

WORD TO MY BROTHERS: Freedom, Sovereignty, and Black Leadership –Time for Re-definitions by Dr. Uhuru Hotep :Kwame Ture Leadership Institute.

‘Let every tub rest on its own bottom’. - African American Proverb

When our leaders refer to our “struggle for freedom,” they usually mean our struggle to access and then contribute to White America’s major institutions. Surprisingly, seldom, if ever, do our political, religious, educational and other leaders speak to us about other forms of freedom, like sovereignty for example. Sovereignty is a political science term meaning self-determination through nation-building, but in our case, it also means self-reliance or establishing the institutions we need to maintain our basic survival. In this regard, sovereignty is Black families and other community organizations pooling resources, buying land, and then establishing political, economic, educational and other life-enriching, life-sustaining institutions that we own and can pass down to our children. This is also a pathway to freedom.

In fact, upon close inspection, sovereignty turns out to be a much higher and more advanced state of freedom than simply integrating into the White American mainstream, which at its highest levels is an option only for the Black elite. But sovereignty, which is the very bedrock of freedom, is seldom discussed by our leadership. Why? Historically, Black leadership has been locked into one-dimensional, eurocentric analyses and one-dimensional, eurocentric solutions stemming from its eurocentric values and eurocentric belief systems. For example, when it comes to the present and future role of Black men in American society, our Black leadership posits no higher calling for us than faithful, life-long service to institutions controlled by White men simply to earn money to purchase goods produced or sold by White men. And rather than seek financial independence from, our leaders encourage us to seek employment in the very same economic system that enslaved and robbed our fore parents and under-employs and underpays us. Given a lifetime of humble service to White male-controlled institutions as our only life goal, it’s no wonder that millions of Black men are totally disenchanted not only with the quality and direction of their lives, but also with Black leadership.

If we truly expect to progress as a people, it’s high time for Black leaders to re-define freedom as sovereignty, because for us to only make contributions to American society for the ultimate benefit of others is to define freedom in the very same fashion as our fore parents who built this country, yet received nothing in return. This we must not do. By way of contrast, while Black leadership pines for mainstream inclusion, White leadership speaks and acts globally continually exercising sovereign power on behalf of the White collective. As a consequence,

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most of the world—and all of Africa—is controlled by and for the benefit of White men. To free Africa's mineral and human resources from White leadership for Black World development will require not only a radical re-definition of freedom, but unified leadership with a global vision of and plan for African redemption and empowerment. At present, we have neither.

One of the critical differences between White men and Black men is that White men would rather die than surrender their sovereignty. When it comes to Black leadership, Europeans, historically, have chosen death rather than life under the dominion of Black men. As historian Chancellor Williams (1974) points out in *The Destruction of Black Civilization*, the White male desire for sovereignty runs so deep that White men have never allowed themselves to be ruled for long by Black men, even when it's to their advantage. Remember the expulsion of the Moors from Spain in 1492? This is perhaps the most blatant example of White men rejecting superior Black leadership in favor of inferior White leadership in spite of the fact that Moorish Spain under African rule was the most democratically, technologically, and culturally advanced region in Europe. In more recent times, Whites have fled Zimbabwe, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, etc., in droves rather than live under the authority of Blacks.

While White men deeply cherish their sovereignty, project it world-wide, and gladly die to maintain it, we Black American men, in spite of racism, classism and the like, seem content living under the (mis)rule of White men. In truth, we are so taken with our second and third class American "citizenship" that we have neglected to develop even a modicum of sovereignty. The end result is that we, our women, and our children are totally and completely dependent on White men to feed, clothe, and house us. If White men grow no food, sew no clothing, or build no housing, we are left hungry, naked, and homeless. With the possible exception of Minister Louis Farrakhan, our national leadership has been totally compromised, so it cannot or will not tell Black men this simple truth: To truly prosper in this nation, we must unite, pool our resources, and then acquire the necessary land, buildings and equipment to produce the essentials of life for ourselves and our people.

We must become sovereign to be respected as men by men and to insure our group survival. The Christian Bible, through a parable, teaches this universal truth: No one respects a beggar, and Black men have been begging for decades, like Lazarus, for crumbs (jobs and recognition) that fall from the rich (White) man's table. Black men, as long as we beg others to do for us what we can easily do for ourselves, we'll never be respect as men by men. Furthermore, climatologists, astrophysicist, mystics and counterterrorism experts have warned us that we must prepare now for both the natural and the man-made disasters that are sure to come.

In the 21st century, restoring our sovereignty so that we control the production, distribution and

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consumption of our food, clothing, shelter, education/recreation, medical and self-defense needs is the only way Black men can simultaneously restore their manhood, insure their survival, and get fabulously rich in the process. The massive governmental abandonment of Hurricane Katrina's Black survivors clearly demonstrates that it was naïve for us to believe that we could depend on the largess of White leadership to do for us what we must now unite and do for ourselves. To advance economically, politically, socially, and even spiritually, Black men, beginning first with those who occupy leadership positions, must re-define freedom as the restoration of sovereignty. Our collective survival demands that we set this as our highest group priority; to do otherwise will embolden our enemies and court our very destruction.

- Resources for Black Men -

Film

Panther. Gramercy Picture. (1995).

Hoodlum. United Artists. (1997).

Once Upon a Time: When we were Colored. BET Pictures. (1995).

Video

500 Years Later. Halaqah Films. (2005). www.500yearslater.com .

Legacy of Torture: The War Against the Black Liberation Movement. (2006). The Freedom Archives. (DVD ISBN 978-0-9790789-0-3).

African Underground: Democracy in Dakar. (2007). www.Africanunderground.com .

Music

Davis, M. (1959). Kind of Blue. Columbia Records.

Coltrane, J. (1965). A Love Supreme. Impuse Records.

Marley, B. (1974). Natty Dread. Island Records.

Books

Haley, A. (1965). Autobiography of Malcolm X. New York: Harper & Row.

Karenga, M. (2002). Introduction to Black Studies. Los Angeles: University of Sankore Press.

Akbar, N. (1991). Visions for Black Men. Tallahassee, Fl: Mind Productions.

Yogananda, P. (1974). Autobiography of a Yogi. Los Angeles: Self-

Realization Fellowship.

Spoken Word

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Sulaiman, A. (2004). Dead Man Walking. www.amirsulaiman.com .

Acey, T. (2005). Market for Ni\$\$as. www.youtube.com .

Heru. (2004). Volume 3: African Mathematics. www.heruspeaks.com .

Web Sites

www.libradio.com

www.mindwarz.com

www.bibliotecapleyades.net/esp

www.swagga.com

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