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OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:
**CULTIVATING REFORM or
BREEDING CRIME?**

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VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 2

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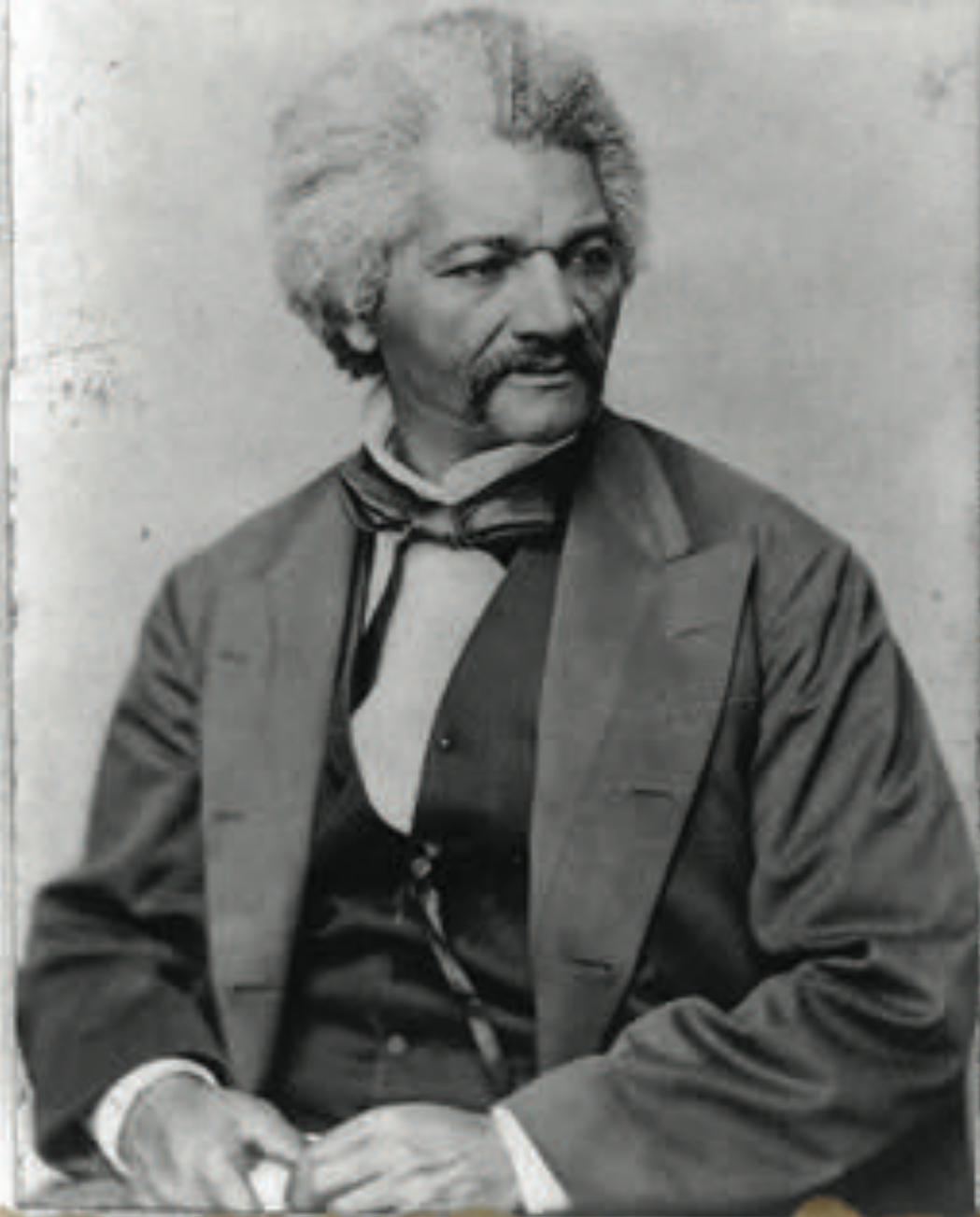
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“Our destiny is largely in our own hands. If we find, we shall have to seek. If we succeed in the race of life it must be by our own energies, and by our own exertions. Others may clear the road, but we must go forward, or be left behind in the race of life.”

Frederick Douglass

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Publisher's Welcome

Welcome to the May/June 2009 issue of Freedom's Journal Magazine. In this issue, we begin with a look at our failing Criminal Justice system, and the ever-increasing rise in nation-wide crime statistics. For many in our communities, these realities continue to be most evident in the inadequate appropriation of federal and state resources; higher drop-out rates from dysfunctional schools, and families with children of broken homes who have criminal behavior modeled before them, which inevitably is passed down from one generation to the next.

As you ponder these alarming statistics, our hope is it will cause you to seriously consider whether our Criminal Justice system is "cultivating reform or simply breeding crime." Our goal is to shed light on a growing systemic problem costing America, in general, and the Black community, in particular, of its God-given time, talent and treasures.

The time we spend fighting crime is exorbitant, to say the least, and would doubtless be better spent by fighting the underlying causes of crime. The talent that is lost when people, especially young people, sit in jail not realizing their full potential is a disgrace and a sandal on our society. The treasure we lose is not just the millions of dollars spent on prisons, police and other punishment and prevention tools, but the countless lives lost to violent crime and hopelessness.

While this issue will not solve the problem; it will hopefully rekindle some much needed debate on how we think about criminal justice. Is it possible to fight crime before it even manifests itself? Can the harden criminal be rehabilitated? How do we rid the system of racism and at the same time protect those in our society most vulnerable to the criminal element? How do we prevent children from not only becoming victims of crime but also the perpetrators of it? What does Criminal Justice reform look like? What is the goal of the criminal justice system and does it rehabilitate or make more harden criminals? These among other questions are what we attempt to address.

It is our belief that true transformation for any offender can only come from the inside out. Criminal activity is a symptom of a greater ill. The break-down of the traditional family and disregard for human life fans the flames of discontent and lack of purpose. Nevertheless, we believe all human beings were created in the image of God, in His likeness (Gen. 1:26-27)--but that reflection has been broken. Criminal behavior is the result of this brokenness; and can only be repaired by reestablishing a right relationship with our Creator. The government cannot make this happen: It can only separate the offender from society. It takes the body of Christ to bring about authentic healing and restoration; and it's our prayer that someday soon our Criminal Justice system reflects this reality.

So as you read the articles, features and opinions, which speak to this critical issue; we hope you are challenged to try to make a difference among your circle of influence. We hope that you will take the plight of not only the victims but offenders into your prayer closet; and remember this issue when political candidates present themselves for election. Only then will we truly begin to see change.

Eric M. Wallace, Ph.D.





A New Age Rite of Passage

By Ceasar I. LeFlore III

For African-Americans, one of the most rewarding outcomes from the election of President Barack Obama was that for the first time Black parents could look into the eyes of their children and tell them, without reservation, that if they do the right things they could grow up to be anything they desire, even President of the United States. This is a huge motivational tool that can now be used for inspiring Black youth to strive towards the greatest achievements imaginable; knowing that they are actually attainable because of what they have observed in the lives of President Obama and others.

The restrictive ceilings, whether real or imagined, that have existed to block Black political and economical advancement have now been shattered, and future generations of Blacks will have fewer

people beyond themselves to blame for some of our most egregious sociological failures, including our failure to keep our sons and daughters on the paths of accomplishment and out of the nation's prisons. Clearly the best prison reform for us would be to keep our children out of them, but for some reason that is not what's happening.

I don't believe that there has ever been a Black parent who looked into the face of their child and thought, "If I do all the necessary things in raising this gift from God, one day he or she could grow up and go to prison." I'm sure that no Black parent planned to raise their child for prison, but because of obvious and entrenched social trends that continue to proliferate in the Black community, it appears that this is what millions of Black parents have done over the past decades and continue to do today. Social attitudes in our urban environments are affording America's Black youths a greater chance of becoming state and federal prisoners than becoming presidents of anything.

For African-Americans, the American justice system has been and remains a sick joke. Black social activists and political leaders have long lamented, and rightfully so, the disparaging percentages of Black inmates in our nation's federal prisons and the zeal exhibited by judges and prosecutors in American courts to lock up Black people and keep them that way.

Liars figure, but figures don't lie. Statistical analysis conducted on data taken from reports from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, United States Sentencing Commission and the Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities reveal some troubling trends that should make every person with a social conscience cringe and immediately fall to their knees in repentance before God and America's minorities.

America now spends more than 50 billion dollars a year to incarcerate a record 2.3 million of it citizens. Blacks comprise only 13 percent of the population, yet ***Black men account for more than 41% of America's prison population.*** One of every nine Black males between the ages of 24-35 years is currently incarcerated. Consider that and tremble. On any given day, more than 800,000 Black men are in jail and not at home with their children, in college or contributing to our economy.

Tougher sentencing laws, especially those that fall under the category of America's so-called "war on drugs" are contributing in great measure to more Blacks landing in jail and remaining there longer than their white counterparts. Whitney Houston was right

in saying that "crack is whack". Those who use it are losing their sanity and those who sell it are losing their freedom for a very long time.

Between 1994 and 2002, the peak years for crack cocaine proliferation, the average time served by African Americans for a drug offenses increased by 73%, compared to an increase of 28% for white drug offenders. In 1994, African Americans served an average of 33.1 months for a drug offense, which exploded to 57.2 months by 2002. In fact, African Americans serve virtually as much time in prison for a drug offense (57.2 months) as whites do for an act of violence (58.8 months).

Considering these facts, it's not hard to understand why many reasonable people would view the nation's war on drugs as nothing more than a thinly veiled war on people of color. African American drug offenders have a 20% greater chance of being sentenced to prison than white drug offenders. Hispanics are even worse, having a 44% greater chance of incarceration than whites.

So the question must be, "How are we letting this happen?" There must be some tractable reason to explain these troubling statistical paradigms that reveal serious problems in the processes of determining who goes to jail. There must be someone whom we can blame for this, someone we can point the finger at, because it's unimaginable to accept that Blacks are inherently more prone to use drugs and engage in criminal behavior than others and thereby more needing of institutionalization. Could malicious prosecution adequately account for these astoundingly disparate incarceration statistics? I fear there must be more to it than that.

Like most law-abiding American citizens, I believe the place for a criminal is in the penitentiary, no matter his race, color or religious beliefs. I believe that prisons are places for punitive justice designed by society to protect itself from continued harm from the lawless and to exact an appropriate cost from those who would willfully victimize the innocent.

It boils my blood when Black people protest incarcerating Black criminals who have been justly convicted, especially when you consider that most of the victims of Black criminals are Black people. Black-on-Black crime is devastating to the Black community and severely limits our ability to thrive in business and to help our children pursue quality educations. I have no problem with Black people going to prison when their conduct warrants that punishment. How else are we going to protect ourselves from those who refuse to



live decently within a civilized society?

I suppose a narrowly thinking person could accuse me of being one of those heartless conservatives who believe that the real problems with some criminal cases are that the sentences imposed are not long or harsh enough. I would counter by reminding that person of how often we have cried over the death of some promising young person whose life was taken by an unrepentant convict who should have still been in prison because of his first offense?

Again, Blacks are only 13 percent of the total population, yet Black men account for 49 percent of America's murder victims with almost all being victims of Blacks. As a Black man, I'm a fan of locking up those who would engage in wanton violence in my community or profit from activities that promote that type of dangerous behavior.

Still, considering Black people's tragic history of being abused in American courts, I can understand why many people would continue to question the motives of those on the bench and those who operate our penal

institutions. It's reasonable to investigate and protest what may be the racist motivations of some. I would only suggest that while they are protesting and being outraged at a system that arrest, convict and incarcerate Blacks at such alarming rates, that they be equally outraged at the behaviors that we continue to tolerate in our own community that invariably cause our young people to be more vulnerable to a system that would throw them in prison at the drop of a hat.

If we're really looking for someone to ultimately blame for our high incarceration rate I would simply remind us of the words of Pogo, the comic strip character, who said, "We have met the enemy, and he is us."

The breakdown of the Black family and the abandonment of its long-treasured values as represented in an unthinkable 77 percent illegitimacy rate for children can be clearly established as the social dynamic that contributes the most to our children being on the fast track that bypasses universities for prisons.

The reason why so many Black people, especially

our males, are winding up in prison is because many of them are coming into the world already heading in that direction. Without the support structures that provide safety and guidance and fathers and mothers working together, very little happens for them that keep them from getting caught up in the jet stream that inevitably lead to destruction.

Speaking at the National Summit on Fatherhood in 2001, former president George H.W Bush said, *“We know that children who grow up with absent fathers can suffer lasting damage. They are more likely to end up in poverty or drop out of school, become addicted to drugs, have a child out of wedlock, or end up in prison.”*

Without question, the former president has identified a cultural dynamic that disproportionately affects the Black community and is practically creating a criminal population that some are all too willing to use as justification to build more prisons. It’s obvious that we don’t need more prisons, we need more parents.

Understanding that many Blacks will find it almost impossible to indulge these types of observations from a white man like George W. Bush, let us consider the results of some other scientific social studies that prove our complicity in our own demise. Again, liars figure, but figures don’t lie.

The Heritage Center for Data Analysis concluded, based on 1993 data taken from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Bureau of the Census, that in Wisconsin, juvenile incarceration rates were up to 22 times higher among children of single-parent families as opposed to those of two-parent families.

The Heritage Center also calculated, based on data from 1995 Survey of Consumer Finance and the Federal Reserve Board, that 66% of families with children in poverty came from single parent homes as opposed to only 10% from married families.

Couple that study with the fact that an astounding 88 percent of all Black inmates claim to come from homes with income below the poverty lines, and 73% of those homes were those where the father was either absent or uninvolved, and you will find proof that the decline of the traditional Black family lays firmly at the root of our disproportionate incarceration rates.

If we would be honest, we would admit that the behavior reflected in those numbers reflect that we are training our children to become and produce criminal inmates.

There is a Biblical proverb that says, *“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”* The Adams Clarke commentary for this passage (Proverbs 22:6) reads as follows:

“Show him the duties, the dangers, and the blessings of the path; give him directions how to perform the duties, how to escape the dangers, and how to secure the blessings, which all lie before him. Fix these on his mind by daily inculcation, till their impression is become indelible; then lead him to practice by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, till each indelible impression becomes a strongly radicated habit.”

When we consider a child growing up in most urban environments, it’s obvious that the behaviors they observe, embrace and imitate contribute more to their transition towards prison than to college and/or careers. Because of these patterns of self-destructive behaviors, prison oft times becomes more than just possible for young Black men, it becomes probable.

Consider the behavior they observe on a daily basis. Sexual immorality begins earlier in life without any social stigma associated with it as a consequence to convey societal disapproval. Men are impregnating and abandoning young women and then bragging about their lack of responsibility to one group while blaming the white man for his failure to provide to another group. I believe men who do this and set these negative examples deserve to go to jail, themselves.

In a controversial 2007 speech at the St. Paul Church of God in Christ in Detroit, Dr. William (Bill) Cosby noted that, *“No longer is a person embarrassed because they’re pregnant without a husband. No longer is a boy considered an embarrassment if he tries to run away from being the father of the unmarried child.”*

These behaviors are not only observed, but it’s obvious that they are actually being embraced as reflected in our hip hop music and pop culture. Someone once said, *“Allow me to write your songs and it won’t matter who writes your laws.”* The hip hop culture has managed to glorify prison culture to a degree that going to prison has become a rite of passage for millions of misguided Black males.

We can no longer avoid what is painfully obviously and true. The only way to lower the prison population is by raising the moral standards in our communities.



HOW WE MUST DO WHAT WE MUST DO

BY CHARLES L. ALEXANDER, PSYD

When the question is posed about the need to end criminal recidivism, the range of solutions often include more government intervention (federal, state and/or local), greater police presence, improved schools, increased economic opportunities and better parenting. With regard to parenting, the cry is typically more specific. It is quite commonly believed and stated that the presence of the Black male will resolve all of our woes. However, a review of the relevant literature revealed that as it pertains to the aforementioned solutions, we have either missed the mark, passed the buck or have yet to even scratch the surface.

The short answer to how we stem the tide of criminal recidivism is to stop it before it starts. Perhaps that may sound a bit too simplistic. But it brings to view a couple of flaws in our reasoning. First, and the most obvious, we must shed this reactionary mindset to attend to and thereby prevent the initial act. If we are contemplating strategies to save would-be *repeat offenders*, then we have already conceded defeat to the degree that the crime has already been committed and thus the cycle we are attempting to interrupt is in motion. So, first and foremost we must be more proactive. The time spent vacillating between reactionary behavior and proactive rhetoric is a typical high point or precipitant for *missing the mark*. Unfortunately, this necessarily leads to the second flaw; which is overwhelmed by the initial circumstance in which we forego not only our responsibility to right the ship, but more specifically our ability to do so. We begin to look outside of our community for a solution to a problem

that typically originates in our home. At which time we have begun the dreaded cycle of *passing the buck*.

Ironically, we consistently pass the buck to someone, who sort of by definition does not typically look like us, but rides in on his or her white horse to define our problem and therefore the nature of our existence and helps us to identify our innate and indigenous strengths, organize our collective resources in order to solve the problem as stated above that originated in the home; yet manifest in the streets. Lest we not forget, I literally mean *pass the buck*. For those whose counsel we seek to define and solve our problems use those aforementioned strengths, resources and problems to obtain funding from some federal, corporate or philanthropic entity in an amount sufficient to employ themselves and yes, just enough to *scratch the surface*.

So, I submit to you the reader that we forego what I have just described and seek to engage and employ the voluminous annals of research to identify, define and solve our own problems. In order to do so, I posit that we first look within before we run out. Before we abandon our responsibilities and underestimate our abilities, let us make an honest self assessment in order to determine how we can benefit from our collective resources. After we assess, we will be better able to make informed decisions about the alliances necessary to keep our children and communities safe. We can establish, re-establish and fund institutions and havens of hope and possibilities as well as nurture economically viable communities as opposed to simply serving as subjects and objects of external research that ultimately fill the coffers of the cultural other.

As I stated in the intro, owing to our tendency to *miss, pass and scratch*, we are losing valuable human capital every second, every minute and every hour of the day. For while we wait for the government to allocate resources or for the police to arrive, we forget and unfortunately sometimes deny that we are the key to the health of our children and the growth of our communities. For example, according to The National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health (ADD Health), the most comprehensive survey of adolescents to date, “For all health-risk behaviors, across all socioeconomic levels, family structures, and races and ethnicities, when teens feel connected to their families and when parents are involved in their

children’s lives, teens are protected.” ADD Health also found that *parental expectations regarding* completion of high school and college were associated with lower levels of health-risk behaviors. Further, *parental presence* served as protection against “9th-12th graders use of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana and 7th-8th graders use of marijuana as well as for emotional distress at all grade levels and violence in high-school.” The authors stated further that there “does not seem to be a magical time of the day when parental presence is especially critical. Rather, it is having access to a parent and perhaps parental supervision in general that matters most.” This sheds light on yet another point. The research states we need parental presence. It is not gender specific. We need both parents. Which means in the interest of our children, we can no longer afford to allow “baby mamma” or “baby daddy” drama to deprive children, male and female, from much-needed parental presence. Last, but not least, if we are to prevent crime we must decrease the access to the implements of crime. ADD Health noted access to illicit substances in the home was a risk factor for the use of such substances at all grade levels and perhaps more importantly “access to guns in the home was a risk factor for violence in high school.”

Hence, the first line of defense against violence and crime is not outside but inside. There exist several other protective factors that will be explored further in subsequent articles. However, neither the government nor police were defined as protective factors. And let us be more thoughtful regarding youth employment. ADD Health also found that “*students working more than 20 hours per week* were associated with higher levels of emotional distress, substance use and earlier onset of sexual activity. We have to stop pointing fingers and begging for help. That is not to say that there are not real and significant social barriers to well being, i.e. institutional racism, social disenfranchisement and poverty. But rather in the midst of such trials and tribulations, who are our children to look to for love, nurturance, support and guidance if not us? We must answer and heed that call. For if we don’t, the streets certainly will.



For a detailed description of the Add Health project, go to www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/addhealth/sitemap.html

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PRISON NATION

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TRANSFORMING OUR CORRECTIONS SYSTEM

BY MARK EARLEY AND KAREN WILLIAMS

As Americans, we like to hear that we rank first in the world. But, our nation's status as the world's leading incarcerator should not boost the ego nor warm the heart of any patriotic citizen. Rather, it should compel us to pursue aggressive reforms.

Our imprisoned population of 2.3 million pushes us well beyond every other country, including China and Russia. A recent report from the Pew Center on the States revealed that one out of every 100 people in America is in prison or jail. For blacks, the ratio is even more sobering. One in every 9 black men ages 20-34 lives behind bars. If present trends of incarceration continue, one out of every three black males will spend time in prison. These staggering statistics represent decades of exponential prison growth and an incredible drain on state budgets. But the ultimate cost of corrections extends into the neighborhoods and homes of families across the nation. Incarceration's true price is felt when our criminal justice system tears mothers and fathers from their children and shackles people with criminal histories that hinder their economic and social advancement. More often than not, America's black communities bear the brunt of our gluttony for imprisonment.

We might have some reason to accept our current situation if incarceration was the best way to make us safe. Prisons do exert some deterrent power. As the former attorney general of Virginia, I certainly believe that we should use them for protection from violent offenders. However, there is only a loose and inconsistent link between an increase in incarceration rates and a decline in crime rates. New York, for example, reduced its prison population in the last decade and experienced a drop in crime at the same time.

This may seem impossible. But, when you consider that only about half of our prisoners are actually convicted of violent offenses, it makes sense that some of them could remain in the community under supervision without risking our safety. Prisons should be used for people who threaten public safety – not for those who have made us angry. When we fill our prisons with people who've committed minor, non-violent offenses, we crowd out room for those who are truly dangerous.

We can't just think about how our criminal justice system affects us, however. Each man and woman behind bars is precious in God's sight. Before I came to Prison Fellowship, I believed prisoners deserved their sentences and merited none of my sympathy. Today I realize that while we must uphold justice and the rule of law, we must also value each prisoner as God does – and consider whether our policies help or hinder their ability to transform their lives.

How did we come to incarcerate more people per capita than any other nation? It stems from a breakdown of the family and a "tough on crime" paradigm introduced in the 1970s. This paradigm delivered harsh sentencing laws that reduced judicial discretion and delivered lengthy prison terms. The war on drugs began in this punitive era, bringing significant numbers of people into prison. In 2003, drug offenders represented one-fifth of the state correctional facility populations and over half of federal facility populations. And a far greater number arises from crimes committed by those with drug and alcohol addiction.

Our probation and parole policies also contribute to our bloated prisoner population. If our system's success was measured by failures, then you might say we were doing a good job. In 2006, nearly one-fifth of the people who exited probation had their supervisions revoked and were sent to prison. More than one-third of prison admissions are for parole failures, and half of the U.S. jail population is incarcerated for violating community supervision. That's an incredible number of men and women trudging back through prison gates.


And for many, the violation committed was not an illegal act. There are two kinds of probation and parole violations. A criminal violation occurs when a person is charged for committing a new crime. A technical violation occurs when people fail to comply with the rules unique to their supervision conditions – such as keeping a curfew and checking in with their probation officer.

While the policies differ between states, the Bureau of Justice Statistics says that half of probation violators incarcerated in 2006 were sent to prison for technical violations. In 1997, roughly one-third of state parole revocations occurred because of reasons other than a new offense. And, once again, these policies disproportionately harm black communities. Research on Wisconsin's probation and parole systems reveals that blacks have a 30% higher chance than whites of being revoked from supervision without charges for a new offense.

So how should we respond to all of this? We must re-evaluate who we lock up, why we lock them up, and how we lock them up. Micah 6:8 says that God has shown us what is good: to do justice and to love mercy. It is hard to argue that delivering lengthy prison sentences for minor offenses ushers in a just society – or is any indication of mercy. It certainly harms our families and communities. And it certainly doesn't make much sense for our budgets or our safety.

The good news is that there are better ways than incarceration to hold offenders accountable and keep us safe. The U.S. Sentencing Commission recently said it is considering recommendations for alternative sentencing and rehabilitation instead of lengthy prison terms for some of our low-risk, non-violent offenders. These are exactly the kinds of things we should pursue. We should eliminate mandatory minimums and three strikes laws that take a one-size-fits-all approach to justice. We should use drug treatment courts that allow offenders to remain under supervision in our communities while receiving treatment for addiction. And, we should reform our probation and parole policies so that supervision helps offenders successfully transition back to our communities.

When it comes to probation and parole, we should take several, specific steps. First, we should assign offenders' supervision levels based on their risk level. Good behavior should be rewarded by less intense intervention. This not only encourages successful completion of supervision but also frees probation and parole officers to direct their energy and resources towards those who pose a greater risk.



Second, we should change the way we respond to technical violations. Sanctions for these kinds of violations should be risk based, depending on the gravity of the violation and the offenders' threat to society. This gives supervision officers a variety of ways beyond revocation to respond to violations. Oregon has used this approach since the early 1990s and has found that people who receive these kinds of sanctions are almost half as likely to recidivate as those who do not.

Effective sanctions are also swift and certain. Requiring formal hearings to address violations often delays response because of the backlog within court systems and the amount of accompanying paperwork. We must streamline the process to decisively address risks to public safety, meet offenders' needs and compel compliance.

Hawaii employs such a swift and sure approach to probation violations in its program called Offenders in Hawaii's Opportunity Probation Enforcement, or HOPE. Using short jail stays and drug treatment as possible sanctions, the program has yielded remarkable results. Arrest rates for HOPE probationers are three times lower than comparison probationers.

Finally, sanctions should be outcome-oriented, equipping offenders to change their behavior. For example, if a person under supervision fails to report an address change because he lost his job, it makes more sense for an officer to require job training than to punish with more frequent reporting. This method better stewards resources and helps offenders succeed in their communities.

Ultimately, enabling offenders to change requires changing the human heart. We must remember that crime is essentially a moral problem, as Richard Herrnstein and James Q. Wilson from Harvard University confirmed in their 1987 book *Crime and Human Nature*. If offenders are to become productive, law abiding citizens, we need to equip them with moral standards to live by, a worldview that explains why they should do so and the power to make these choices possible.

Prison Fellowship's InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI) works to do exactly this. Operating in six states, IFI is an intensive, holistic residential program that provides spiritual and character development, job and academic training, as well as mentoring. A 2003 study by the University of Pennsylvania found that IFI program graduates had 60% less likelihood of being reincarcerated than the comparison group, demonstrating the influence of faith to transform lives.

IFI is only one of many programs across the country that show the benefits of a restorative focus within our criminal justice system rather than a punitive focus that crowds our prisons. For the sake of our families and communities, we need to take a serious look at the culture of incarceration that we're creating. By using wisdom to practice justice and mercy, we can change the way we approach corrections in our country. And perhaps, if we do so, we can lead the world not in the number of men and women we imprison but in the number of offenders we transform into exemplary fathers, mothers, co-workers, neighbors and leaders.

Mark Earley, former State Senator (1988-1998) and Attorney General of Virginia (1998-2001), became president of PFM on February 1, 2002.

Karen Williams is Restorative Justice Assistant for Justice Fellowship.

FROM DARKNESS



TO LIGHT

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BLACK ON BLACK CRIME:

The problem starts and Stops at Home

by Jimmie L. Hollis

Crime is something pundits like to call a “kitchen table issue.” It’s something that cuts across lines of race, class and power. There is no place devoid of crime, and there is no real way to completely avoid it.

Like securing a good education and minding the family budget, dealing with crime is something every household must ponder. Some households, unfortunately, have much more at stake than others.

There is an unsettling racial aspect to our nation’s crime problem, but it has nothing to do with racism. It’s black-on-black crime, and it is tragic in more ways than one.

While blacks account for a mere 12 percent of the U.S. population, roughly 41 percent of the two million prison inmates are black.

As of December 31, 2005, approximately 8.2 percent of black males between 25 and 29 were in state or federal prisons, versus 2.6 percent of Hispanic males and 1.1 percent of white males in the same age group.

This over representation of blacks in correctional facilities can't be explained away as a consequence of bias or racism in the criminal justice system; it's a reflection of the violence within our community. In 2002, 45 percent of all murder victims were black, and 91 percent of them were murdered by a black person.

While the victimization rates for blacks were six times higher than for whites, the rate for black offenders was also more than seven times higher.

Americans are pleased to see a reduction in murder rates nationally, as we should be, but such a broad compilation of data hides an alarming racial divergence. Federal reports show that 539 white and 851 black juveniles committed murder in 2000. Seven years later, white juveniles were responsible for 547 murders; crime rates had barely changed. Black juveniles, however, demonstrated a 34 percent increase in violent crime, committing 1,142 murders. The number of young black murder victims also rose during this period, as did the number of murders involving guns.

Homicide is the leading cause of death for black males between the ages of 18 and 24, and the secondary one for females in the same age group. In 2005, black males between the ages of 18 and 24 also had the highest victimization rates — more than two times the rates for males 25 and older, and nearly four times the rates for males between 14 and 17. Since the early 1990s, however, the frequencies of both black female victims and black female offenders have continued to decline across all age groups.

There are those who will, despite these statistics, continue to dwell on rivalry between the races. They refuse to acknowledge the rapid series of breakthroughs in equality our nation has experienced over the past few generations and the increasing tolerance of white Americans.

America has elected its first black president. Blacks hold positions at the top of the corporate ladder and are highly-respected in American culture in the fields of sports and entertainment.

Racism could not hold these achievers back, and it can't be blamed for black-on-black crime.

As for my own personal story, I grew up ten miles outside East Saint Louis, Illinois during the late 50s

and early 60s. It was a proud middle-class city where white and black professionals lived as neighbors. By the end of the 70s, all the white residents had moved out. So did many black families. Those who could not afford to move saw their city quickly overtaken by thugs, criminals, dope addicts, prostitutes and gangs — most of whom were black.

Residents soon found themselves trapped in a hell that caused them to fear even going out to the store. This wasn't fear caused by the Ku Klux Klan, but by blacks preying on their own.

Between 1970 and 1990, I occasionally visited relatives in the East. St. Louis area. I was saddened to see that even the churches there had become targets of crime and disrespect by black hoodlums. Two of my childhood friends are ministers in the area and they often tell me of the awful crimes perpetrated by black thugs in that city.

Racism didn't cause the evil attitudes, broken families, high rates out-of-wedlock births, child abuse and abortions that plague black communities. The cause is a lack of moral foundation, ignorance, apathy, selfishness and greed.

But time and time again, we hear our so-called leaders repeating the age-old lie that these black problems stem from white racism. While some problems may have racist origins, black-on-black crime isn't one of them.

What can be done to fight the scourge of black-on-black crime? The first realization we must face is that it is our problem. Others can help, but we must do the heavy lifting. Furthermore, we must not blame our problems on whites.

We must change our attitudes towards law enforcement to start working with these agencies and not against them. We must not glorify drug use and paint violent criminals as "heroes of the 'hood" just because they are black. The same black "heroes" praised in rap songs would not hesitate to murder black seniors to get a few dollars for drugs.

Naturally, there are serious risks involved because the criminal element won't go away without a fight. Case in point: on February 18, 2003, NPR's "All Things Considered" highlighted the brutal crime that occurred in Baltimore in October of 2002. When Angela Maria Dawson tried to do something about drug crime in her neighborhood, black thugs set her home on fire in the middle of the night. Dawson and her family perished in the flames.

It would be nice to think things have changed

in Baltimore since that horrific incident, but they've probably gotten worse. It's common to see T-shirts that read "stop snitchin'" — based on the popular (and vulgar) witness-suppression DVD of the same name.

Cleaning up this embarrassing and demeaning problem in our community will take time, hard work, involve risks and require a persistent grassroots movement. Despite the formidable task, I believe it can be done. It starts in the home.

For example, Judy Martin founded Survivors/Victims of Tragedy, Inc. in Cleveland, Ohio after her youngest son was murdered in 1994. The organization strives to help grievers who lost loved ones to acts of violent crime, from murder and vehicular homicide to suicide. Their services include helping families and/or friends hold vigils and memorials and assistance in dealing with the Victims Assistance Office, State Parole Board and other bureaucratic agencies.

A unique feature of Survivors/Victims of Tragedy is their "Wall of Sorrows." Their website explains that: "This wall represents all the children and young adults killed in Cuyahoga County (Cleveland, Ohio) since 1990." Including eleven victims killed so far in 2009 (as of March 4), the Wall of Sorrows pays tribute to 1,202 victims of violent crime and to the 207 Ohioans lost in Iraq.

In another instance, Joyce Raynor was spurred to action when her 23-year-old son was shot and killed by a gang leader in Little Rock in 2001. She quit her job of 14 years to start the non-profit Center for Healing Hearts and Spirits, a project of the Women's Council on African American Affairs, Inc. The Center was created to assist victims of violent crimes and terminal illnesses and their families "to improve the quality of their economic and social environment, transition back into the workforce and to provide for self-sufficiency."

As much as we appreciate the actions of these women and the examples they set, it shouldn't take losing a loved one to get someone involved. While it's important to pay respects to the victims of violent crimes and honor their memories, communities need to come together and *prevent* these tragedies from happening in the first place.

It is of great importance not to abdicate this task. Crying and wailing every time a black child is murdered by a black thug avails us nothing. Action is necessary.

The Black-on-Black Crime Coalition, for instance, was created in Little Rock in response to increased black-on-black violence. As of August 6, 2003, the Coalition

reports 30 homicides had been committed in Little Rock alone, 47 percent of which were committed by blacks against blacks. The Coalition strives to increase public awareness and reduce black-on-black crime in Little Rock.

It takes groups like this to bring a community together. Black people in America have come a long way over the past few decades — we should know by now that when we come together, and decide to rise above bickering over the reasons behind our problems, and take action to fight injustices, we can accomplish great things. But first, we must come together.

One day, we will surely be held accountable for the actions or lack thereof for protecting our children, wives, mothers, sisters and seniors. No excuses will be accepted.

“HOMICIDE IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR BLACK MALES BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 24, AND THE SECONDARY ONE FOR FEMALES IN THE SAME AGE GROUP”

Jimmie L. Hollis is a member of the national advisory council of the black leadership network Project 21.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

By Harry R. Jackson, Jr.



Traditionally, conservatives have run on strong law-enforcement campaigns. Conversely, liberals have periodically made a big stink about high-profile cases that show problems in our justice system. A few years ago, the Tookie Williams case drew national attention because this hardened, sadistic killer and father of the famous Bloods gang transformed himself in prison.

A grassroots movement rose up to keep him from being executed for crimes that he committed. Though the media gave high profile to the celebrity support that rallied to recognize Williams' personal transformation, in the end he was executed because of the heinous nature of his crime. Whether you believe Williams truly changed or not, most people feel that the justice system is broken. We have seen the guilty go free, the

unrepentant dealt with leniently and the intent of the law sidestepped by powerful lawyers or special interest groups.

What if we could build a system that punished criminals, while teaching those who are young enough to be salvaged to make better choices? This could save the nation trillions of dollars over the next decade or so because it can cost as much as \$50,000 yearly to keep an un-restored person behind bars.

The African-American community is especially aware that the criminal justice system is broken for all Americans. They also know the U.S. justice system is not colorblind. There is a disparity in enforcement and sentencing for crimes. Race is a defining variable that often determines the level of justice one receives in this nation. This becomes apparent in even the most superficial review of statistics from the Federal Bureau of Prisons:

- 910,000 African-Americans are in prison today.
- Blacks, who are approximately 12.9 percent of the population, make up 43.9 percent of the state and federal prison population, which now totals 2.1 million inmates.
- One-third of Black males born in 2006 can expect to go to prison in their lifetimes.
- Only 13 percent of all monthly drug users are Black, but 35 percent of arrests for drug possession, 55 percent of convictions and 74 percent of prisoners sentenced are Black.

Black criminals are not the only one concerned about their contact with the law. David A. Harris wrote a provocative article for *The Minnesota Law Review* titled "Why Driving While Black Matters." His research showed that although Blacks and whites violate traffic codes at similar rates, 72 percent of the people stopped and searched by the police in my home state of Maryland were Black.

There's much more to say about excessive use of force, disproportionate sentencing, insufficient prison aftercare programs and the generational impact of prison-induced fatherlessness. I've witnessed many of the problems with law enforcement firsthand. Suffice it to say, there is a need for faith-based public policy to change the way laws are administered and justice is served in our nation.

There are more than two million prisoners in the criminal justice system in this country, with four

million others either on probation, parole or awaiting trial., The majority in every category are Black. Dr. Manning Marable is a professor of political science and African American studies at Columbia University in New York. Our views on most of today's issues would be quite different. He's a liberal Democrat and a civil rights activist. But I read a speech he delivered at Fayetteville State University in Fayetteville, N.C., concerning the unequal enforcement of justice in this country, and its affect on the Black community, and I would like to recap some of what he said.

In 1974, the number of people in state prisons in this country stood at 187,500. By 1991, that number had risen to 711,700. Just under two-thirds of those men and women had less than a high-school education, and a third of them were unemployed at the time of arrest. By the end of the 1980s, incarceration rates were soaring, especially for Blacks. By December 1989, the total number of inmates in federal and state prisons totaled a little more than a million — that's roughly one out of every 250 Americans in jail.

For African Americans, however, the rate was more than 700 per 100,000, or about seven times that of whites. Half of all prisoners were Black; 23 percent of all Black males in their twenties were either in prison, on parole, on probation or awaiting trial. In the last year of that decade, there were more African Americans in jail than the total number of Blacks living under apartheid in South Africa. [2]

In New York, African Americans and Latinos made up approximately 25 percent of the total population in the 1990s; but by 1999, as Dr. Marable reports, 83 percent of all prisoners and 94 percent of all individuals convicted on drug offenses in that state were from these two groups. There's no doubt that many of those arrested and convicted were guilty as charged. But there's also a pattern of racial bias, confirmed by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which found that while African Americans make up about 14 percent of all drug users nationally, they accounted for 35 percent of all drug arrests, 55 percent of all drug convictions and 75 percent of all prison admissions for drug offenses.

If you extrapolate those numbers out, it's statistically feasible that as many as eight out of every 10 African-American males can expect to be arrested at some point in their lifetimes. These are troubling statistics, and they raise many troubling questions. How do we begin to address all the problems these numbers imply? Dr. Manning's answer is one I happen to share -- a restoration and rehabilitation program developed by

Christians and secular sociologists called “restorative justice.”

As some readers will know, this is also an approach that has been pioneered in the prison system by Prison Fellowship Ministries and its founder, Chuck Colson. It’s also being taught today in more traditional academic settings.

A New Kind Justice

The goal of restorative justice is to bring back from the margins millions of Americans who are denied jobs due to prior felony convictions; to bring back millions of African Americans who are excluded from exercising their right to vote and to bring ex-prisoners back into the community and the local economy by eliminating state-sanctioned restrictions on the kinds of jobs that former prisoners can hold.

Restorative justice programs often include a “therapeutic jurisprudence” component that focuses more on rehabilitation than mere punishment. Restorative justice works at both ends of the cycle, helping to make sure that the laws and sentencing requirements fit the crime and helping ex-prisoners return to productive lives.

Restorative justice works inside the penal system to help prisoners make restitution to their victims, to understand that their crime is bigger and more serious than they may have known because of the human dimensions of the crime and then helping them to make the adjustment back into society when they’ve done their time. The following list, from Dr. Ron Claassen of the Peace and Conflict Center at Fresno Pacific College, describes five of the 10 original principles of the restorative justice process. Time will not permit us to go into great depth. The list below simply gives you an idea of this approach’s values and priorities.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE



1. Crime is primarily an offense against human relationships and secondarily a violation of a law (since laws are written to protect safety and fairness in human relationships). When we place emphasis on the violation of law instead of the violation of the human relationship, we hide or mask the real violation
2. Restorative Justice recognizes that crime is wrong and also recognizes that after it does occur, there are dangers and opportunities. The danger is that the community, victim(s), and/or offender emerge from the response further alienated, more damaged, disrespected and disempowered.
3. Restorative Justice is a process to make things as right as possible and includes: attending to needs created by the offense, such as safety and repair of injuries, relationships and physical damage resulting from the offense; and attending to needs related to the cause of the offense (addictions, poor social or employment skills, poor moral decisions, etc.).
4. Restorative Justice views the situation as a teachable moment for the offender — an opportunity to encourage the offender to learn new ways of acting and being in community.
5. Restorative Justice prefers that most crimes are handled using a cooperative structure including those most impacted by the offense as a community to provide support and accountability. This might include primary and secondary victims and family, the offender and family, community representatives, government representatives, faith community representatives, school representatives, etc.

In conclusion, America has to make major changes in its criminal justice system for the sake of the law-abiding, the criminals and future generations. We must stop locking people up and throwing away the key. This kind of justice is too expensive, too racially biased and too un-American. Let’s transform this system to meet the changing needs of the nation!

*This article is an adaptation of an excerpt from *The Truth In Black and White*, written by Harry R. Jackson, Jr. [Frontline Books]. Visit www.hilc.org for more information.*




COUNTY JAIL BOOKING

Click here for the video



Criminal Justice Rehabilitation: What Really Works?

by Julia Nelson



In the 1980s and 90s, a federally funded criminal rehabilitation program, “Alternatives to Incarceration,” offered several convicted felons in California the opportunity to attend San Jose State University instead of serving their remaining time in prison. The program’s creators reasoned that these men’s lack of quality education was the primary cause of their criminal behavior. The program ran for a decade, and not one inmate graduated. However, several of them were convicted of violent crimes against students and members of the community, and one actually raped, tortured and murdered two women.¹

Such has been the reality of too many well intended efforts to rehabilitate convicted criminals. The exploding prison population in the United States now tops two million including federal, state and local facilities. Over 95% of these individuals will eventually be released. With this reality come questions: what do we do with these individuals when they are released and what can we do about the fact that nearly 7 in 10 of them will be rearrested within three years? People across the political spectrum agree that at least some criminals should receive better services to help them live law-abiding lives after they have served their time. Many also have fears and doubts about such programs, given the realities like what happened in San Jose. Others turn a blind eye to such realities and assume that good intentions will make good policy. At the end of the day, what kind of help do convicted felons need, and perhaps more importantly, who should spearhead the effort?

In many ways, Catherine Rohr was an unlikely person to address this situation. In her mid-twenties she was already clearing a healthy six-figure salary doing multi-million dollar deals with Wall Street venture capitalists. She and her husband led an enviable life in a high rise Manhattan apartment without a care in the world. Yet at the age of 25, Catherine had an encounter with Jesus Christ that forever changed her life and her priorities. After visiting a prison with a friend who was involved with Chuck Colson’s Prison Fellowship, Catherine found herself broken by the stories of the men that she met there. Yet more than just compassion was stirred in her heart. She realized that many of these men, although violent offenders who had done terrible things, possessed remarkable entrepreneurial leadership qualities. The more she learned about their past drug dealing and gang warfare, the more she saw tremendous potential in their passion and ingenuity.

¹ Joseph D. McNamara, “When in Trouble, Don’t Call the Feds,” Wall Street Journal August 24, 1994, p. A10 as cited by Thomas Sowell, *The Vision of the Anointed: Self-Congratulation as a Basis for Social Policy*, Basic Books 1995 New York, New York, p. 154.

Catherine created a program for the inmates she met in that Texas prison that quickly evolved into the Prison Entrepreneurship Program. As its success grew, she ditched her lucrative career in order to run PEP full time, relocating to Cleveland, Texas. Cooperating with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, PEP runs a four month intense program with applicants from over 60 prisons where inmates are taught basic life skills, etiquette, office skills, and how to create and present a business plan. The men correspond with accomplished MBA's to get feedback on their plans and then have multiple opportunities to present them to CEO's who come to visit on particular days.

PEP also helps reunite inmates with family members by teaching the importance of being a responsible husband and father, inviting family members to visit the program and attend graduation ceremonies. The work doesn't end there. Kami Recla, PEP's chief of staff, spoke with Freedom's Journal Magazine about the assistance they offer graduates. "It is very important for us to stay in touch with our graduates upon their release from prison," Recla explains. "Our post release programming includes housing assistance, job placement, continued education, mentoring, access to medical care, parole mediation, and so on. There are few temptations and little responsibility in prison: that's the easy part! The real challenge is acting like a responsible adult once you have the freedom to make your own choices and have to support yourself financially when the hard times settle in."

For those graduates who want to put their business plans into practice, PEP offers further entrepreneurial support and educational opportunities. They also have social events nearly every week, which offer encouragement as well as accountability.

PEP's results speak for themselves. Their recidivism rate is under 5%, the lowest for any ex-offender program. This rate is calculated by including every inmate that participated in their program in prison, regardless of whether they took advantage of PEP's re-entry services. Sam Amaya is 29 years old and spent time in juvenile detention as well as four years in prison for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. He participated in PEP while incarcerated and today Sam is devoted father, a music producer and a law-abiding citizen who is attending Rice University for further business training.

So what makes PEP so successful? More than 97% of their graduates are employed within four weeks of leaving prison, a leading factor in their lower recidivism rate. As Catherine herself pointed out to an audience at the Kauffman Foundation, 89% of ex-felons that are rearrested are unemployed at the time they are apprehended.

Furthermore, PEP does not spend time and resources on everyone. It is a voluntary program, selecting only applicants that demonstrate a commitment to personal transformation, a strong work ethic and entrepreneurial

leadership ability. "I will never sit here and say that every man in prison is a changed man," Catherine tells the Kauffman Foundation. "But on the same note there are so many guys there who just want a second chance and they don't know what to do." PEP only helps those men who are serious about that change. In fact, Catherine explains that PEP is the leading cause of its own recidivism rate, tiny though it may be, "If we know someone is back to using or dealing drugs, or other illicit behavior, we call the cops and have them rearrested."

The program in San Jose correctly recognized that lack of education was a legitimate obstacle in the lives of the felons it sought to help. However it screened participants only for academic test scores. It did not deal with the need for a personal commitment to obey the law, a willingness to work hard and the need for the life and family skills that PEP aggressively addresses in the lives of its students.

While some prison reform advocates are campaigning for shorter sentences, PEP has found greater success with inmates who have served longer periods of time. Recla explains, "Someone who has been in prison for more than ten years has likely grown up, matured and figured out that crime gets you nowhere. They have sacrificed a great deal of their lives behind bars and have hurt their families enough to realize that they don't want to live their lives in that manner anymore. Those who do 18 months or two years oftentimes don't come to that realization. They are released into the world thinking they can do it differently next time and without getting caught. We have learned that it's impossible to change those who are not personally committed to their own success."

PEP is entirely privately funded and Catherine Rohr intends to keep it that way. While many government run rehabilitation programs receive little or no evaluation, they almost always receive funding regardless of whether or not they actually do their jobs successfully. The San Jose program was considered "exemplary" because it filed its monthly reports on time.

Catherine Rohr came from a world that valued results. If she couldn't get the deal done on Wall Street, she would have been out of a job. PEP runs the same way. "As a nonprofit organization, our results are what enable us to raise money," explains Recla. "Without good results, we don't exist." Here's hoping programs like PEP are able to expand and serve every prisoner who is truly committed to personal transformation and success. If only funding for ineffective programs would dry up so they too would cease to exist.

Julia Nelson is a freelance writer and frequent speaker on biblical worldview. She and her husband Dean reside in Gaithersburg, Maryland.



PRISON ENTREPRENEURIAL PROGRAM

Click here for the video



The Economics of Crime: CRIME PAYS!

By Todd Allyn



Growing up back in the day, watching popular television programs of superheroes like Superman and Batman, children were always told that crime doesn't pay. Today, a different message is being conveyed. Transgressions, criminal activities, the idea of living the thug life and hustling is being glamorized in everything from popular music to, fashion, movies and television. Society is being inundated with images of sagging pants, gangsters, drugs, prostitution, excess drinking, and doing time. Crime pays and it pays well. Young people of today see images of those who have become successful through a life of criminality, whom possess; millions of dollars, highly expensive houses, cars, clothes, dining in five-star restaurants, star in their own reality shows, and are seemingly living the fabulous life. Crime is portrayed as a stepping stone that was taken in order to have a better life. What used to be from rags to riches from diligence and honest hard work is now from rags to riches through criminality and maybe even doing hard time. The cost of the crimes committed was

received from it. Then, they are openly and highly praised for going legit.

There are many people other than criminals who benefit from crime. The entertainment industry, colleges, the criminal justice system, cities, municipalities, and politicians all benefit from crime. The entertainment industry benefits from selling criminal images to millions through musical lyrics, videos, movies, books, magazines and sports. These industries have taken an adverse culture and made it mainstream. Colleges offer criminal justice degrees because there is a market for students to learn the scheme with hopes of obtaining gainful employment, supporting a family, and creating lifestyle from those who commit crimes. The criminal justice system benefits because professions such as lawyers, bail bondsmen, bounty hunters and others, are benefactors of crime and are paid, sometimes very well, for their services. Cities and municipalities hire police to patrol the streets to keep the general public safe from potential felons and their dangerous behaviors. Politicians use crime as a siren song to the voting public. They promise to reduce crime and to protect the electorate in order to gain votes and get elected to the job of governing. Law breaking has put lots of money in countless numbers of pockets. Not only are the pockets of criminals and former offenders getting fat, but so are those of law abiding professionals as well. Crime is an enormous financial stimulus package.

Let's look at the economics of crime. Before we do that, we first must define what economics is. Economics is the study of choices and how those choices affect society. People will make the decision to commit crimes if they believe that the benefit of doing the crime is higher than the cost. If getting caught for doing a crime is more painful than the benefit from the criminal activity, then the cost of committing a crime would be too high and would not be carried out. We won't do the crime if we can't do the time.

Crime is a mega-industry. There are over two million prisoners in the U.S. Billions of dollars are allocated to building prisons, feeding inmates, maintenance of facilities, - clothing, toiletries and health care. Each inmate represents capital that is paid to sustain and maintain the cash flow of those who work to provide goods and services to the departments of corrections. The U.S. maintains more people in prison than any other country in the world. The bill for supporting prisoners is paid for by the general population for their sense of safety and security for having such a system in place. The cost of having this system is lower

than the benefit society perceives it receives. The dirty little secret is that if crime were eliminated, millions of dollars and hundreds of jobs would vanish into thin air. The bureaucracy of the criminal system would dwindle to a point of none existence.

Bureaucratic organizations operate in their own self interest. Crime and criminals are needed in order for the system to sustain itself and for all organizations and stakeholders to continue to benefit.

The Black and Latin community have the largest numbers of men and women in prison and pay the highest price for going through the system. Families are destroyed. There are thousands of African-Americans and Latin-Americans who have done their time, released from prison, and find that a felony record severely limits their choices in what types of jobs they can obtain in order to provide for their family. The concept of having a job and earning a livable wage sounds good, but with a felony record, quickly becomes nothing more than political lip service. While the individual is responsible for their choices, society is responsible for the choices it makes as well. The creation of a permanent underclass is the price paid for by society, with no clear benefit. Most men and women leaving prison have a desire to make choices that have higher benefits than the cost of crime, but the system works against them because they represent the life's blood of an industry that needs them to survive. As long as crime and the benefits of crime are glamorized, and as long as there is a benefit for stakeholders, there will be no incentive to eliminate crime. Society will suffer and always be made to feel afraid if they don't pay, and will suffer for creating a class of individuals who feel hopeless when they do pay. The economics of crime is like a circle that is unbroken. Crime pays and crime pays well for all those who have the most to gain without experiencing the pain.

Todd Allyn is a professor of economics, motivational speaker and author. Visit his website at <http://www.toddallyn.com>. E-mail contact Todd at toddallyn1@gmail.com



RACISM IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

BY PATRICK JOHN

This past week saw a brazen disrespect for law and order by Chicago's top cop, Jody Weis. Chicago's superintendent of police was held in contempt by a federal judge for his failure to turn over a list of police officers who had multiple internal affairs complaints lodged against them. Weis relented after several days of stonewalling and turned over the list as the judge ordered. One has to wonder: If this is how the top cop treats a federal judge in broad daylight, then how do the police treat defenseless suspects on the streets when there are no TV cameras around?

The racism suffered against Blacks in the criminal justice system is well documented. The fact is Blacks

were *brought to America* (unlike White immigrants who *fled to America*) for the *sole* purpose of being servants. Once Blacks were “freed,” White Americans had an instant problem – what to do with all these Black people that most Whites did not want anywhere near them. Even Abraham Lincoln, a lifelong opponent of slavery, always preferred that slaves be set free to live in another country. (For more on that, read “The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass” by Frederick Douglass, and “Forced into Glory” by Lerone Bennett Jr.). Once the slaves were “freed,” most Whites – even abolitionists – were uncomfortable with Blacks around them and states began passing laws to keep freed Blacks in a subservient position. (For more on that, read “In The Matter of Color” by Judge Leon Higginbotham). Bear in mind that Blacks were first brought to America in 1619 but were not granted legal equality until the 1964 Civil Rights and 1965 Voting Rights acts. That’s 345 year of government-sanctioned discrimination that was made illegal a mere 44 years ago. Our nation was birthed in racism, what Condoleezza Rice called our national “birth defect.” So it’s not surprising that in 2009 Blacks are still the victims of racial discrimination.

Blacks still face racism in every facet of the criminal justice system: i.e. racial profiling by law enforcement, being excluded from juries based solely on race, receiving stiffer sentences than Whites who commit the same offenses, etc. Even Black judges have stories about how they are discriminated against by White judges. (Read “Black Robes, White Justice” by Bruce Wright). When Christine Todd Whitman was the Republican governor of New Jersey in the 1990s, she made real efforts to put an end to the rampant racial profiling that the New Jersey state troopers were infamous for engaging in. As part of her reform effort (which you can read about in her book, “It’s My Party Too,” chapter 14 – “Reclaiming Lincoln’s Legacy”), she required that troopers record the “race” of every motorist they pulled over. Unfortunately, the troopers lied on the forms and intentionally listed most of the motorists as White – regardless of how dark their skin or wooly their hair. This dirty little secret was brought to light by famed attorney Johnnie Cochran when he sued the New Jersey state police over a racial-profiling incident. Cochran hired private investigators to visit the motorists listed in the reports filed by the troopers he was suing. Lo and behold, most of the Black and Hispanic motorists were listed as White by the troopers!!

So, what role can government play in deterring racial profiling. There are several organizations of Black law-enforcement officers that have been screaming solutions for years. Those include removing pre-textual barriers that keep minorities off police departments. So-

called psychological exams and college requirements serve to disqualify many minority applicants, yet have failed to produce a police force capable of dealing effectively with our diverse population.

Another area for reform involves the police unions. In his book, “A Lawyers Life,” Cochran describes how police unions conspire to protect rogue officers. Some years ago Cochran filed a police brutality suit against several New York City police officers. The union contract specifically gave the officers the right to refuse to talk to internal affairs until a couple of days *after* an incident of alleged misconduct. Mind you that the police have the same 5th Amendment right to remain silent as civilians have, so they can’t be compelled to talk about criminal allegations made against them. But the union contract gave them the right to remain silent for a couple days, not in the constitutional sense but in the employment sense. In other words, without that provision, a cop could be fired for refusing to immediately talk to internal affairs. What this provision in the union contract did was give police accused of misconduct a few days to talk to each other so that they could “get their story straight.” Cochran sued the union under civil RICO laws – something no attorney had ever done before. Rather than risk losing the case, the union settled.

Other ideas for reform include videotaping confessions and tighter residency requirements for officers. For example, Chicago police officers must currently live in the city limits of Chicago. However, every Chicago police officer I have ever spoken to says that police brutality and racial profiling would halt overnight if we could institute one reform: require that officers live not only in Chicago, but more specifically that they live in the police district they’re assigned to. Every officer I discussed this with agreed that such a rule would bring police excesses to a screeching halt. They also agreed that the police union – The Fraternal Order of Police – would fight like hell to oppose it.

In order to build enough public support for police reform, more Whites need to be convinced that the discrimination actually exists. Most Whites still believe that, “Well, if the cops arrested the guy, he must’ve done something wrong. They wouldn’t just pull somebody over for no good reason.” Until that perception changes, the chances for real reform are slim to none. And slim is on vacation.

Patrick John is an attorney in Chicago, Illinois



An Interview with **Star Parker** by David Brooks

Star Parker is the founder and president of CURE, the Coalition on Urban Renewal & Education, a 501c3 non-profit organization that provides national dialogue on issues of race and poverty in the media, inner city neighborhoods, and public policy.

Previous to her involvement in social activism, Star Parker was a single welfare mother in Los Angeles, California. After receiving Christ, Star returned to college, received a BS degree in marketing and launched an urban Christian magazine.

The Los Angeles riots destroyed her business in 1992, yet served as a catalyst for her focus on faith-based and free market alternatives to empower the lives of the poor. As a social policy consultant, Star Parker gives regular testimony before the US Congress, and is a national expert on major television

and radio shows across the country.

Star has been a regular commentator on CNN, MSNBC, and FOX News. She debated Jesse Jackson on BET; fought for school choice on Larry King Live; and defended welfare reform on the Oprah Winfrey Show.

Nationwide, Star shares her story and policy suggestions through college and church lectures, community outreaches, and empowerment conferences for inner city pastors. She has hosted radio talk shows in Christian and secular markets, and her opinion pieces are featured in TownHall.com, WorldNetDaily.com and Freedom's Journal Magazine.

Our David Brooks caught up with her for an interview for Freedom's Journal Magazine to get her unique insight on conservative politics, poverty and the Black Church.

FJM: There's a lot of talk made about the qualifications of particular individuals for President of the United States, Vice-President, etcetera. With this in mind, there maybe some readers who will look at your name and say, Star Parker, okay, well, who is she and what qualifies her to be interviewed for this magazine? They may be thinking why they should devote time to read what you have to say. For those who are interested to know who you are, please talk about your life and how you've gotten where you are today.

MS. PARKER: Well, for those that don't know who I am, who perhaps are interested in some of my concerns, may find interest in this article because poverty, social justice, the role of government and the role of church in our public space are important issues. As a matter of fact, these are issues I've dedicated my life to thinking about.

Over the past 20 years, I've spent time assessing how we—as a community of people (the black community)—got in the social state we're in, an absolute crisis; and more importantly, how we get out. I run a think tank, and I not only read and research data, giving thought; but I also bring, from my own personal experience inside the welfare state, an understanding of the mentality that says we can disconnect from our personal responsibility-- the first

step out of poverty, which is self-governance. We've brought into the idea that our problems are not our own to fix; and that there is a role of the politician—and the political world—which allows us to watch our lives outside ourselves go into total recklessness and chaos. I was living a very aggressive life—criminal activity, drug activity and sexual activity—that led me in and out of abortion clinic after abortion clinic. I had a gut instinct way down deep inside that there has to be something wrong with killing your offspring. And I know our society will try to convince us that this is socially acceptable--It's not. And I knew it wasn't (inherently); though I opted to have the next child I was pregnant with, and ended up on welfare. And it wasn't until a born-again conversion (when I meet the Lord) that I was able to grasp some principles, which helped to shape my life; and caused me to recognize that my life was not my own—that I had been bought with a price—and I was able to open the scriptures, learn from the scriptures and see it work in my own life. And then as I began this journey to say, "Can this work in other people's lives?" Is there a way we can replace what government is doing with poverty initiative—with God? Can we say, as I was told, "Is God our government?" And from that journey, I was invited to participate, as well as consult, on federal welfare reform. I worked with the Congress to help bring that to reality (with the GOP Congress, of course). It really needed a lot of attention from the politicians.

So, before we got the right formulas to help people transition their lives—we had to change the Congress. I was a part of making sure there was a Republican revolution; because we could not find Democrats who were willing to say there was something wrong with the welfare state.

You can look at every inner city in the country and see the result, but we couldn't get any Democrats—including those that say they care about these communities—those who come from these communities and represent them, to say that there's something wrong with welfare and the welfare state as we knew it.

So we changed the Congress; we reformed welfare. And I started an organization, a think tank, which now looks at all American urban policy and said we have got to come up with alternative answers. What we have been doing over the last 40 years has not worked, and to a degree, it's made the problems worse.

And that's who I am today. I do, as a result, a lot of media, which is where people could become familiar with me—especially if they are political junkies—because I do quite a bit of media, not just nationally, but internationally. I write a syndicated column that goes out to 400 newspapers in the country. I have, through my organization, a pastors' network, as well as a program we call Cure Net, where we are looking for those that want to look at alternative answers to the social state of the black community. And we help them get information—including bringing them to Washington DC. And then we have a policy side of our think tank where we work directly on Capitol Hill helping fight bills, which are not necessary; and pushing them towards ideas and bills that perhaps could help.

FJM: I personally dislike the abuse of labels. For instance, people speak of the black community as if it were one big monolithic mass. But for argument sake, let's talk about the black community and the current national black leaders—leaders like Maxine Waters, Charlie Rangel, Sheila Jackson Lee, Jessie Jackson, both, senior and junior, and Al Sharpton—who claim to represent the little man, the disadvantaged, the disenfranchised or those near, at, or below the poverty line.

The black church also plays a major role in our communities. The black church represents the rock of our communities—and of our faith. What are your thoughts of the role of the black church today and its battle against poverty? And what should the government's role be in fighting poverty? Could or should the two work together?

MS. PARKER: I'm going to start with the last part of your question first and then move backwards, because the answers are simple for me on the churches' role. It's absolute. The charity belongs to God. So therefore, I concluded that there's no role of government except to remove all the barriers that it has put up to keep people—free people—from doing free work in their local communities, which help people in need.

The battle against poverty has become political. It's a war on poverty that has been socially engineered by the secular 'left'—and it's deeply hurting the black community. But, moving to the first part of your question about the black community, although not

monolithic, is social engineering—and takes place in the black community creating its own special interest group.

There's some common interest within the black community—with blacks—because our ancestors, were all dragged here against their will. Unlike other ethnic groups in America who came from oppression to freedom, blacks have a shared history in leaving freedom and coming into oppression. But what happened to our common interest is, it divided during the Civil Rights movement or toward the end of the movement. When Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. died—the movement swung towards politicization. The people who picked up the baton, which had fallen from his hand in his very young life, took us into a governmental structure; institutionalized our interest, if you will, where then the social engineers who were already developing out these ideas of the secular 'left' with their sexual revolution and their war on poverty—grabbed hold of our community. It was a good guinea pig, if you will, to test these ideas of socialism—ideas of socialism in terms of educational policy; ideas of socialism in terms of health policy; housing policy and welfare. And lastly, job creation—in terms of affirmative action policy.

These new ideas began to take hold in the black community throughout the '70s; and then in the '80s these ideas became very destructive and counter-productive. They created the environment, which we saw toward the '90s where it was so out of control that it dismantled the core principles of the black community—principles of faith, strong family, and strong commitment to create our own wealth.

These ideas of social engineering and their politicization started to break down the core institutions of the black community—family life went first. In the '60s black family life was relatively intact. It was strong. Seventy-eight percent of husbands were in their homes with their wives raising their children. Today, it is the exact opposite. We've got 70 percent of children born outside of marriage. You have close to 70 percent of black kids that are brought up in single-headed households. And what's interesting is that number 70 runs also to what we're seeing in our criminal rate. Seventy percent of the young men that are going in and out of our criminal justice system come from single-headed households.

So, we see all the social pathologies of what happens

when family life breaks down, but also what occurred is church life became politicized. Rather than the church becoming the first place to go when you're in a state of crisis (whether it be a health crises, family crises, educational crises) -- I mean, our schools are the black churches --it became an instrument of the secular 'left'—it became a political arm. And over the same period of 30 years after Dr. King's death, the church lost its mission and became, well, an arm of the Democrat party. What can I say?

And, therefore, the black church has lost its authority to fight poverty. The government has now become the primary point or institution that one goes to when they have a crisis. And they say, "Poverty is rooted in some type of crises". It usually starts as a personal pain, whether it's a transfer of pain from your family just not having been successful the generation before, or it's self-induced—like my own. Where I came from (an intact family), to making bad sexual choices, which landed me on welfare—and eventually landed me into poverty.

So the church has to recover this. If the black church is going to be strong—to be the social institution that it's supposed to be in its community and serve the real hard needs of the people—then it's going to have to cut its political ties. And it's going to have to become a voice of moral clarity, which once again promotes principles of strong family life—meaning marriage before sexual activity; meaning rearing children with strong moral framework, i.e., putting them in church-based schools; and having a comprehensive educational program that includes order and scripture.

Then, of course, economically, I'm looking to ideas of free market and capitalism as opposed to ideas of redistribution and socialism—so that we begin to see an entrepreneurial spirit, which flourishes and grows into successful business. So the church has played a role—but getting to the basic bottom line, the government has to get out of the poverty business; and the church has to get back in.

FJM: This next set of questions is based on just that: The black community is historically more conservative than one often casually observes, yet, every national election cycle roughly 90 percent of blacks vote Democrat.

With that in mind, in your opinion, is the Gospel of Jesus Christ a conservative or a liberal document?

MS. PARKER: Well, the word conservative and the word liberal today are political terms. In Washington D.C., conservative means that you adapt a Judeo-Christian worldview. The word liberal means that you adapt a secular, 'left' worldview. So it's hard to say, because the Gospel is absolute. The Gospel doesn't allow for a bunch of deviation. It's a narrow path: it's a choice this way or that way--"I've laid before you life or death, good or evil". Now, you choose.

So to try to put the Gospel in a political arena is very difficult. But I do have to address what you said about blacks being conservative. Now, blacks poll overwhelmingly as if they are conservative. They poll, I suppose, by their faith. They poll what they know is to be true—and should be according to their life.

But blacks don't live conservatively. The data is extremely clear. Blacks have brought into ideas of secularism-- lasciviousness, actually. Blacks are overwhelmingly sexualized. The top three social crises confronting all of our society, but particularly in the black community, are rooted in sexual immorality—AIDS, abortion, and the welfare state.

And blacks have bought into this sexual revolution concept that they feel they don't have to discipline their energies—that there are no parameters to govern themselves by; and that we can express ourselves any time we want to physically. And we're living with the consequences of this. We're seeing it in abortion rates. There's an abortion statistic, that for every two pregnancies in Black America, one is aborted. We're aborting over 1000 black babies a day. We're aborting more than 300,000 black lives a year. It's an extremely out of control sexual community. In terms of those that are brought to term—those that are brought to birth—70 percent, seven out of 10 are born out of marriage. Marriage is not occurring as much in our communities. So when you use the word conservative, it's a political term: but it has meaning in religious thought, which is a Biblical worldview.

Well, in a Biblical worldview, you're supposed to discipline your sexual energies. Scripture is extremely clear on what to do with your sexual impulses—you are to marry; and then stay in that marriage faithfully, and

rear your children accordingly.

The scripture does not allow for any deviations from this. It has strict guidelines against sodomy. It has strict guidelines against promiscuity. Many blacks are not living according to the scriptures—which is extremely evident even now with what's happening with sexual transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDS. It's become now the number one killer of our women, 25 to 34, because we've concentrated poverty through the welfare state and the 4,000 housing projects.

Secular society and government have sent these messages that you don't have to think about any natural consequences to your sexual behavior. We have these 'safety' nets: "We will take care of you," is the message of society. So people live for today, rather than think about their lives over their lifetime. And so men prowl through these neighborhoods, and they are not only leaving babies or pregnancies, they are leaving the HIV virus.

We are in a great dilemma as a community of people. And, yet, as you mention, we keep telling Gallop and Pugh Pollsters that we're conservative, because when they are asked, they say, "Well, I believe in these conservative things." We might have a community of people who believe them, but we certainly are not living them.

FJM: Has the black church led our people astray?

MS. PARKER: The majority of the black church absolutely has led our people astray by not telling the truth—by allowing themselves to become politicized. Now, I have to say the majority—but keep in mind that within the black community (in the black church community)—there's a remnant that we could call either evangelical or conservative. They tell the Pollster such.

Out of 45,000 black churches in the country about 4,000 consider themselves evangelical and conservative. They are going to come from what we term today as the religious 'right' philosophy or worldview. That represents about four to six million blacks out of the 35 million blacks in the country. Pollster after Pollster records those that have a real deep understanding of the scripture; and live accordingly. And we see it in some places, in some of our mega churches and some

of our more outspoken pastors—you see what they are following-- that these people live the absolutes of the Gospel.

But with the majority of the black community, that's not so. There's a hard 'left' in the black community; and we see evidence of this with Barack Obama's former pastor—which made a lot of news recently. He's not alone. There are many black preachers who interpret scripture according to the way President Obama's former pastor interprets scripture; and, therefore, believe that the church is an institution for social justice—not for moral clarity.

But, then, the remainder of black pastors is in between. They don't give too much thought outside of what the 'political' leadership tells them to think about. So they might come in on Sunday morning with a well-gilled sermon—but there's no Monday through Saturday follow-up to make sure people understand that you are to live right.

And I know that this sounds harsh. I will probably turn a lot of the readers off, but these data are clear. It's like what Bill Cosby said. He's not putting our business in the street. Our business gets out into the street at 2:00 in the afternoon. It's evident now. It's not only evident by when we look outside and we see the breakdown and despair; but it's evident in the documentation. I spend a lot of time reading the data.

FJM: Sort of a follow-up question to that, has the Democrat party led our people astray?

MS. PARKER: Well, I believe that the Democrat party is part of the problem in that they are the political means by which we got all of these programs. They are the ones who convinced black people they don't have to be individually responsible; that they are a special interest group; and that they should think as a group desiring entitlement, social engineering and political programs. They are the ones who convinced blacks that welfare, affirmative action, government, engagement, education, housing and economic policy is a good idea.

And blacks who bought that from the Democrat party (like a sleazy salesman at a used car lot)—brought that and now we're living the end result of it, forty years later, wondering how do we recover. And the same Democrat party is now saying, "Don't worry." We'll

help you recover from that mess we've created." And I just wonder, sometimes how blacks continue as a group to keep buying into this notion. We all know that saying, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." And this is what blacks continue to do. "Maybe we can get this round peg in that square. We've got to do it again. Maybe the definition of insanity is not true. We can make this work." It will never work. And one of the reasons it will never work—is the whole notion of redistribution of wealth, which is inconsistent with scripture. There are some internal truths that the politicians cannot void out simply because they have a lot of power. One truth is, you should not covet. And covetousness is not going to produce the type of 'prosperity' and 'peace' that one might think they can make happen through redistributing wealth. Redistribution of wealth is really covetousness. Somebody has something somebody else doesn't have. So we hire politicians to go and take it from one and give it to the other. There's no consistency of that from scripture—so it will never work.

But secondly, one of the challenges with this notion and with what the Democrats have done is the removing from the individual their dignity to excel—it interjects in the formula for life: a middleman. Each of us has a lot when we're born. We cannot change the set of circumstances in which we were born; that's our lot -- our fate. You can't change your ethnicity; you can't change your birth; you can't change your birth parents; you can't change your family—but your destiny is up to you. What you do with those set of circumstances is where individual merit and attention has to be carried out.

And what the politician has done – what the philosophy of the 'left' has done is to interject a middleman in between this equation to say that your fate can be "micro-managed". And we can—even though this is where the set of circumstances, based on your environment and your situation—can develop out 'new' rules to the game. And we can determine, like it's a guinea pig's lab, what your destiny will be. Well, this is not true; and that's the reason that it's not working for anyone that buys that line.

FJM: Lastly, where should government aide end and personal responsibility begin?

MS. PARKER: The moment of conception.



FJM: Explain, please.

MS. PARKER: We each have an individual responsibility once we come into this world, and some purposes for the whole world are more important than our life. So as we grow—we develop a moral framework. And when you think about the great lesson of the scriptures, the beginning—in the very beginning, the creation of man—the lesson in the garden was that of bought property rights: this is yours, this is mine, over the apple. Well, we each have our life. This one is yours; this one is mine. And we have to take care of that. And government interjecting any concept into this is going to distort that picture. It's going to tell people that you really don't have to think about your life. It's going to remove from a person a certain portion of personal responsibility—and that means that person now is not going to be as successful as they should be.

This is why it is critical that we recover family life, because it's through family life that we pass on traditional norms and framework for how we are to live; how to produce and to feel about thinking people, and responsible mature adults. This is why husbands married to the mother of their children are important to the children's living so that they can then develop out into productive mature adults—because we pass on those messages. We pass on messages even subliminally. The first message that a kid learns when they're born outside of this structure (the ideal structure) is that commitment is not important. Well, if commitment were not important to something that fundamental as family structure—then why would commitment

become important when they go to kindergarten? Or why would commitment become important when they get to be 12 years old and their hormones are starting to kick in and they're going to either become aggressive men or promiscuous men and women.

So the personal responsibility of a young person begins at conception, because the adult who has conceived this in that marital union is responsible now to make sure that they do what? Eat right, and have a good birth. Then once that child is born, the parent still has a continuing responsibility—but let's face it, children begin to adapt behavioral patterns from the moment of birth.

You should leave them in the crib when they cry in the middle of the night so that they will learn how to prolong their sleep before waking you again. So you start to wean them very early in life. You begin the first concepts they need to learn when they are born into family life--one of responsibility. "I said no." They learn the word no. So life and personal responsibility begin immediately. But when you interject government, you have removed from moment one that responsibility. Government has told people, for instance, at conception, especially single women, "I will take care of you. You don't have to think about how you eat. I will give you WIC stickers. I will make sure you have this cereal and that cheese." And is it any wonder that these women now when their child is born don't understand basic nutrition and concepts of nutrition, not only keep their kids from becoming obese, but to pass these concepts on to that child. So government is the problem, not the solution.



North Carolinian Blacks in the Republican Party:



George Henry White

(Dec. 18, 1852 to Dec. 28, 1918), lawyer, legislator, spokesman and Republican congressman from North Carolina between 1897 and 1901. White was the last African

American congressman of the Reconstruction era.

Born in Rosindale, N.C., White attended private “old field” schools before entering public schools after the Civil War. He was then educated at Whitin Normal School in Lumberton, N.C., before entering Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1874. After graduating from Howard in 1877, he studied law privately and was admitted to the North Carolina bar in 1879, practicing in New Bern, N.C.

White taught school in New Bern and later became principal of the New Bern State Normal School, one of four training institutions for Black American teachers created by the Legislature in 1881.

White entered politics as a Republican in 1880. He was elected to a single term in the North Carolina State House of Representatives in 1880, and then to the North Carolina State Senate in 1884 from Craven County, N.C. In 1886, he was elected solicitor and prosecuting attorney for the Second Judicial District of North Carolina, a post he held until 1894.

A delegate to the 1896 and 1900 Republican National Conventions, White was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1896 (over incumbent Frederick A. Woodard) from the predominantly Black Second District, and re-elected in a three-way race in 1898.

During his tenure he arranged the appointments of a number of Black postmasters across his district, with the assistance of the state’s Republican senator, Jeter C. Pritchard.

In his first term, White was a member of the Agricultural Committee and in the 56th Congress (1899-1901) he served on the District of Columbia Committee. Many of his speeches condemned the brutal treatment received by Blacks in the South. He introduced the first anti-lynching bill in Congress.

North Carolina Democrats’ successful campaign to disenfranchise Blacks plus increasing anti-Negro feelings prompted White not to seek a third term in Congress. Being the only Black representative in Congress, White was an eloquent and vocal spokesman for his race. During his final speech on Jan. 29, 1901 before Congress, White stated, “This is perhaps the Negroes’ temporary farewell to the American Congress; but let me say, Phoenix-like he will rise up some day and come again. These parting words are in behalf of an outraged, heart-broken, bruised and bleeding, but God-fearing people; faithful, industrious, loyal, rising people – full of potential force.”

After his term, he and his family moved to Washington, D.C., where he practiced law until 1905. Moving to Philadelphia and continuing his law practice, he became involved in banking, founding the first Black-managed bank in Philadelphia. He also established an all-Black community in Cape May County, N.J., called Whitesboro.

White was married four times. His first wife, Fannie Randolph White, died in 1880; his second wife, Nancy Scott White, died in 1882; and his third wife, Cora Lena Cherry White, died in 1905. His fourth wife, Ellen Avant Macdonald White, survived him, along with two of his four children, Mary (Mamie) White (1887-1974) and his only son, George H. White, Jr. (1893-1927). Two other daughters died before 1918: Della White Garrett (1880-1916) and Beatrice Odessa White (1891-1892).

Then and Now

by Timothy Johnson, PhD



Elected June 2008 to a four-year term as the Republican national committeewoman from North Carolina, **Dr. Ada Markita Fisher** became the first Black woman to serve in her current position. Born in Durham, N.C., Dr. Fisher parents are the Rev. Dr. Miles Mark Fisher and his wife, Ada Virginia Foster Fisher.

As the sixth child born to this distinguished minister and ecclesiastic theologian and his wife, a gifted linguist in French and Latin, Fisher always knew that hers was a family that valued education and public service.

Dr. Fisher is a former member of the Rowan-Salisbury School Board in Salisbury, N.C. In addition, she has served on the boards of trustees of Barber-Scotia College (in Concord, N.C.) and Preservation N.C.

Quote: The Republicans were not only the party of Abraham Lincoln, but the party which has always stood for free speech, individual rights and individual choice. It was the Republican Party, which pushed civil rights and passed the first civil rights legislation in 1865 as well as pushed the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution, which effectively outlawed slavery. This was also the party that was at the forefront of the women's suffrage movement, which is in harmony with the establishment of the 1972 Title IX Legislation. Though most don't recall it, Dwight Eisenhower followed through on the integration of the Armed Forces.

His nomination for president was seconded by Dr. Helen G. Edmonds, a Black professor at Durham's North Carolina College. It was President Eisenhower, a Republican, who appointed Earl Warren (a former Republican governor of California) as chief justice of the United States Supreme Court. Warren wrote the unanimous opinion for the Court in 1954 that separate but equal is a myth, and schools and society should become integrated for all Americans.



Elected November 2008 as North Carolina's first Black female Republican to the State House District #110,

Pearl Burris Floyd is the only daughter of Deacon James and Mrs. Ola Burris. She grew up in Dallas, N.C., with her four brothers to these hard-working

parents. Pearl is proud to be the mother of one daughter, Jessica, who is a 2007 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a former CBS-affiliate reporter and 2008 North Carolina Central University, Durham, N.C., law student. Pearl's early education began in the Gaston County Pubic School System. She is an honor graduate of North Gaston Senior High School, Dallas, N.C., and a graduate of UNC at Chapel Hill with a degree in biology, graduate of UNC at Chapel Hill School of Medicine Cytology School and is an internationally registered cancer detection specialist. Her graduate education is continuing in health administration at Pfeiffer University, Charlotte, N.C. She is currently the anatomic pathology section chief at Rowan Regional Medical Center in Salisbury, N.C.

A proud Republican woman, Pearl made history in 2001 when she became the first African American to serve as a commissioner in Gaston County, N.C. She has served in numerous positions, including the vice chair of the Gaston County Commission, member of the Gaston County Republican Executive Committee, Gaston County Republican Women-Daytime Club and the State and National Republican Conventions. Pearl is a strong supporter of Second Amendment rights and is a member of the National Rifle Association.



California Charters Among Best for Low-Income Kids

By Phillip J. Britt

Twelve of California's 15 highest-performing schools serving primarily low-income children are charter schools, according to the 2008 Academic Performance Index (API), an annual state testing measurement.

Of the 12 top-performing charter schools, five are in Oakland, three in Los Angeles County, two in Santa Clara County, and one each in San Bernardino and San Diego counties.

"A lot of these schools are in some of the toughest areas of California," said Gary Larson, spokesman for the California Charter Schools Association (CCSA). "The only traditional public schools on the list were elementary schools. The [charter] middle and high schools traditionally outperform their [conventional] public school counterparts. Charter schools have a lower dropout rate."

Alan Bonsteel, president of California Parents for Educational Choice, said even though California charter schools serve a higher percentage of low-income students than do other public schools, "we're just leaving [those] public schools in the dust."

Best Practices

The two top-performing schools were Oakland's American Indian Public Charter School and American Indian Public High School, also a charter. American Indian Public Charter School II ranked fifth on the report.

"Our model of success at American Indian is simple," said founder Ben Chavis, who attributes the school's success to an emphasis on fundamental reading and math instruction. "Our kids do a minimum of an hour and a half of math and language arts every day, along with two hours of homework. We have high expectations for our students and provide them with the structure and accountability they need to succeed."

Disadvantages Overcome

The top public schools at each grade level for children in poverty were all charter schools, according to CCSA, the membership and professional organization serving California's more-than 700 charter public schools. Together, charters serve more than 250,000 students statewide.

"These results show that charter schools are opening doors of opportunity for California's

most under-served students and [are] effectively advancing them on the path to academic success," said CCSA Interim CEO Peter Thorp. "These exemplary charter schools should be studied and their best practices replicated in the broader public school system so that more under-served children can benefit."

"This report should confirm just how well charter schools are doing academically with kids from low-income families," Larson added.

Faster Implementation

"Charter schools are funded at about 85 percent of the level of traditional public schools, but are still easily outperforming them," Bonsteel said. Unlike other public schools, charters are accountable to parents and are more free to choose teachers without union red tape, he noted. That helps account for their greater success in raising academic achievement.

"They have a great deal of freedom in choosing their teachers," Bonsteel said. "A lot of studies show that the most important thing in the success of a student is the quality of the teacher."

Phillip J. Britt (spenterprises@woway.com) writes from Illinois. Originally published by Heartland Institute 3/1/09

A Time to Laugh



Concierge Medicine Movement Enhances Consumer Choice

by Elisha Maldonado

Dr. Marcy Zwelling has built her medical practice around what she views as a sacred relationship: that of patient and physician.

Zwelling runs a new style of medical practice known as a “concierge” practice. She began it in July 2004 after deciding to “speak out against the broken health care system.”

Focus on the Relationship

Concierge medicine is fairly new, according to Greg Scandlen, director of Consumers for Health Care Choices at The Heartland Institute. “It has only been around for six to eight years,” he said. “It started in Seattle, Washington with sports medicine doctors providing this kind of service to professional athletes with sports-related injuries.”

Now, Scandlen said, “most concierge physicians are in the primary care field.”

Zwelling favors the concierge approach because of its focus on the relationship between patient and physician. “The patient needs to be at the center of the decision-making,” she said.

“The quality of health care suffers in a system that transforms patients into numbers and the doctor’s office into a production line where HMOs and Medicare make all the rules,” Zwelling said.

A Benefit for Consumers

“Currently, if you go to see a doctor, you are part of a huge caseload of 6,000 to 8,000 patients,” said Scandlen. “Doctors are spending six to seven minutes with a patient. That is simply not enough time, in my opinion. They look at the problem and write a prescription, or tell you what to do.

“As a result, patients feel like they are being shortchanged,” Scandlen said.

Doctors in concierge medicine practices can cut their caseloads down to the hundreds. Patients pay an annual retainer, in monthly increments of \$75 to \$150, for 24-hour access to their physician. With the smaller caseloads, doctors know their patients extremely well and are able to act as intermediaries for their patients in case of any hospital visits, Scandlen explained.

“This,” Scandlen said, “is the consumer benefit of concierge medicine. You need someone to be your agent, to have an advocate, and with concierge doctors, they are able to provide that.”

A Matter of Choice

“This model of medicine will save health care,” said Zwelling, not only because of the cost savings but also thanks to “the core tenets of concierge medicine: the sanctity of professionalism, the patient-physician relationship, and the assurance that all medical decisions are in the hands of the patient and physician.”

The distinction between concierge medicine and institutionalized medicine, the current doctor-insurer-patient system, Zwelling said, is choice.

“Choice doesn’t work in institutionalized medicine, because patients are bound to certain hospitals by their insurance company or by their need for certain medical equipment,” Zwelling said.

“People choose which hairdresser they go to,” said Zwelling. In medicine, she continued, it’s even more important “to have those choices so the patient feels like their life is [at] their own discretion.”

Elisha Maldonado (elishamaldonado@gmail.com) writes from California. Originally published by Heartland Institute 3/1/09



Costly Stimulus Bill Unlikely to Work, Analysts Say

By Steve Stanek

The federal economic stimulus bill started with an emphasis on “timely, targeted, and temporary” spending on infrastructure projects, plus sizable tax cuts, but ended as a \$787 billion bill emphasizing social and environmental spending and less tax relief than originally proposed.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 passed with support from only three Republican Senators and no Republican House members. Supporters called it a quick job creator and economy stimulator before the February 13 final vote, but just two days later even Obama administration members were playing down its probable effects.

“The plan we passed tonight will strengthen our economy by creating millions of good-paying jobs here at home; deliver tax relief for 95 percent of workers; and invest in America’s future by fixing our communities’ roads and bridges, improving our children’s education, and making our country more energy independent,” Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nevada) said in a statement immediately after the vote.

Republicans Wanted Business Help

Republican lawmakers overwhelmingly took a different view.

“You cannot borrow and spend our way into prosperity,” Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-TX) told reporters. “The Republicans want to stimulate the economy by helping small businesses. The Democrats want to stimulate big government.”

President Barack Obama signed the bill early in the week after its passage.

On Fox News Sunday just two days after the vote, Obama senior advisor David Axelrod said “it’s going to take time” for the economy to improve, probably not until the second half of the year. “The president has said [the economy] is likely to get worse before it gets better,” he noted.

Analysts Doubt It Will Help

Tad DeHaven, a budget analyst at the Cato Institute, said he doubts the stimulus will create lasting improvement in the economy.

“If federal spending is a stimulus, why are we in recession?” DeHaven said. “We saw the first \$2 trillion budget under George Bush, the first \$3 trillion budget under Bush, and we’re now headed to \$4 trillion.”

David Williams, vice president of Citizens Against Government Waste, said the stimulus “represents a lot of what we have seen the last eight years. Obama and the Democrats are saying they are bringing change, but they’re not. Republicans spent the heck out of the budget, and we have a \$10 trillion debt because of it, and the Democrats are doing the same thing.

“A couple of years ago the deficit was \$400 billion, and people were rightly in shock. Those are the good old days,” Williams said. “Now we’re looking at a \$2 trillion deficit. We’re pinning for the days of only \$400 billion in deficits.”

Economist: Problem Was Spending

Economist Mark Thornton of the Mises Institute said the stimulus package “is actually going to further disrupt the correction process that has already been too long and painful. It involves more spending. The problem that got us into this mess in the first place is excess spending and excess borrowing, largely by government but also private borrowing and spending induced by the [Federal Reserve’s] policy of low interest rates.

“Spending more and going more into debt and bailouts of failing enterprises is the opposite of what we need,” Thornton said. “I anticipate nothing good to come from this.”

Thornton said economic stimulus and direct bailouts of financial institutions are “in effect protectionism. Traditionally we have viewed protectionism as tariffs, quotas, trade restrictions, subsidies to export industries, those sorts of things. Subsidies, government investment in firms, handing out cash are just different forms of protectionism. The whole thing is essentially protectionism.”

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Black Leaders' Gospel of Dependence

By Star Parker



The National Urban League has just issued its annual State of Black America report. It provides a troubling statistical snapshot of where blacks stand today in our country.

Like Marc Morial, president of the National Urban League, I'm concerned. But after concern, we part company. We have very different ideas of

what it is we should be concerned about.

Morial, I am sure, sees his organization as part of the solution. From what I see, it is a well-funded symptom of the problem.

Shouldn't it embarrass black Americans that one the nation's largest and most prestigious civil rights organizations offers a long list of proposals to improve black life in our country, and every single proposal is a government program?

Government-funded jobs as the answer to unemployment, more government money in public schools, government health care, government business loans, government money for retirement accounts, government programs for counseling homebuyers, government worker-training programs, government money for building construction, and on and on.

There's not a single proposal that I could find in a several-hundred-page report about improving black life that does not start with government. The civil rights movement once was about freedom and liberation. Now it's about government dependency. We should be ashamed.

The report is crafted to disabuse any notion that since we now have a black president, our discrimination woes are "relics of the past." The proof: Blacks are "twice as likely as whites to be unemployed, three

times more likely to live in poverty and more than six times as likely to be incarcerated."

But with all the statistics reported, methodically ignored is that blacks are little more than 12 percent of the population, yet we account for 50 percent of new AIDS cases, almost 40 percent of abortions, and 70 percent of black babies are born to unwed mothers and grow up in single-parent homes.

Please, hold the hate mail telling me that I only want to show the ugly side of black America. No, I want to show the side of black America for which we ourselves are responsible and which really point to where our problems lie.

The National Urban League report talks about black poverty, but it does not bother to point out that hand in hand with poverty are single-parent homes. That black households with two married parents are not living in poverty, and their household incomes are on par with those of white households.

Breakdown in family and values is at the root of poor education, unemployment and crime as well.

Blacks have the highest church attendance in the country. If we paid attention to the Gospel heard on Sunday, we wouldn't think that extorting welfare from taxpayers was the answer to our problems the other six days of the week.

Regarding discrimination, you have to wonder what it will take to get off this convenient excuse. Forty million white Americans voted for Barack Obama for president. That is 2 million more white Americans than voted for John Kerry in 2004.

As the civil rights movement transformed into a government dependency movement, the original focus on law and the U.S. Constitution as the vehicles to protect all citizens has been lost.

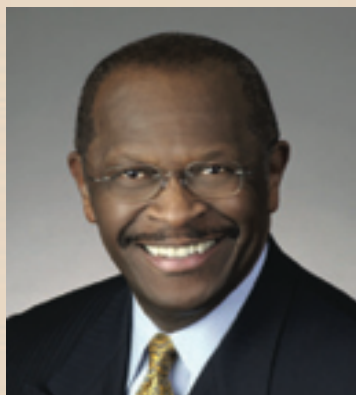
My friend Pastor Walter Hoye sits in jail in Oakland, Calif., for violating a clearly unconstitutional city ordinance prohibiting him from peacefully standing in front of an abortion clinic offering life literature to the mostly black clientele.

A black pastor's civil rights have been violated as he tried to save black babies. It happened in the district of Rep. Barbara Lee, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. Yet, she could care less and has done nothing. The National Urban League could care less. The NAACP could care less.

What's wrong in black America? You won't find the answer in the National Urban League's report.

With America at a Crossroads, Duty Falls to the Defending Fathers

By Herman Cain



In memory of my dad, Luther Cain, Jr. (March 16, 1925 – March 29, 1982)

Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are the ideals to which our Founding Fathers mutually pledged their lives, their fortunes and

their sacred honor. Thus, the United States of America was conceived and born.

It was not an easy birth with the Revolutionary War and then the Civil War. And it has not had a conflict-free social history with slavery, segregation and institutional discrimination. But America's ability to change, along with its resiliency, has allowed it to prosper. And many of its citizens, like my dad, the grandson of slaves, have been able to achieve their American dreams.

This nation is at a critical crossroad in its history with new and different challenges to those founding ideals – an economic recession, creeping socialism, heightened class warfare and national security threats at home and abroad.

This has not come about overnight, but over decades of excessive legislation, regulation and taxation. We are now threatened not by a single abusive foreign power, but by an abusive federal government, which would cause the founding fathers to roll over in their graves.

The Declaration of Independence by our Founding Fathers also says:

“... that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government ...”

We may not need to institute a whole new form of government, but some things in Washington, D.C. need

to be abolished, and we need to drastically alter the career path of many of those who have been elected to govern.

Where are the defending fathers who will make these changes?

Congress has shown for decades that its main concern is getting re-elected, sending pork spending home and delaying real solutions to big problems. There are a few exceptions, but way too few.

When new government programs are consistently added to the federal budget, while old dysfunctional programs are never significantly modified or fixed, the people running our government are clearly not the defending fathers.

When laws are proposed with the distinct purpose of limiting and controlling free speech, or to eliminate the use of secret ballots in union elections in the workplace, the current lawmakers are clearly not the defending fathers.

When a popular new president won the presidency on promises of hope, change and a new way of doing business in Washington, D.C., but the first 100 days of the new administration with an increased majority of his political party in Congress has shown nothing but business as usual, they are not the defending fathers.

The defending fathers are not the president, the Democrats in Congress, K-Street lobbyists, the labor unions, the Wall Street CEOs, the career federal agency bureaucrats and, most certainly, not the mainstream media.

The defending fathers are the workers on Main Street, stock holders in publicly traded companies, business owners and risk-takers who invest their own money to create jobs, new products and services. They are the life blood of a thriving economy and nation.

The defending fathers are no longer silent. They are organizing, mobilizing and vocalizing their frustrations and dissatisfaction with the status quo. They are citizens becoming active in many organizations, participating in public rallies, petitions and starting to pummel Congress with phone calls, e-mails, faxes, post cards and office visits on key issues on a regular basis.

The defending fathers are getting louder and louder. The new president and Congress are not listening yet, but they will.

We the People have to be the Defending Fathers United. Get connected! We are at a crossroad with our lives, our fortunes, and our honor.

The Culture of Entitlement

By Ken Blackwell



Our lives are filled with measures of achievement. From cleaning our rooms as children and taking a driver's test as teenagers to annual job reviews through the course of a career, there are benchmarks of achievement that follow us through the entirety of

our lives. As we grow, these benchmarks become more numerous and the stakes become higher.

Curiously, these benchmarks are being consistently eroded in primary and secondary education, a stage of life when they should be most emphasized. Standard benchmarks in educational achievement are increasingly falling by the wayside and the results are troubling.

George Leef with the Pope Center for Higher Education Policy wrote of this problem at the college level, noting that more college students today expect high grades for simply showing-up in class or completing reading assignments. The New York Times explored the issue as well, quoting college educators bemoaning the fact that too many students are equating effort with quality of work.

The origins of this sense of entitlement to good grades are not difficult to trace. Students preparing for college now often find themselves in classrooms where self esteem is valued more than results. This mindset is perpetuated at the collegiate level as institutions increasingly forsake legitimate measures of scholarly merit in favor of unclear and shifting policies designed to permit social engineering, both in terms of admission to college and assessments of performance within it.

An illustration of this is seen in the relatively small but growing number of colleges that have dropped standardized testing as a requirement for admission in favor of "holistic" admission practices.

Just last month, the University of California Board of Regents voted to eliminate SAT Subject Tests as an admissions requirement, opting instead for a costly "entitled to review" system. The stated reason for dropping the tests: Some students did not know they had to take them, thus creating a "barrier" to admission.

Efforts to eliminate such standards in education come from outside academia as well. Political activist groups like Fair Test and others advocating the end of standardized testing for college admission do so not for academic reasons but because doing so meshes with the defined political agenda of liberal control over academia. This is done by preaching to students and educators about the false politics of entitlement over the practical necessity of achievement. Test-optional policies promoted by such groups serve no purpose other than to blur the lines of scholarship while destroying empirical standards of education and the definition of academic merit.

Wherever standards are destroyed and merit is redefined, a sense of entitlement necessarily follows. This is true in any aspect of society. In the field of education, it manifests itself in the demand by students for high grades when they are not earned. Aaron Brower, vice provost for teaching and learning at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, summed up the need for empirical measures, telling the New York Times, "Unless teachers are very intentional with our goals, we play into the system in place."

The same can be said of test optional admission policies at America's colleges. Presenting students with uncertain and imprecise standards for admission plays into this growing sense of entitlement. It stands to reason that, if the standards for admission to college are subject to holistic whims, so too should be the grades given to students. The end result is a workforce that is less able to contribute to and compete in an increasingly competitive global economy.

The American economy today is under stress because of a recession. Recessions ebb and flow over time, but a failure to provide the highest caliber education and demand excellence from those who seek it poses a far larger threat. Students may receive higher grades by simply demanding them, but America will not succeed economically just because we want rewards without results. It's time to align our education priorities with economic realities.

Fuzzy Thinking

By Walter E. Williams, PhD



George Orwell warned, “But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.” That is the challenge, not allowing language and ill-defined terms to corrupt thought that I face in teaching economics to both graduate and undergraduate students. Terms that are widely

used can have considerable emotional worth but little or no analytical value, ambiguous meaning, or their implications not fully appreciated. In analytical usage precise, operational definitions must be found.

“Equality of opportunity” is a widely used term but what does it mean? Sometimes I ask students are they for or against equal opportunity. Most say they are for it. Then I ask how can they tell if equality of opportunity exists in a given activity. For example, does everyone in the class have an equal opportunity to earn an A? If not, how would they create equal opportunity? I ask them whether it is unfair when another is denied equal opportunity. Then I cite examples where I have denied others equal opportunity such as when choosing a wife every woman was not given an equal opportunity to marry me. I systematically discriminated against white and Asian women, handicapped women, women with criminal records and women who did not bathe regularly. None of my criteria for setting up a long-term contractual arrangement would have met EEOC criteria for doing so.

Occasionally, a student might rejoin by saying marriage and earning an A is different but what equality of opportunity mostly refers to employment or college admission. At that point, I ask whether they think every employer should give them equal opportunity to be hired or colleges give them equal opportunity to be admitted. Most often the reply is in the affirmative at which point I ask whether they plan to give every employer an equal opportunity to hire them or have they given every college an equal opportunity to admit them. Most often their answer is no; they plan to discriminate amongst employers and they have already discriminated in choosing a college. At that point I ask them if you’re not going to give every employer an equal chance to hire you, why should every employer give you an equal chance to be hired?

Part of the justification for various labor market restrictions, such as minimum wage laws, collective bargaining legislation, and work hour legislation is to protect workers from the alleged superior bargaining power of employers. What is meant by superior bargaining power? Let’s see. The president of George Mason University, where I am employed, has the power to tell me that the maximum wage he is willing to pay me is \$20,000 a year. I have the power to tell him how many hours I am willing to work at \$20,000 a year, namely zero. So who has the superior bargaining power, me or the president? He has the power of price and I have the power of quantity. Alternatively, I have the power to tell him that I refuse to work for less than \$500,000 a year. He has the power to decide how many hours he is willing to hire me at that price. Again, who has the superior bargaining power? I think it is impossible to say. What sets the minimum price the president pays for my labor services? If he wants my services, the minimum salary he can pay me is the salary I could earn at some other university. What sets the maximum salary I could get from him is the salary some other economist will accept to do the same job that I am doing. Bargaining power is a vacuous concept. What truly protects the worker is the number of employers competing for his services. Similarly, what protects the employer is the number of employees competing for his job.

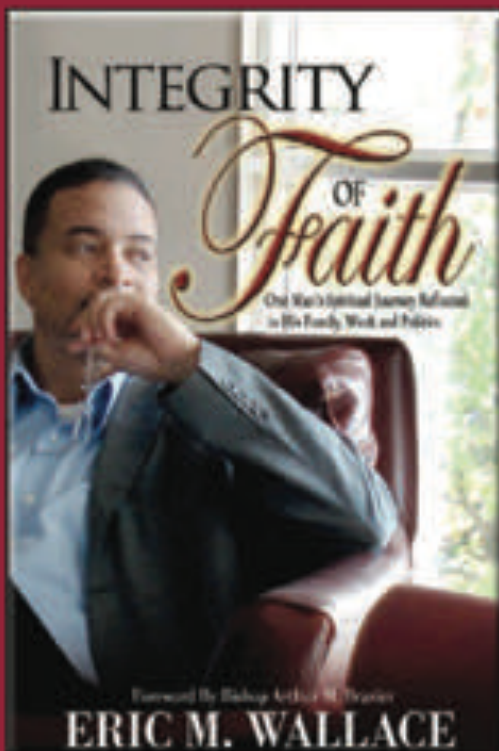
So often we hear that our nation is a democracy. Somehow Americans have come to accept that whatever our congressmen, state legislatures or city council can muster a majority vote on. There is nothing benign about majority rule decision-making. In fact, majority rule gives an aura of legitimacy to acts that would otherwise be deemed tyranny. Let’s look at it while asking ourselves how many decisions in our daily lives would we like to be settled through majority rule.

How many people would like for it to be a majority rule decision whether we had turkey or ham as the main course for Thanksgiving dinner, and if turkey won the vote, it would be illegal to serve ham. What about the kind of car that we drive? If Lexus won the vote, it would be illegal to drive other cars. I am sure that if majority rule were the decision-making criteria in these and most other areas of our lives we would deem it tyranny. Is it not the same when majority rule is used to dictate how we provide for our healthcare, how we prepare for retirement, whether restaurants permit smoking or use trans fats or serve foie gras?

Continued...

In addition to majority rule being a form of tyranny, it is a major contributor to human conflict. The reason is that majority rule can be a zero-sum game. One group of people has their wishes satisfied at the expense of another group of people not having their wishes satisfied. In the Thanksgiving dinner example, turkey lovers have their wishes satisfied at the expense of ham lovers. Knowing that ham lovers have high incentives to enter into conflict with turkey lovers because they know that if turkey lovers win it will be at their expense. There would be no conflict if, as it is, the decision on what to have for Thanksgiving dinner is made by individuals. In general, decision-making at the individual or market levels is conflict reducing while making decisions collectively or at the political level is conflict enhancing.

Our nation's founders had absolute disdain for democracy and majority rule. James Madison, in Federalist Paper No. 10, said in a pure democracy, "there is nothing to check the inducement to sacrifice the weaker party or the obnoxious individual." During the 1787 Constitutional Convention, Edmund Randolph said, "in tracing these evils to their origin every man had found it in the turbulence and follies of democracy." John Adams said, "Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There was never a democracy yet that did not commit suicide." Chief Justice John Marshall added, "Between a balanced republic and a democracy, the difference is like that between order and chaos." The founders knew that a democracy would lead to the same kind of tyranny suffered under King George III. The term democracy appears in none of our founding documents. Their vision for us was a republic and limited government.



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