, but twice for manslaughter.

I had seen a very informative television documentary on the life of Mr. Don King on ESPN, and I do must say that I had really enjoyed the program. The documentary shed light on things that I did not know about Mr. King, but I had thought was very inspiring for a person who has been incarcerated, or is presently incarcerated.

The documentary of Mr. King's life proved that there is light -i.e. success, wealth, happiness and so forth- for even a man or woman in America after incarceration. Mr. King, while incarcerated, had went through a form of transformation and started into intense comprehensive studies on all types of subjects, including law, business, english, and the dictionary. Then, one day while watching a boxing match on television, according to the ESPN documentary, Mr. King had an epiphany. He came to the conclusion that a career as a boxing promoter will would be his ticket to prosperity. And as you can see, the rest is history.

There are countless of great stories just like Mr. King who had faced and over came terrible heartbreaking adversities to become an inspiring story for any man or woman who is presently in an unfavorable and unhappy situation. Whether it is incarceration, drugs, alcohol, sex, depression, education, I mean whatever, there are individuals who managed to overcome their demons, flaws and misfortunes by

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turning a negative situation, into a positive one. Famous people like Malcolm-X, who was once a street hustler, became incarcerated for burglarizing homes, and while incarcerated, he made a transformation to become one of the great intellectual and significant leaders in the civil rights movement before he was unjustly killed by some brothers.

Actor Charles Dutton, who was once incarcerated for manslaughter, in the State of Maryland, started studying Theatre, first, by teaching himself by reading English poet and playwright, William Shakespeare's plays for long hours late in the night. Sometimes reading on the floor by the crack underneath the cell door, because it was the only source of light. He later went on to formal training at the prison theatre workshop -where he met his beautiful, talented and very famous former wife, Ms. Debbie Morgan- and then on to Yale University, which he later graduated with a degree in Drama. Mr. Dutton became successful and received fame on Broadway by playing in the Pulitzer Prize award-winning play that was written by the late great African American playwright, Mr. August Wilson called, The Piano Lesson. He is also continuing success both on the small and silver screen. First, on the television FOX's Network, with the excellent and controversial show simply called, Rec, and finally on the big screen with movies like Alien 3, Robia, and The Edge of Hell. I had the opportunity to read his autobiography, "The Edge of Hell" and one of the brothers that I had looked up to for inspiration during my transformation when I was incarcerated on my first bit.

Champion boxer, Bernard Hopkins, who was once incarcerated in the State of Pennsylvania's prison system, said in an USA Today article that was published July 2005, that what kept him going when things were tough and bleak was the infamous statement that a prison guard told him as he was leaving prison, "You'll be back".

But instead of becoming a statistic in the prisoner's recidivism column, he became a wealthy boxing champion in the middle weight division, a successful business co-owner with another boxing champion, America's Golden Boy, Oscar De La Hoya and most important, a mentor to others, including youth in his hometown of Philadelphia.

Professor and writer, Nathan McCall, who was once incarcerated for robbery in Virginia's state prison system had made a transformation as well. While incarcerated, he had participated in a printing apprenticeship course and once released from prison, he went to college and graduated in journalism to become a successful newspaper journalist in Virginia, Atlanta, and the World Famous newspaper, The Washington Post. Mr. McCall had written two great and inspiring autobiographies that I had the opportunity and pleasure in reading. The first installment of his National Bestseller was called, "Makes No Sense Noller" and the second was, "What's Going On". Both books were very great and inspirational work of his life. Mr. McCall is currently a professor at an university in Atlanta.

In fact, I have a very close comrade of mine, who has a brother that left the prison system in Michigan and now currently running a successful record label called, Up and Up Records. The brother has material on the "2 Fast 2 Furious" Soundtrack, and he has a distributing deal with Rap and Business mogul, Ludicrous' Disturbing The Peace label.

Then, there are those who have never been incarcerated but was locked up mentally by the harsh streets, homelessness, drugs and alcohol, or HIV/AIDS. Brothers like Detroit's own, jazzy smooth crooner, Ken, who was once homeless, living in Detroit's Rescue Mission, narcosis on drugs and lost. But Ken lifted himself out of his situation with the help of God and became a popular and prosperous recording artist who hit the world by storm with two excellent CDs on the Motown Label. Ken is now receiving heavy air play on the radio, he is in all the major magazines, and has been on television shows, including Soul Train.

OUTLOOK AND CHANGES (3)

And then there is the story of multimillionaire stock investor, Mr. Chris Gardner who was once homeless while raising a son. He, while struggling, went and successfully completed school to become a very wealthy stock broker. Mr. Gardner has just recently released his autobiography called, "The Pursuit to Happiness" and a movie has been made on his life as well. Mr. Gardner also successfully manage in guiding his son -who he had raised while homeless- in becoming a college graduate.

Businessman Mr. Lavan Hawkins is an African American success story. He grew up in the rough and dilapidated housing projects in Chicago as a gang member, street hustler, and according to an inspiring article that I had read in the March 2003 issue of Ebony, a former drug user. But this good brother fought against the negative odds and became a very successful businessman, owning over a 100 Pizza Hut franchises in the Detroit area. He has opened the famous and successful soul food restaurant in downtown Detroit called, "Sweet Georgia Brown". Mr. Hawkins has created other successful businesses that has listed his company in Black Enterprise's Top 10 of the Black Enterprise 100 African American owned business in America. He also has his own private jet, an estate in Atlanta, and most important, he has created thousands of jobs for African Americans.

This is the same with celebrity superstar athlete-turned-successful businessman, Magic Johnson. Magic Johnson, who is the most valuable player in the NBA's most valuable player, five-time champion with the Fabulous Los Angeles Lakers, and Hall of Famer. Magic received a death sentence when he tested positive for HIV in 1991. This discovery had forced him into retirement from a game that he loved very much. In the dark period of Magic's life, he held his head up high, and endured all the negative media and gossip from former fans and other athletes in the the game. But the man, with the always billion-dollar smile, refused to allow the disease to take control of his life. Instead, Magic rebounded in a big way, with his always positive and optimistic attitude. The man who played all three positions in the NBA was named one of the Top 10 celebrity entrepreneurs in the December 2004 issue of INC. Magazine, and maneuvered his company which consist of Magic Johnson Movie Theaters, Starbucks Coffee Shops, Magic's T.G.I.F. Restaurants, Burger King Restaurants, record company, clothing company called, "Magic 32" -just to name a few of his companies- to a massive and very lucrative portfolio that has been estimated at over \$800 million. Magic did not let the disease beat him. He instead, beat it. But that should not come to any surprise because Magic has been a winner his entire life. I love Magic's story, because he did not give up or give in, considering his situation. He fought back and in the process, he helped our people by creating employment and wealth in our communities.

These individuals are what you call "Strong Soul Survivors". These are some of the many stories that gives me inspiration to fight on with my situation. I enjoy hearing stories of individuals who found themselves in dire situations whether incarcerated, former drug and alcohol users and so forth changed their lives to become prosperous and successful. This gives a person hope that there is light at the end of tunnel. The christian newspaper, Inside Journal published by Prison Fellowship, reports inspirational stories each month of men and women from all nationalities and backgrounds who were incarcerated, but changed their lives and became entrepreneurs, loving family members and responsible citizens.

In fact, I recently read a story in the February 2006 issue of Entrepreneur called, "Life is What You Make It". I believed the story of Mr. Dwayne McKinney was a very inspiring story and a prime example of how a person can overcome any situation, no matter how dire it may be. The brother, Mr. McKinney took a very negative situation, being wrongfully convicted for over 20 years for robbery/murder and turned it into a savvy positive and prosperous one. According to the article, Mr. McKinney was wrongfully convicted and sentenced to life in prison at the age of 19. While

incarcerated, he went through hell, living in fear, being stabbed and assaulted on a number of occasions, and once even tried to take his own life. But what kept the brother going in the years of hopeless and a life ending situation was, "Hope", as he dreamed of being free someday. He said according to the article, "I started to dream outside of my environment. I started to go beyond my circumstances." By Mr. McKinney keeping hope alive, the truth prevailed. He was released from prison January 2000, just three years after an individual confessed to committing the crime.

He was fortunately compensated with a \$1 million settlement for the very precious years that were taken from him. He wisely invested the settlement in the ATM business after a member of his church explained to him about the deregulation in the business.

So, in 2001, he started his business in California but made an excellent strategic move by relocating to Hawaii -his wife home state- and now, he owns the second largest ATM business in that state called, "Island ATM" with over 50 ATMs and profits of approximately \$400,000 a year. Mr. McKinney also mentor with troubled juveniles.

This was a great story. The thing that was so ironic about the story, the day that I had received the magazine in the mail, I was just talking to a young brother about the restaurant franchising business and how he could be an owner of his own restaurants. I had explained to the brother that most of the owners of those fast food restaurants were ex-convicts who had been in the state prison system. The brother was very skeptical. When I had explained the fact that he could receive at the restaurants' tech schools and universities, he was very surprised and unaware that he too could be an owner of a chain of restaurants. My goal during the conversation was to enlighten the brother about the options that he and other brothers like him have in making money and living the good life, besides going back to the streets to sell drugs, rob, and kill in order to survive. I further explained to the brother that he did not have to be a millionaire to live a prosperous financial and comfortable life. All he needed were a beautiful home, worth two to five hundred thousands dollars, a couple of nice automobiles for himself and his wife, and some toys -with a piece of mind, knowing that you had earned it legally by hardwork. I told the brother, "That's nothing". Then, Mr. McKinney's story came, and I had ~~showed~~ it to the brother, so he could see for himself, that there is life after incarceration.

Not only are our brothers are doing well, our sisters are taking care of business also. Take our sister, Ms. Vickie M. Stringer. After doing seven years in federal penitentiary for selling drugs, this beautiful quick thinking and self-determined sister took her situation and wrote a book about it. She successfully started her own publishing company called, "Triple Crown Publishing" after she was denied by over two dozens publishers in publishing her manuscript that she had written while incarcerated. Ms. Stringer went to angel investors -family and friends- who all together, gave her five thousand dollars to self-publish the book and successfully sold it herself. From the success in the enormous sells of her book and the publishing companies missing out on an opportunity, the sister won twice: One, in the success of her book, and two, by creating her own successful as well as profitable legit business. Additionally from her success, she has received a major publishing and distribution deal with a major publishing company. Now, that is a beautiful thing. Ms. Stringer's story reminds me of the stories of Russell Simmons, Percy "Master-P" Miller, and Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter -just to name a few who got their start by others refusing to give them a start, and look at them now. This is what Madam C.J. Walker -the original African American Millionaire- meant when she said, "I got myself a start by givan myself a start." I love that quote, because that means, you create or innovate yourself an opportunity when others do not see your beliefs, goals or possibilities.

OUTLOOK AND CHANGES (5)

There is something else that I want to basically touch on in regards to publishing before I move on. I do not know if anyone had noticed, but there is a major lucrative market in publishing ethnic type books today and I hope people like Ms. Stringer seized the opportunity before the major publishing companies get their hands too heavily in the market. I pray Ms. Stringer capitalize off this unoccupied territory and become a major publishing company herself. This is the same with Mr. McKinney. Both, Ms. Stringer and Mr. McKinney planted the entrepreneur seeds in the America's economical soil, the same soil that Benjamin Franklin, America's original entrepreneur, had over 250 years ago with his printing publishing company.

These companies has the potential in growing into major publicly traded corporations with board members, shareholders, and tens of thousands of employees working for the corporation, from around the entire world. I mean, look at Black Entertainment Television-"BET". That was the first African American publicly traded company. And when co-founder, Mr. Robert Johnson and his former wife, Sheila sold it, Viacom reportedly paid \$3 billion. Currently, Ms. Catherine L. Hughes has her media company, Radio One, Inc. publicly traded on the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations -as known as, "NASDAQ", and she started in 1980 with one radio station, out of Washington D.C. that she and her son lived in for awhile. Now, Mr. Hughes and her son have a second company that she has successfully publicly traded company. I know that may sound crazy or "so-called" wishful thinking, but I always think and dream very big. Always!!! And, why not?!

If the slaves, our forefathers and mothers, had not dreamt of freedom, we would still be in slavery today. If our brothers and sisters in the civil rights movement had not dreamt of being treated as God human beings and not as animals or third class citizens, we would still be living under the full-fledged laws of Jim Crow.

Brother Quincy Jones said it best during Dr. Henry Gates, Jr.'s PBS Documentary program called, "America Beyond the Color Line". He said during interview with Dr. Gates, "You must dream big, man!!" "And even if you don't accomplished everything in that dream, at least you made it." "Even if it's just half way." Mr. Jones is absolutely right. And he is a brother that was raised from the streets.

I have read and seen stories of Walter Disney, founder of Walt Disney, William C. Durant, founder of General Motors, Sam Walton, founder of Wal-Mart, Walter Chrysler, founder of Chrysler Motors Co., Henry Ford, founder of Ford Motor Co., Thomas Watson, Jr, who father helped build IBM (Big Blue) with founder Charles Flint, Berry Gordy, founder of Motown Records, John H. Johnson, founder of Johnson Publishing Co. (Ebony and Jet), Reginald Lewis, founder of TLC Beatrice Foods, Inc., Robert Johnson, co-founder of Black Entertainment Television, Ray Kroc, founder of McDonalds Corporation, Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's, Colonel Sanders, founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, Fred DeLuca, founder of Subways Restaurants, the Carney Brothers, founders of Pizza Hut, and what each and everyone of them had in common, was that they all started just like Mr. McKinney and Ms. Stringer, from the bottom. Now trust me, I know the road was not easy for any of them, but what road is. Leaders,...true leaders never back down from a challenge. I have read several stories of great giant corporations like Sony Corporation, who this very powerful and world recognized corporation has hundreds of subsidiary businesses that operates under its umbrella. The company is listed on stock exchange markets all around the world, and just think, it all started for Sony in 1946 at a kiosk stand in the corner of a Japanese department store repairing radios and selling rice cookers. Or Dell Computer, Corporation, founded by Michael S. Dell out of a college dorm in the early '80s. What really blew me away, was the fact that in a Forbes cover article that I had read about the hotel giant, Marriott International

Incorporation, according to the article, it started as a ice cream stand. eBay is another success that I enjoy telling brothers about. Pierre Omidyar, founder of the giant auction/retail website said during a 60 minute interview, that he came up with the idea while writing the business model on a paper napkin back in 1995.

The company took off very slow, but what made the company take off to its multi-billion dollar status was the start of the "Bennie Baby" craze. People used the site to post, and auction their little furry creatures to other collectors. Today, it has been reported that the site transact over \$60 billion worth of business each day. At the time of the 2003 interview, Mr. Omidyar -who was 35 years old at the time- was worth \$7 billion. His creation of eBay has created a new market that has formed thousands of virtual businesses, helped grow thousands of brick and mortar businesses, created employment for the common man with handsome incomes, and started new spin-off businesses like iSold It (on eBay), Quickdrop, Snappy Auctions and other drop box service stores in which customers can go to have the recently sold products packaged and mailed to its destination. eBay has auctioned everything, from a town in California to Actor, William Shatner's gallstones. This is not a fad, but a new business model for commerce. I have told many of my comrades that eBay has been the best innovation since the internet and automobiles, because it has changed the way we do business and the way we live. It has changed and moved the economy to the next level, creating a new avenue to generate billions upon, billions of dollars. This is the same story with website companies like Amazon, Yahoo! and mega-sites, Google, who has been reported to be worth over \$110 billion with the common stocks being publicly traded as high as \$420 a share.

These companies are changing the world. I would like to see people of color create and innovate their own multi-billion dollar corporations with their creative ideas.

And yes, there is a desperate need for our own and operated multi-billion dollar corporations, because of our quality of life. Plain and simple. By doing this, we will not only create employment for the people of color and other minorities who are systematically locked out, over looked, or just plain ignored by the good old boys network -who continue to keep the original entitlement program in full effect, but also it will generate political power. We must create our own and keep them once they are successful and prosperous. Too many of our sisters and brothers sell their companies, when they should be building and expanding the companies, so our youth can see faces like theirs behind the companies. You will be surprised of the youth who are very proud and inspired when they see the African American owners of companies they recognize. The Master-Ps, the Russell Simons, the P-Dittys, The Jay-Is, the 50 Cents and others of the Hip Hop entrepreneur world has caused a wave of young inspired entrepreneurs in starting their own companies and businesses.

They are selling products or services that are not illegal and they have become very exceptionally business savvy. This is a good start. I do understand business and the fact that it may be in a person best interest in selling a company that they had started, but not in all cases. I have heard people say that they can not understand why some African Americans become upset when African Americans sell their companies, particularly to caucasians and their companies. But these people need to understand that African American owned and operated companies is a sense of pride for African Americans. African Americans were proud of Motown, Johnson Hair Care products, Essence Magazine, PUSU Clothing, and Black Entertainment Television, because it represented African Americans' accomplishments which was supported by these same disappointed African Americans. So in reality, when they hear of these companies being sold, it is like something has been taken away from them. We can not blame them. I still remember when Americans were upset when Chrysler Motor

Company sold the American car company to Daimler-Benz AG, a German automotive company, or when American baseball fans found out that the owners of the Seattle Mariners were considering selling the team to a Japanese interested buyer. America's baseball fans really took offense in that. Just recently, China was interested in buying an American oil company and Congress stopped the sell for National Security reasons. That was the same when an India steel naverick was interested in purchasing an U.S. steel company and Congress ~~stopped~~ that as well. I even recall when Dominice Pizze's founder and former CEO, Tom Monaghan was putting the Detroit Tigers up for sell back in 1989 or 1990. According to an article that I had read, a very financially successful African American real estate developer was interested in buying the professional baseball team and according to the article, the Tigers' owner refused to allow the developer to review the organization's financial records.

But when the smoke had cleared on the sell of the baseball team, Mr. Monaghan decided to sell the team to his pizza industry rival, Little Caesars Pizza's CEO, Mike Ilitch. There are countless of stories in which African Americans, who were both wealthy and well respected in America, ~~and many~~ ~~had~~ been shut out when trying to purchase major corporations, institutions, television networks or professional sports teams. What I see and hear stories like these, I think back on what ~~Mr. Jack Welch~~ ~~said~~ ~~was~~ ~~his~~ ~~company~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~reasons~~, it is ~~absolutely~~ ~~the~~ ~~reason~~, because corporations are building their companies to be very powerful financially, politically, and socially. I absolutely agree with the Minster. I still recall back in 1997, I had watched a very informative program on The Learning Channel (TLC) that showed how corporations build and sustain the quality of life in a particular community or society. During that program, it distinctively pointed out one of the critical factors in the success of any society, ~~was~~ the state of its economy. You must have a major prosperous and stable economy in order for the people in the community to take care of themselves and their family.

Point blank, Mr. Jack Welch, former CEO and Chairman of General Electric, Co. said it best, "Business is the engine of society." So, once a major corporation or corporations are established in the community, and it is giving the people a prosperous quality of life, the community will support and protect that corporation, because it is their life line. If you ever noticed, the community where a corporation has its headquarters located, they are very supportive of that corporation.

Especially, when the corporation is supportive to the community. I had discovered this when I was working at Ford Motor Company in Dearborn. I remember every summer and autumn work morning as I drove down Southfield Freeway heading to work, I had noticed the enormous congested traffic of automobiles made by Ford. I was really awed in seeing this, because this was the first time I had really recognized the true influential power of a corporation. Even when I had went about my landscaping work throughout Dearborn, I continued ~~to~~ be awed by Henry Ford's accomplishments in

building Dearborn and his company. I still remember reading the historical site signs that were located throughout Dearborn, including the one historical sign that identified the prestigious Dearborn Inn as the hotel that Mr. Ford built for his guest who flew in to Dearborn, at his personal airport that was located across the street from the hotel. I also remember being fascinated in seeing Ford Motor Company's World Headquarters Building when ever i drove passed it, or being at the TPC Championship Golf Course, in the back area of a model house, looking passed the beautifully manicured landscape and pond, seeing the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Ford's World Headquarters building as the sun shines its golden rays off the windows of both buildings. As I think back on those days when I did work at the model house, I really enjoyed seeing the pleasant man made and God created imagine. It was really a beautiful sight to see. I recall once saying to myself, that it must be something

■-stopped; ■-has;
■-and that; ■-to

OUTLOOK AND CHANGES (8)

powerful for a man to wake up from his bed and be able to look across the pond and see what he has built that affects the entire world. To most people, this may not seem important, because most Americans are not interested in building a Fortune 500 or 1000 company -and I do not see anything wrong with that. But I see a desperate need in building our own corporations, and I know we as a people of color can in fact get the job done. With the creation in new African American corporations, this would create hundreds of thousands of living wage jobs for individuals who have been denied the opportunity to raise a family with a working middle-class income.

It would significantly boost or jump start the local urban economy for its citizens, local businesses, and the local government. With corporations of our own, we could stomp out systematic discrimination towards minorities and women when it comes to hiring practices. It would shatter the corporate glass ceiling that has unfairly held worthy individuals back in making equal salaries as caucasian men who are employed in corporate America. Most important, it would bring integrity and honesty to corporate America. The corporation and its leaders would be able to create and finance foundations, endowments, philanthropic and charitable organizations that could concentrate on issues and problems that ails minorities and the poor, including health, education, and homelessness. These corporations would be able to create national research centers and laboratories that would have the proper staff to conduct the work that will solve the very problems that are destroying our people around the world. With our own corporations, we would be able to create hi-tech institutions and facilities that could educate future engineers and scientists who would be able to innovate, discover and invent products that will change the world. Additionally, we would be able to acquire other corporations that are for sale like Suzuki Motor Company which was for sale back in 1999/2000 for \$475 million. With a small automobile company like Suzuki, that would had enable us in building small and mid size automobiles which could had been marketed in the U.S. -as well as other parts of the world- and most likely place the company in good competitive standings with other companies like Hyundai and Kia with very attractive and alternative fuel cars, mini-vans and small SUVs. I know this could be accomplished. Hundreds of corporations that we see today on the Fortune 500 list started from garages, basements and small rooms in the homes of big dreamer entrepreneurs which now are major corporations that is turning America's -in fact the world's economy. And it was done in less than 25 years. I mean look at the mighty Japanese successful automobile company, Toyota. Believe it or not, it started as a business making rugs and look at it now. It is a major contributor in America's economy. Toyota had strategically, as well as aggressively built their enterprises into mighty powerhouse corporations. But in order for us to accomplish these goals, we must first think like entrepreneurs, and not as workers. This is very critical in the great change for African American entrepreneur development and building wealth. In the January 2006 issue of Entrepreneur magazine, Mr. Robert Kiyosaki, who created the "Rich Dad Poor Dad" business book series said in his column, that people who think like employees and not like entrepreneurs has a tendency in doubting themselves or others, and always find excuses in not creating their own businesses.

He said:

"...entrepreneurs focus on opportunity, while employees focus on resources such as money, people and time. For example, a person who thinks like an employee will say 'I can't do it, because I don't have the money.' A person who thinks like an entrepreneur will say 'Let's tie up the deal and find the money later.'"

He further said:

"Even though you're an entrepreneur, you may still be thinking with an employee mind-set. And you can't change your business -and the results you get from your business- until you change your way of thinking."

This is very important that we understand this. We must think like entrepreneurs. In Robert Lacey's biography of Henry Ford called, "Ford: The Man and The Machine", there was a quote that Mr. Ford said that was in the book that I really took to heart. Mr. Ford said:

"'No work with interest is ever hard.' '...a man intent on success ought to keep his mind occupied day and night.' 'If he intends to remain always a manual labourer, then he should forget about his work when the whistle blows, but if he intends to go forward and do anything, the whistle is only a signal to start thinking...'"

In my opinion, these are some very powerful words. Especially taking into account the major focus in building America's economy in the 21st century.

It is most important for African Americans, Hispanics and other people of color now, than ever before to know and strive in creating Fortune 500 and 100 type companies because of the serious concerns of where America's economy is headed.

With the economic global politics -i.e. North American Free Trade Agreement, Central American Free Trade Agreement and World Trade Organization Agreement (formally known as General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade)- in place, competition has just sky-rocketed 1000 percent for the common man in America to secure a life time middle-class job with benefits as he now must compete with the third-world job markets. The days are now numbered for the common American man or woman who felt that a high school diploma, A General Equivalency Diploma (GED), or even a college diploma will be enough in order to secure and maintain a decent living-wage job to successfully support a family on. Corporations in the manufacturing and some service sectors has found it in their interest to "outsource" those jobs overseas.

Therefore, it has taken the American Economy that was once driven by industrial, manufacturing, labor and service, into an economy driven mainly by technology and low-paying service jobs. Case in point: On August 22, 2005, I was listening to this radio talk show, The Ed Schultz Show, and during the program a caller called in and explained that in Oakland, California, over 11,000 people applied for the 400 job positions that were available at a Wal-Mart. People, the reality is, we have a serious economic problem in America and we as African Americans, Hispanic and Latino Americans must wake up and face the music. This is why education is so vital in our economic prosperity and quality of life. As I had stated in the chapter, Education, American leaders are very concerned about this problem as well. A few nights ago, I was watching the Charlie Rose show on PBS, and on his program he had two guest from an organization called, The National Academies. The guests were Mr. Norman Augustine, former CEO of Lockheed Martin Corporation -a military and commercial aircraft, electronic and missiles company, and Mr. P. Roy Vagelos, former CEO of Merck and Company, Incorporation -a pharmaceutical company. During the informative discussion among these gentlemen and Mr. Rose, the leaders revealed a report that a group of America's best minds, from top universities and Fortune's Top 100 companies had put together called, "The Gathering Storm Report". In the report, it revealed troubling findings in regards to the state of America and its

competitiveness ago when it came to the global market. The report revealed a lack of American born scientists and engineers, and children losing interest in math and science in school. The report also revealed that American children were more interested in becoming athletes and entertainers. The guests pointed out that massive technology jobs were moving overseas and foreign born students who graduate from American Universities in science and technology are returning back to their homeland and are working at companies or starting companies that are in direct competition with American companies -just to name a few of the issues that were discussed, and as a result of this problem, it has placed America in a what economic disadvantage. It was said by the guest that this was a national priority that must be corrected. In fact, Mr. Augustine said that he was very concerned about the matter, because of his grandchildren's welfare, being able to have a job, and national security in protecting America. This should concern us as well, especially after hearing it from world business leaders who were very much concerned that they had created a "Five Point Plan" -from re-educating teachers in math and science in K-12, to encouraging children in becoming engineers and scientists. I am going to be honest with you, this issue has really "spooked" me as well, because of the problems that we as African Americans, and Hispanic and Latino Americans already face in America. If American business leaders, scholars, and government officials are silent over the problem, we as African Americans view this as a national or a state of emergency in our communities and make the massive necessary policy changes in correcting the matter. Because if we do not and continue to ignore it, look forward to more severe social catastrophic happenings in our communities that no one will escape.

African Americans, Hispanics, Latinos and other so-called minorities are going through the same problems, and we all fail to realize that a number of our problems could be solved if we only start contributing to an unified cause. A few days ago, I had written these brothers who started a prisoner assistance organization called, "Spreading H.O.P.E.". During the writing of the letter, I had explained to the brothers how we as African Americans has allowed over \$725 million to pass our hands each year, how we have countless of African Americans who are multi-millionaires and several who are billionaires, and yet, according to a Black Enterprise report, we only spend six or seven percent with African American businesses. We are not major owners of world corporations, financial institutions, or land that would be the trillions of dollars that floats around the global economy into the hands of African Americans, Hispanic, Latinos, and other so-called minorities. Where is that \$725 million going? The money, wealth, and properties that we as African Americans are generating collectively each year could in fact build and sustain a nation. I had later explained in the letter that if there are over 37 million African Americans living in America then, there is no excuse why we can not solve the many problems that we are having in this country. Because, where there are 37 million African Americans, there is \$37 million or \$370 million in which we can make an economical investment and get African Americans out of the predicament that we are in. If every African American gave just one dollar, that is \$37 million. If we each gave just ten dollars, that is \$370 million that could be invested in economical, financial and social projects that would drastically change our situation within 20 to 50 years. If we gave ten dollars each year, for the next 10 years, that would create a financial base of \$3.7 billion. This is only 94 cent each month. That is only "10" ten cent refundable pop or malt liquor bottles. This is a plan that each of us could invest in. From Billionaires and Millionaires, to the brothers and sisters who are sitting in a prison cell. This would be an Economical Trust Program with a board of trustees. The members could be individuals like Oprah Winfrey, Dr. Earl Graves, Dr. Bill Cosby, Ms. Coreia Rice and others, including just common

☐-ware; ☐-saw

☐-fennel

individuals. The program would not be based on religion, political or class. It would be based only on one aim and one goal and that is to build wealth for African Americans. The money would be placed in African American banks like Harlem's Carver Federal Savings Bank and a trust bank could be created as well. With the trust bank, this would enable us to not only create businesses, we could also purchase companies, corporations, land and other profitable acquisitions that would build the trust.

While at the same time, the trust would enable anyone to obtain a loan in order to start or build a business, create a line of credit, buy a home or automobile, attend college, and so on. Now, the loan must be paid back to the trust with a fair interest charge. The interest that comes from the loans would create the revenues and profits that could build the wealth in the trust. I believe a plan like the Economic Development Trust Program is needed, because of the continuous blatant and subtle discrimination towards African Americans and other minorities when applying for loans, and over-charging them in high interest fees when repaying on loans. The program would teach African Americans how to budget and manage money, and build wealth. Additionally, the program would be an economic and business building network as well. Lets look at the African American farmers situation for instance. The agriculture industry is one of the oldest and most profitable industries in the world. It is the critical backbone to life. But the agricultural industry has not been very profitable for the very hardworking African American farmers. They have been discriminated in the industry, from receiving loans, grants and subsidies, to having problems in getting their products to market. With this program, not only would it help them financially in maintaining the farms, it would also create a fair playing network to market their products, possibly worldwide.

The system would encourage more African Americans, Hispanics, Latinos and even caucasians to invest in agriculture, which has been a declining business for African Americans.

Here is another reason why the program is needed. Take the issue with the recent selling of the major African American companies like Black Entertainment Television (BET) and Essence Magazine. Instead of these companies selling their companies to corporations in which the African Americans community has questions about the corporation and their goals in keeping the African American cultural philosophy of the company intact, if the owners had problems in selling the company to an African American prospective buyer or buyers, the owner could simply sell the company to the trust and then, later resold to a group of African Americans who are interested in buying the company. With this program, Mr. Robert Johnson would have been able to sell Black Entertainment Television to the trust and that would have enabled a group of African Americans to purchase the cable network, thus satisfying everyone, including the concerned African American community. This is the case with Motown Records, Johnson Hair Care Company, Fast Fash Clothing, FUBU (For Us, By Us) Clothing, Essence Magazine, and other African American companies. These companies would have remained in the hands of African Americans in order to continue and maintain the wealth building road to prosperity. The program itself would be built into a multi-trillion dollar organization. It will additionally create living-wage employment for the many African Americans and other minorities who are discriminated in the work force, eradicate poverty, empty the prisons, build and beautify communities, create excellent top academic schools, create major media networks, and the list goes on and on. Take the Katrina Hurricane tragedy that had occurred in New Orleans. With the program, we could have obtained both air and surface transportation and gotten the elderly, children, women, and men out safely, in fact before the levees were breached. We can finally help ourselves collectively, with the trust that we have created. We could finally help other nations who are in dire and desperate need of nation building, like South Africa and Liberia. This

OUTLOOK AND CHANGERS (12)

will finally stamp out racism and institutional racism. There would not be a need for Affirmative Action programs or any other programs that has been mandated to "so-call" repair the damaged cause by racism in America, because we would had created so much wealth in a short period, that our next four or five generations would all be financially well off. Look at Ford Motor Company. That company has comfortably raised at least five generations of Fords with one company. All this can be possible, only if we are willing to sacrifice 90 cent a month for about ten years. This is the start of our prosperity. I mean, we all give our money to the government and they find more ways to fleece it. We give it to the liquor stores in order to buy cigarettes, worthless alcohol, lottery tickets and so on, and you do not see one dime come back and help you and the community. When Katrina had hit our brothers and sisters, I did not see or hear of one malt liquor or alcohol company, one athletic apparel company, one cigarette company or one worthless sex drug company come in and assisted our people. These same companies and corporations that we freely give our money to everyday. While we mourned, the companies cared less. What ever happened to the term in business called, "Social Contributions", when companies and corporations aid communities in a time of need? I am absolutely sick of this nonsense. We deserve better, and we can do it. Collectively, we have the brains and skills to make ourselves, I know there are no excuses for what we have done and this could never be accomplished. But I say this to you, naysayers. There were naysayers who believed that our people would never over come institutional slavery throughout the world, but we overcame it. There were naysayers who believed that our people would never overcome Jim Crow and America's institutional racism, but look at us now. If we put our minds together and unify, we will succeed in this economic fight as well. One may perceive this as racism and divide, but I see it as African Americans are finally "pulling ourselves up by the bootstraps" and helping each other out of this economical living hell that we are in. So what is so racist about that?

If others outside of African Americans want to contribute, invest and benefit from the program, they can and should be allowed. Hopefully, they will see that this program has better served them than the current corrupted biling financial system that the powers that be has in place, basically throughout the world.

Everyone, including myself are tired of the destruction that is going on in urban America with our people, particularly, with our youth. So, if this is perceived as racist, then America, Great Britain, France, Germany and other European countries who exploited, profited and/or built their nations from the dark ages slavery and their unwelcomed colonization of Africa, and North and South America, which has given them at least a 700 year start to build themselves as economical and financial mighty force in the world is guilty as well, because they all have, and continue to prosper from their evil past. People like Mr. J(ohn) P(ierpont) Morgan, Jr. -whom as an American Financier, financed and built the railroad industry, the U.S. Steel Corporation and International Harvest, Mr. Anthony J. Drexel, whom according to Dan Rottenberg, the author of, "The Man Who Made Wall Street: Anthony J. Drexel and Rise of Modern Finance" was the man whom built Wall Street into an modern-day American financial empire, and Mr. Cecil J. Rhodes, whom went to South Africa on his family farm and discovered diamonds, which enable him to create the DeBeers Consolidated Mines, LTD. along with forming the Gold Fields of South Africa Company and by 1891, had controlled 90 percent of the world's production of diamonds, have all benefited from the spoils of slavery and colonization. For years, individuals in the world had corroborated in economic successful business agreements that had helped pulled each other up from poverty, including Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone, who managed to maintain a business deal of supplying Ford's Automobiles and trucks with Firestone tires for at least 70 years before the companies severed

ties after the Ford Explorer "rollover" scandal back in 1998/2000. In essence, if we ever going to pull ourselves out the rut that we are in collectively, we must pool our money together and help each other. There is absolutely no excuse for African American to collectively have over tens of billions of dollars in wealth, yet we have little or no money invested in African American banks or financial institutions in which young and old inspiring entrepreneurs can receive a fair opportunity in creating their own Microsofts, Procter and Gambles, Reebok Internationals and General Motors. African Americans have billions invested in banks that has been publicly reported in discriminating against African Americans, from obtaining business loans, to charging higher interest rates with their predatory lending practices. This is the same with insurance companies who have been found unfairly charging African Americans higher insurance premiums. I am not telling African Americans to place their life saving into one basket, but what I am saying, we must start investing in our own banks and financial institutions. And when this is done, other will follow suit eventually, because they will recognize that their business is very well appreciated, and they will not be treated as a doormat as other mighty corporations have been treating us and our business. I do not believe African American financial institutions -at least I hope- will discriminate against African Americans and other people of their own race. This is not the America I want. I want to see African Americans having billions invested in these banks that will continuously denied inspiring African American business owners from receiving loans.

I explained a scenario to the brothers in which a former incarcerated brother had an interest while incarcerated in starting a personalized T-shirt business on the internet. He did the research and created a great business plan in starting the business. He figure on a shoestring budget, he will need about five grand as initial capital to get it started. His major problem in getting his dream started, he does not have the capital, he does not have any credit, and he does not know any one that has that kind of money -except the dope man that he used to work for before he was incarcerated, and Lord knows he does not want to get involved with him and end up back in prison, possibly this time for life. The brother figure that his only option is to apply for a micro-loan at the Federal Small Business Administration Office. He does that, and the banks he applied for the business loan has all denied him. These are the same banks that our African American brothers and sisters, including multi-million dollars entertainers, professional athletics and businessmen and women have their money invested in. The brother, after he unsuccessfully tried to obtained the money, becomes very disappointed, frustrated, and eventually depress. He ends up back in the streets, and he ends up back in prison, this time for robbery/murder after he robbed and killed an African American all star athletic. An athletic that had his money invested in the same bank that had denied the once young inspiring entrepreneur a loan in order to start his personalized T-shirt business on the web. Now this same bank, has given other inspiring caucasian entrepreneurs loans, even though the bank may felt that there could be some financial risk. Our African American brothers and sisters, and others are now very upset with the death of the athletic and the brother who was responsible for it, because it was a senseless murder. Everyone questions why was the brother released from prison. The brother's actions were not justifiable under no circumstances, but you do must ask yourself this question? What if the brother had received the loan in order to start his business? There was a great possibility of the business taking off. Because believe it or not, the personalized T-shirt business is a very profitable business. In fact, countless of clothing companies including FUBU got its start with T-shirts and hats. And FUBU turned itself into

a successfully \$300 million business in the late 1990s, and the company was started in 1992 by four brothers, in a house, with two sewing machines, and a dress. This is where we continuously make our mistakes, time and time again. Now in the world do we expect to get out of this rut that we are all in, if we do not in what in each other. This scenario that I just explained is a reality that plays out every single day in our communities. Yet, we seem that we can not find the answers of why are we continuing on the destructive path that we are on. African Americans as we well know do not have inherited wealth to work with as most caucasians. ●

Ms. Elizabeth Cole, an University of Michigan, Associate Professor of African American Studies had reported during a discussion with Mr. El Gordan on his NPR radio show, News and Notes with El Gordan dated May 23, 2005, that the wealth of African Americans collectively in 1865 was .5 percent, and in 2005 it was 1.0 percent. She said that 42 percent of African Americans are born in poverty.

In conclusion of the discussion, Professor Cole noted that it is a total myth that most Africans has come to believe, that by seeing a few percentage of African Americans being somewhat wealthy in America, that we are getting our so called piece of the American Dream, and those who are living in poverty are doing so by their own free will. In Oprah's report, "Oprah: Class in America", it was said that today, it is much harder for a person to become wealthy than, it has been in the past, and that one percent of America's rich controls 40 percent of America's wealth. In reality, brothers and sisters, at the pace that we are going, we will forever find ourselves in the dismal situation that we are currently in unless, we make some very serious economic changes that will in fact benefit us as a whole. Even though some of us as African Americans believe that we have financially and physically made it out the urban slums and ghettos, but in reality, you have not escape, because you still have family members, love ones, and friends who are still trapped and subject to the madness and mayhem of the urban war zones. African American tennis superstars, Venus and Serena Williams, with all the wealth, fame and social status that they both worked hard for and rightfully deserved, they still was unable to escape the evil in the hood when their sister had tragically lost her life after being senselessly shot in a crossfire shootout.

Michael Jordan, a man who has been reported to have generated over \$10 billion for the corporations that he had endorsements with, has been identified as the "baddest" man that ever played the game of professional basketball, has been claimed to be the most popular man in the world, besides Michael Jackson, Muhammad Ali, and Jesus, and who is a very wealthy man himself, still could not escape the ghetto, when his father had tragically lost his life at the hands of two young men during a robbery/car-jacking. There are many, many stories like these. But the reality is, that we must make changes.

I am going to be quite frank with you, and some of you may disagree with me, but I believe -as others has pointed this out- that in some cases, intergration was a very bad policy for us, in terms when it came to economic and financial empowerment and wealth building for African American. Before integration, African Americans had some control of the flow of money that was being pass through the hands of African Americans, by owning the general stores, the clothing cleaners,

hair shops, restaurants, the after hour joints and etc. But with the installment of integration, African Americans who were able to cash in on their businesses and property and move to suburbia America, left the communities and therefore left a major consumer market behind for others to exploit. I do not believe any one seriously considered or realized the serious ramifications that would come from the exodus. The educated, the financially sound, the reverent, the doctors, the lawyers and the role models had left the less fortunate brothers and sisters to struggle among themselves and fight against the outsiders, who were only there to exploit them. The exodus had left a major void in the communities for inspiration and positive development. I found this clearly evident when I had seen Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. PBS program called, "America Beyond the Color Line". The program revealed the fact that African Americans are now divided based on economic and social class, and from the program, things did not look too bright for us. I remember one brother from Chicago that Dr. Gates had interviewed who had worked at a Popeye's Chicken Restaurant and lived in the projects. From the interview, the brother seem to see his life and his job at Popeye's as a dead end. I was very concerned about what I had seen from Dr. Gates' program and decided to write him. During the letter, while I did compliment Dr. Gates on his excellent piece, the substance of the letter was more based on the concerns that I had about our people who "live in the hood" in America. I also had concerns about the brother who felt that his life was a dead end for him, and I explained to Dr. Gates that the brother must realize that it was not the end of the road for him, but in fact a window of opportunity for him to purchase his own chain of franchise Popeye's Restaurants in order to get his family out of Chicago's crime infested, dilapidated and hopeless projects and into a financially secure situation for both he and his family. These are the attributes that we must change -that I had just seen on Dateline's newdocumentary report called, "Separate and Unequal" with Tom Brokaw- is these unconcerned bourgeois, broke back, so-called "I'm finally getting my piece of the American pie, even though I am still being treated like a worthless nigger on my job and in society, and I don't want to mess-up a good thing that I got going on for me and my family, by foolin' around with those niggers in the slums and ghettos". These types of African Americans has basically turned their backs on the brothers and sisters in the hood, even though these same people who are struggling in the slums are the same people who elder family members had fought in the civil rights movement in order to allow that nigger to move to the suburbs and get the job that he or she continuously complains about. These are who I call the "Modern-Day Brother and Sister Ku Klux Klans", because they are now doing the work that racist America was trying to achieve over 50 years ago and that was to divide us, in all ways, shapes and forms. And now the Klan has finally realized that all the killing, lynching, burning and terrorizing was in fact a waste. All they had to do is give some of us a so-called piece of the American Dream, and the others will fall by the waste side, eventually destroying and killing the rest. I could not believe -but I was definitely not surprised- when an African American on the Dateline program explained how certain middle-class African Americans felt about the Jackson, Mississippi poor and work-class African Americans and the social and economical problems that they continue to face. The brother said most of them feel that it is not their concern or job to save them, that their only responsibility is to their family, and therefore, forget about them. My question to these unconcern African Americans, "What ever happened to the love and unity for eachother from the '50s, '60s and '70s? Did not our civil rights leaders like Brother Edgar Evers -their son of Mississippi- who on June 13, 1963, while coming home from a meeting, was shot in the back by a racist animal, Byron de la Beathwith, which our great brother later died in front of his wife and children, sacrifice

his life in order for them to live peacefully in that sunflower suburban community? To send their children to the excellent suburban schools? To have a living-wage job in order to put food on their table, a roof over their head, and clothes on their back? Well, people like Medgar Evers, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, the three young civil rights brothers that were killed in Mississippi in 1964, and others who fought for political, social, and economic equality had not reaped the benefits that you as unconcerned middle-class African Americans are currently benefiting from.

Therefore, you do not have a choice in the matter -in my opinion- when it comes to helping our brothers and sisters in the slums and ghettos in America. Because ~~there~~ is no doubt in my mind, that these individuals would be in these streets helping the lost brothers and sisters. Point blank!!! These bourgeoisie failed to realize, that these are the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the civil rights brothers and sisters who had sacrifice, struggled and lived in fear in order for them to decide if they want to help their poor, sick and destitute people. You can not make us believe in a million that Brother Medgar Evers was only fighting for the bourgeoisie African Americans, and not the poor who fought along side of this great man. You can not tell us that Dr. King and others died so, forty years later, we as African American can now discriminate against our own with "black-classism". It makes me wonder, was this in their hearts all the time. I had read this excellent book titled, "The Strange Career of Jim Crow -Class, Color and Association", Dr. C. Vann Woodward, and in the book, he had pointed out this behavior amongst our people towards the poor and the fact of who and who did not actually benefited from the civil rights movement, despite the fact that most African Americans wanted social, political and economical changes. On page 206 of the book, Dr. Woodward said:

"The myth of Black unity obscured the special interest of the Black bourgeoisie as beneficiaries of racial separatism. 'Black Power', it has been pointed out, usually means Black middle-class power. Negro entrepreneurs, teachers and professional people, the educated and privileged class, had acquired such status as it enjoyed in a segregated society. E. Franklin Frazier called it 'a privileged status within the isolated Negro community.' That status was threatened by the removal of the legal foundations of segregation. The ironically 'deprived' class stood to gain benefits from racial unity, separatism, and Black nationalism. Some middle-class Blacks, to be sure, sacrificed self-interest to serve the less fortunate. Left intact, however, the Black ghetto served as a kind of tariff wall to protect a monopolized market.

Perfectly legitimate reasons would be found for expanding Black enterprise, and there were genuine needs for Black participation in the administration of Black communities.

But the great majority of Black people are not capitalists and like most whites probably never will be, and the benefits of 'buying black' were more those of the seller than the buyer."

He further said on page 208:

"Advocates of 'Black community control' were not Black writers but inspiring Negroes with an eye on administrative posts in public offices, schools, hospitals, and social services. Their success would gratify racial pride, but it left the community with the same problems of poverty, unemployment, bad housing, and inferior schools."

So in reality, the problems that had ailed the slums and ghettos before the civil rights movement, still in fact, exist today. The only changes that came about after the civil rights movement for African Americans, was the fact, that now, if you were financially able, you could move you and your family into a better situation, and turn your back on the others who are now left behind in the slums and ghettos of America that was not changed after the civil rights movement. Remember, we had integrated into the white establishment of their schools, neighborhoods and jobs.

What we basically failed to do, was to go back into those still segregated schools, neighborhoods and so forth, and cleaned up and rebuild the communities for those who did not have the education or money to move out. Everyone seems to forget, that the Civil Right Movement in all actuality, was a Civil War. The inferior schools that we force to attend are still in place. The dilapidated, ruin and rodent-infested homes that we were forced to live in are still standing. The corrupted-minded politicians are still in power. The hopeless and helpless spirit-minded people are still living in the war torn communities, where there are not any living-wage jobs to raise a family. Like in any war torn community, after the war and treaties are made and signed, you must rebuild. Not just City Hall, by placing a mayor and a few other government officials in key spots and claim that things have now changed.

You must rebuild the community, the schools, the economy and the government, the people. In the case, Dr. King, it was not the problem and solution in the ghettos and the slums of America who did not keep up their end of the deal, as you suggested, but in fact, you all who left, ~~leaving~~ integration, trying to incorporate yourselves in white America, instead of coming back, and rebuild the infrastructure and the moral of the people. I want everyone to understand, I am not solely blaming the middle-class, because there is enough blame to go around. But if Dr. Cosby claims that we had a deal, well that deal was breached on both side. I mean, it was very beautiful of him and his wife -who I love- to donate \$20 million -and more- to Spelman College and other programs, but how is that going to solve the problems that Ms. Connie Rice, and people like her are facing everyday in just trying to successfully prepare two children for graduation and college. No offense, but that \$20 million has done what Affirmative Action has done for us, very little.

Particularly, the African Americans who are trapped in the slums and ghettos. This is why we must now invest in ourselves, because white America, as we all can see, has not. We have invested so much money in others interest and companies, thus building and sustaining their wealth, that we have absolutely failed to build and maintain wealth for each other. This is one of the contributing factors of why African Americans are either unemployed, or working in dead-end jobs that are just barely paying the rent. Just like I had explained in the chapter, Economy, Arabs in Detroit had basically came to America, brought the businesses that African Americans once owned, and the Arabs built, sold or helped build another business for an Arab. Each time, they ~~was~~ keeping the wealth in the Arab family. This is one of the reason why African Americans in Detroit are in the position that we are in, and the Arab are in their position. They understand the wealth building process in America, "Help Thy Brother!"

We should take a chapter from Hip Hop and its industry. Hip Hop since its first commercial introduction by Ms. Sylvia Robinson and her label, Sugar Hill Records with, "Rapper's Delight" by the Sugar Hill Gang in 1979, it has exploded into a multi-billion dollar business. This industry has made countless of African Americans enormously wealthy and powerful. The reality is, without Hip Hop, most of our multi-millionaires in the world of Hip Hop, most likely would had ended up poor, in prison, or even dead. The birth of Hip Hop has made Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter over \$320 million richer and a CEO of a division of a billion dollar record company. And just think, before 1996 when he had released his first Hip Hop classic, Reasonable Doubt, he was a drug dealer from the projects. Hip Hop has made Percy "Master-P" Miller

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\$500 million richer, Russell "The Godfather of Hip Hop" Simmons, \$500 million richer, Sean "P-Diddy" Combs - "The Hip Hop Jet Setter", \$500 million richer, Miss "Misdemeanor" Elliott, hundreds of millions of dollars richer, Kimora Lee Simmons "The Lady Boss of Lady Phat", hundreds of millions of dollars richer, and the list goes on and on. The innovation of Hip Hop has in fact been one of the fastest ways for African Americans to become very wealthy individuals, and it has produced more African American multi-millionaires in one industry in a 25 year period, than I believe in the history of modern man. That is something to think about, especially by those who hate Hip Hop and its pop culture. We have finally created something that has finally benefited our people. This is something to be proud of. Not only has Hip Hop created the big bank multi-millionaires, but it has created the little bank millionaires as well. It has allowed African Americans to be more in control of their products and services that they have created, and obtain more of their hard earned money. Additionally, it has created a work force in the industry as well. Now, you see why our African American children want to become rappers. They see it as an opportunity in getting out the ghetto. And for those who may not know, a large portion of the consumers of Hip Hop products are caucasians. So, in reality, Hip Hop is not bad after all. This is what innovation is all about. There are so many products, services and business models in this world that can be created, recreated, modernized and marketed to the world. I look at it like this: if there are profitable markets for bottled water, Cabbage Patch dolls, Bennie Babies, Pet Rocks, Chicia Pet Plants, and other outrageous and insignificant products and services, I am quite sure you can find a profitable market for your idea. Take Starbucks Coffee for example. For years, I have been literally curious to know why would people pay five bucks -or more- for a cup of coffee, instead of just buying a can of coffee from a local store and brewing it themselves. Then, I seen a business report on CNBC's AMERICAN MADE about the \$29 billion company and its CEO, Howard Schultz -a man who grew up poor and came from the Brooklyn projects.

Mr. Schultz had turned the once small business, that had opened its doors back in 1971, as a coffee packaging and distribution business, into a very successful and profitable Fortune 500 empire, in a market that did not exist. Mr. Schultz came up with the idea after visiting Italy and noticing their fine coffee shops, and thought the business model could work in America. As you can see, it has.

This was the same story with the publicly traded natural organic food market, Whole Foods Markets which was formed in Houston, Texas by founder and CEO, John Mackey in 1978. This billion dollar company created a market that did not exist.

By Americans being more health conscious today, this company was able to capitalize on it.

You must realize that these companies had built themselves into corporation giants less than 30 years. The internet is an excellent place to start up a business. This is a very cheap and economical way to start a 24/7-365 small business out of the corner of your home and have total access to the entire world. It has been reported that e-commerce is a \$34 billion marketplace and growing. The good thing to know is, that African Americans starting businesses has grown 45 percent since 1997.

So, this is a new avenue in starting a business, as well. And here is something to think about. Internet companies like, "You Tube", "Facebook", "Go Daddy", "Craig's List", "Double Click", and "My Space" were all small based web-sites that were started either in a home or a college dorm, and each of these companies just four or five years ago did not exist. But look at each of these companies now. They are all worth billions, with tens of millions of customers and viewers. Home-based businesses are a very big and lucrative industry, and according to www.47BBB.com, America's Home Based Business Industry is a \$427 billion business

with over 20,000 businesses making over \$1 million each year. With the U.S. retail consumers spending reportedly over \$4 trillion each year, you can not lose in this business. We as People of Color must realize that we must create our own, just like some of our brothers and sisters have done, including World Wide Technology's Founder and CEO, David L. Stewart (a 650 employee St. Louis based hi-tech company founded in 1990, which has generated over a billion dollars in revenue. He is also the author of "Doing Business By The Good Book".), CAMAC International's founders, CEO Kase Lawal and his wife, Eileen Lawal (a \$1.5 billion annual revenue energy company founded in 1986, which recently received the "2006 Black Enterprise's 'Company of the Year Award'"), and founder and CEO, Greg Jackson of Detroit's Prestige Automotive Group (the company received over a billion dollars in annual automotive sales and was awarded the "2005 Black Enterprise's 'Auto Dealer of the Year'" honors). In recent years, there has been a major concern in regards to the destroying of the middle-class by the government and Corporate America, as both culprits have been more concern with giving and receiving corporate campaign finance dollars, eliminating labor union protected living-wage jobs and/or benefits, increasing enormous outrageous salaries for CEOs of major corporations, profits, and passing laws that protects Corporate America as oppose to common citizens. Individuals like, Democratic U.S. Senator, Byron L. Dorgan of North Dakota -who written a telling book in regards to the attack on the middle-class called, "Take This Job and Ship It", has expressed these concerns as well. During a televised C-SPAN's "Book TV" promotion and book signing of his new book in a Dearborn, Michigan bookstore, Dorgan extensively elaborated in how Corporate America, with the aid of government has placed it hard working citizens at a significant disadvantage with foreign countries including China -who has a much cheaper work force, and has America in a \$50 billion dollar trade deficit with China. Dorgan told the audience about an incident in which a woman had explained to President Bush that she had to now work three jobs, and Bush response to the woman's concerns was, "That's fantastic". He also revealed that in order to avoid paying taxes, over 1,270 American corporations has located or relocated their corporation headquarters in a five story building on Church Street in the Cayman Islands, and just how American some corporate leaders are, as they have said, "Patriotism need to take a back seat". My question is, "Just exactly what patriotism must take a back seat to?" People!!! This is the "Tell-Tell" sign that we must create our own.

As you may realize, my interest and passion are education, entrepreneurship and business, political science, and most important, helping people. Any one who knows me, will tell you that I eat, breathe and dream about being a very successful entrepreneur. I dream of one day creating and owning my own corporation. I never stop dreaming, and I dream very big. I keep faith in God, and most important, I have maintained my sanity, values, morals and principles despite my very dire circumstances. Even though I am incarcerated with natural life without the possibility of parole, the fact that the courts has not treated me fair as with other citizens, and the light may seems very dim, I continue to fight on. I continue to show both young and old brothers that we must build our characters in order to bring about a change in our communities, because the leadership responsibility falls on us. Our people need our help. I tell brothers all the time, that there is too money and legitimate ways to making it, besides selling drugs, robbing, stealing, jacking, killing, and committing other illegal acts in getting it, especially towards eachother. Prison can be a place to build yourself with positive thoughts. You have the time in which you can broaden your knowledge and horizons. I have a crew of brothers that I confabulate with, and our topics of discussion are the same; business and entrepreneur aspirations, world politics, world current affairs, and

■-amongst Americans; ■-had;
 ■-such

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so on. We put each other in tune to good informative books, magazines, and etc.

We exercise together, and we keep things positive. In fact, I have one comrade we call Big Ripp, who is very interested in starting his own television network.

So, we all brainstormed ideas in how to make it a reality. Through our brainstorming, we all decided that it be to his advantage if he had created the network on the internet, because it is very inexpensive and considerably a new avenue in the production of media. Additionally, we came up with the concept, how it should be marketed, and just how to generate revenue and make the network profitable. This is just an example of what brothers are doing among each other while incarcerated in prison. It is very important that you surround yourself around individuals who are on the move in striving in becoming successful. If you hang around negative individuals, or in a negative environment, expect negative outcomes.

This has been the problem with many of our youth in America. They are totally surrounded by pure negativity. The other day, I was talking to a young brother whom grew up thinking that violence was the norm. He had explained to me that it was not until he was incarcerated and became conscious, that he discovered that violence was in fact abnormal behavior. See, this brother came up in the "Crack Silent War" era. And this is the case with a lot of our young brothers and sisters. They did not know about a future, goals, or success. Shoot!!! These kids did not know if they were going to live to see their twenty-first birthday. Their environment must be cleaned up, or it will continue to be stories like the young brother. I have stories in which former gang members or troubled students once taken out of these negative environments, excel extremely well, both in school, in their behavior, and in life. MTV News and CBS Nightly News reported a story about a school for troubled inner city teens, in which six young men - five African Americans and one Asian, had built a hybrid sports car as a class project. The report revealed that the once troubled and former gang members were all college bound, and they were maintaining exceptionally high grade point averages. During the report, I could not help but notice how enthusiastic, bright, and ambitious each of the young men were. They all clearly had what Dr. Carter G. Woodson calls, "The Spark of Genius".

Unfortunately, for a lot of our children that spark is discovered too late. Now, just think, if we had the automobile company that I had spoke on earlier in this chapter, these young men could had started in the company's apprenticeship program, or the company could had granted the young men full scholarships to universities or tech schools in order to obtain their certification while working as interns at the company. This is what innovation and opportunities can do. With these possibilities, we can save our children. We can in fact ~~save~~ troubled children if positive productive avenues and opportunities were created and develop. This is why it is so vital for children to be involved in programs that will allow them to think and create, as oppose to what today's children are accustom to, and that is memorizing, carrying out and following instructions, tasks and formulas. Critical thinking and interesting programs in which the children are physically involve the problem solving process, will allow them to be better decision makers. Studies have supported my position, but everyone has ignored it. We must encourage children, in fact all children to play organized sports, musical instruments, involve themselves in science and engineering, and even writing. Especially, the children who are considered troubled and hyperactive. Children have so much energy that they must be involved in activities that will capture their attention. In Robert Lacey's book, "Ford: The Man and The Machine", Henry Ford's sister spoke on Ford's childhood years growing up with a deep curiosity in discovering the mechanics in how mechanical items worked. I recalled reading in Lacey's exceptionally well written and very informative book, where Ford's sister revealed times when Ford would mistakenly destroy their toys, because of his fascination in tinkering with things, and how

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individuals would come to him in order to repair mechanical items that were broken.

I had found Ford's story interesting because, it reminded me of myself when I was a child tinkering with things. I still remember the times when my mother would whip me for taking things apart, including my radio/record player set. I was very interested in how things worked myself. Growing up, I had dreamt of one day becoming an Electronic Engineer. In fact, I tried to major in the science back in 1985/86 when I had attended Highland Park Community College, but only having completed the eight grade and with a GED, I discovered the course to be extremely academically challenging. As I now think back on my early teenage years, believe it or not, I use to imagine myself one day creating a telephone in which the caller and receiver would be able to see each other on a screen. I even had a name for it called, "PhoneVision". My interest in electronics came about, I guess from reading Popular Science magazines that my father would purchase and read himself when I was a child.

I believe if electronic courses were in the middle schools that I had attended as a child, my chances in achieving that dream would had been great, because I would had been very familiar with the science of electronics about time I had attended college. Therefore, making my transition a very successful one. We need to talk to children very early in their lives, and discover what their interests are, and get them involved. Too many of our children our today are just running the streets and following others in negative mischief, when they could be steered into creative, positive and mind building activities. This is very important, because our children are our very precious natural resources and extremely valuable to the world's continuing development. It is also very vital that we reform our communities and create fruitful nurturing environment for our children. In Minister Louis Farrakhan's book, "A Torch Light for America", he said, "If our children can't change the environment, then the environment will ultimately change our children". We all want our children to better themselves, and not allow the environment to corrupt them with negativity. You know, there is something wrong when we hear our children saying that they do not know if they will see their eighteenth birthday. Yet, we can see children in places like Africa, India, and China, where living conditions are hopelessly deplorable, and they are in highspirits, with dreams of one day becoming a doctor, engineer, or lawyer. You know, something is just plain wrong with that, and we all know why. We as a whole have let our children down, and we must rectify it.

There is another issue of concern that I have that I believe that needs to be address, and that is, creating legacy wealth and managing money. Recently, mega media magnate, Rupert Murdoch, CEO of the \$70 billion media mammoth, News Corporation -who owns and operates Fox Television Networks (News, Sports, and Entertainment), Fox Movie Studios, The New York Post, and the popular web social site, My Space- had made a \$5 billion bid to the owners of the Dow Jones & Company, Incorporation -who also owns the very prestigious business newspaper, The Wall Street Journal.

The company was founded in 1888 and the Bancroft family has owned the company since 1902. This is what you call legacy wealth. This very profitable and successful company has been in the Bancroft for over a century. And not surprising, the family had rejected the News Corporation's offer.

There are countless of family owned and operated corporations that have been in business for over a hundred, and in some cases, a hundred and fifty years.

Corporations which has created family prestigious aristocratic legacy wealth, including well known family companies like Ford Motor Company, Johnson & Johnson, E. I. duPont de Nemours & Company (DuPont), H.J. Heinz, Company (Heinz), S.C. Johnson & Son, Incorporation, and Anheuser-Busch Company, Incorporation. Each of these well renown American institutions have been in some way embedded in the fabric of our

lives, as we have patronized many of their brand named products. This is the type of legacy wealth that we must create for ourselves and our family. And I believe some of the most effective and prosperous ways in creating a sound foundation to the road in building legacy wealth are in real estate and development, preferably in commercial real estate and development, investing, and good old fashion entrepreneurship -whether starting your own company, acquiring a company, or embarking in becoming a franchisee. Once you have build it, you must keep it in the family. I believe that is very vital to successfully sustaining legacy wealth.

Next, educate yourself in the system or science of public trading and incorporating a company. There are two extremely excellent and informative books that I have read and own, and I would advise every person to read if they are seriously considering starting, incorporating, or even having their company publicly traded. The first book -which is part of successful businessman, Robert Kiyosaki's Rich Dad's Advisor book series- titled: "Own Your Own Corporation" by Garrett Sutton, ESQ. in my opinion, is one of the best business books that I have read in regards to enlightening individuals in how to effectively incorporate and protect their assets, which is very important when building wealth. And the second book titled: "Stocks, Bonds, Options, Futures -Second Edition" by Stuart R. Veale, a Senior Vice President of Portfolio Strategy and Design at Prudential Securities, is another excellent book that I read religiously about the "ins and outs" in investing in publicly traded companies for beginners. Both books are very easy comprehensible books for any one who is enthusiastic in learning about the business in making money and obtaining wealth.

I also believe monthly periodicals, like Entrepreneur and Home Business are excellent informative magazines for all young inspiring entrepreneurs as well. These magazines in my opinion are what I call "Grassroots" business magazines who are targeting the young eager wide-eyed entrepreneur. If you read the magazines, you will discover that not only do the periodicals gives it readers splendid cutting edge information on every component in small business, it also generate ideas in entrepreneurs, as well as keeping them informed on new and existing pertinent laws relating to business passed by government.

And finally, money management. I unequivocally believe that this topic is very important to every individual who live and participate in this capitalistic society.

Especially, individuals who have an impulsive problem in maintaining a budget.

Increasingly, Americans have found themselves in enormous amount of debt, particularly among the Middle-class -whether it is credit card debt, or home and auto foreclosures. It has been reported that the average American is about \$10,000 in bad credit card debt, while still others have fallen prey to the vicious blood sucking predatory sub-prime mortgage industry, which have in recent years created record foreclosures of homes across America, especially in African American communities and has made the economy very unstable, to ~~the~~ the least. With this in mind, a significant contributing factor to this debt, besides the obvious outrageous service charges, fees, and interest that has been ingeniously placed in the consumers' monthly credit card bills from the multi-billion dollar credit card providers, is the misunderstanding by consumers in the sole purpose or philosophy of the credit card. Historically, the creation of the plastic card came about after a businessman was unable to pay for his meal during a dinner social gathering at a restaurant, because he had forgotten his wallet. After the businessman and the restaurant has settled the bill -through a form of informal credit, the businessman came up with the idea ~~in~~ in a modern-day form of credit through the credit card system, and this is when The Diner Card was born. The Diner Card was the first official credit card in America, and the start of the credit card industry.

The sole purpose of a credit card, is to "purchase now, and pay later", with

the intention in paying off the credit balance in a reasonable time period -which in my opinion, less than 30 days. But the problem with some Americans who have found themselves financially buried in bad credit card debt, they are totally oblivious to the fact that the credit card or as I call them, government legitimized loan sharks, rely heavily on individuals not to pay off the credit balance each month.

By Americans failing to do this, the credit card providers can unjustly tack on exorbitant interest charges, and forever keep them in debt. As one person said during a televised PBS Frontline documentary which reported the insides of this extremely corrupt industry, individuals who are prompt paymasters are very unfavorable to the industry. So, in reality, it would be in the best interest of consumers in paying off their debt each month, as opposed to allowing the credit balance to linger, and subject themselves to become prey to the industry. What I have found most ironic, but not surprising, that most Americans and their children are not financially educated in the science of consumer personal credit, checking and savings, and investing in many of today's schools -which I believe should be a mandatory curriculum in schools, considering the reports which revealed that Americans are saving extremely less and it has become a national crisis. I discovered from watching CNBC's personal finance guru, Suze Orman of the Suze Orman Show, that America is a nation of irresponsible and personal finance illiterate individuals.

And my position is very well supported by the fact that in recent years there has been a record number of foreclosures and personal bankruptcy filings. From listening to Ms. Orman's program, particularly the segment in which viewers call in to the show seeking financial sound advice, opinions, and even warrant constructive criticism from the personal finance sage; I took notice in the fact, that most individuals even though they are tens of thousands of dollars (some even hundreds of thousands of dollars) in debt, from a range of sources, including student loans, second home equity mortgages, and credit card debt, that they would still want to purchase big ticket items -ie. new cars, boats, plasma television and etc.- knowing that they are one paycheck from filing for bankruptcy protection. And the thing that really amazes me, that these people would have the galls in seeking advice from Ms. Orman, being fully aware, that if their personal finance report does not pass her very rigorous test, she is going to shoot down their interest in purchasing the big ticket item. I believe Ms. Orman's show is, must program that everyone should watch, especially, African Americans. We are -just like the vast majority of working-middle class Americans, notorious in mismanaging our finance. We waste so much money on things that we particularly do not need, and a perfect example of the waste, is our obsession in purchasing tobacco and alcohol products, and lottery tickets.

We all agree as a nation that these items has contributed in keeping our people utterly impoverished, yet we as a nation willingly continue to purchase these items.

I recently read an article in the April 22-28, 2007 issue of The Michigan Citizen -a prominent African American newspaper, called, "Blacks buy cigarettes to send 2,500 students to college". Accordingly to the article, Wayne Greer of Richton Park, Illinois revealed that for over 42 years he has spent more than \$65,000 supporting his \$30 a week, "pack-and-a-half-sometimes-two-pack-a-day" cigarette habit, and the only thing he has to show for this nasty expensive investment is cancer. I thought about the comment that Greer made in regards to the things he could had done with the money. As I had murmured to myself, thinking about the report that I had seen on CNBC's Fast Money in regards to the second richest man in the world, Warren Buffett's company, Berkshire Hathaway and the fact that when the company started in the '60s, if Greer had just invested \$1,000, he would be worth over \$5 million today. That is a fact. The article revealed a troubling report done by the

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Centers for Disease Control called, "Pathways to Freedom, Winning the Fight Against Tobacco". In the report, it revealed that "the money that African American smokers spend on cigarettes in a single day could send more than 2,500 Black students to college for an entire year." Now, that is incredible. This report was based solely on African Americans and their cigarette spending habits. So just imagine, the number of students that we could send to universities, colleges and vocational trade schools, if we just simply sacrifice the three most unnecessary vices -tobacco and alcohol products, and lottery tickets. In fact, if this was done across ethnic lines, this would be the start in changing America.

Another issue of concern that I have, is the fact that countless of Americans, particularly poor and working-class African Americans (and other People of Color) do not have banking -checking and savings- accounts. Hip Hop mogul and Godfather of Hip Hop, Russell Simmons, who has created the Rush Debt Banking Card, said there are over 70 million Americans in the United States without bank accounts. With this in mind, many of these Americans who are without bank accounts unfortunately find themselves victim to local check cashing centers or party/liquor stores, who will in turn cash their checks at unconscionable service rates. This is another form of exploitation that has contributed to many African Americans' downfall.

We must remember, every cent is very important to the financial health and quality of life of each and every American as we all have fallen prey in some shape or form to the American Capitalist monster. And if you don't believe that every penny counts, you need to keep in mind in what one of the world's renowned wealthiest family's -The Rothschilds- son once said, "while you count every dollar, I count every penny." We as African Americans for too long, have tried to integrate ourselves into the fabric of the financial and economic mainstream goals of America, and we all now come to realize that it has not worked. In fact, it has worked against us, as we see the fruits of our financial labor. There is no excuse for us, a Nation of African Americans, considered by reports to be listed as the eighth or sixteenth World's Wealthiest Industrialized Nation, with reported estimates listing our collected wealth as a Nation in the hundreds of billions of dollars and annual spending income (budget) close to a trillion dollars, yet to have allowed some of our people to live like we ~~are~~ residing in a Third World Nation. Something is just plain wrong with that picture. Dr. Ronald W. Walters had made an excellent point in his book, "White Nationalism, Black Interests" when he had said, "The lesson of the Civil Rights Movement is that Blacks, because of the American history of slavery and Post-slavery exclusion, have had to fight for rights and resources as a group". And the brother is absolutely right. Everything we as African Americans have accomplished throughout American history has been done as a group, and this issue is not any different. If we as a Nation are tired of our never ending situations, then we must make changes as a group. As I have now come to realize after involving myself in comprehensive in-depth studies and research in ethnics -in how economically prosperous communities and Nations are formed, I have discovered that communities and "The Quality of Life" -which Rev. Walter Fauntroy, President of National Black Leadership revealed the five essential keys in the quality of life during an April 6, 2007 C-SPAN airing of the "Martin Luther King - Malcolm-X Initiative on Urban Policy" discussion topic, "Bring Money (Tax Dollar) Back to Urban and Rural America", which are: 1. income; 2. education; 3. health care; 4. housing, and 5. justice, had been created mainly not by government, but in fact, by the many corporations, churches, organizations, institutions and philanthropist. We must remember people, America is a Capitalist society, and it has been historically develop on that philosophy. Henry Ford, II -grandson of the World's famous automobile maker, Henry Ford, said it best in

D-wars; **@**-collectively

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Chapter 31, "Trouble on Twelfth Street" in Robert Lacey's book "Ford: The Man and the Machine" when he stated, "How can minorities hope to operate in a capitalist society... 'without their own capital'". It is just that simple. We must create our own capitalist institutions. In order for us to survive and prosper in this century's global economy, or we are going to definitely perish. African Americans, as well as the People of Color, in all Nations of the Earth, "The time has come!"

And as Venezuelan President, Hugo Chavez said during the June 1, 2006 C-SPAN's airing of Chavez's beautiful, wonderful and exceptionally enlightening speech at an OPEC -Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries- meeting in Venezuela, "Nothing is more powerful when the time has come." Chavez also presented this question. He said, "How is it that Venezuela is the first country to produce oil in the 1900s, but now has poverty throughout the country with its people?" He then went on the historical journey in regards to Venezuela, its leaders, its oil and the vicious exploitation of America. Chavez explained that this exploitation is happening in Africa, as well as Asia. As I was listening and absorbing on the Venezuelan leader's eloquent speech, I could not help but recognize the continuous exploitation of African Americans in America. We must wake up, people!!! We must wake up!!! We must look at the magnificent accomplishments of the shining risen Nation of Japan. Yes, Japan had lost their military campaign against the United States in World War II and surrendered after witnessing the suffering and carnage of its citizens as the results of the United States dropping Atom Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But now, over sixty years later, Japan has risen, like the fire mighty Phoenix, from its ashes, and now has dominated America's consumer market -which has made Toyota Motor Company the number one selling automobile brand in America. Japan had lost the military campaign, true indeed, but now has won the economic one. That was the vision of a Nation. We must create and execute our vision for our Nation as well.

-T H E E N D-

"Give a man a fish and you will feed him for a day,
Teach a man to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime.
Teach a person to start a fish farm and you will feed a
community for a life time."

Source: Understanding Business by
William G. Nickels, James N. McHugh,
and Susan M. McHugh