

There was a time when I was very young that people would intimidate me because of the color of my skin. My mother would put me on a Greyhound bus in Los Angeles and send me to Shreveport, Louisiana to bond with my grandparents and other relatives. Once that bus got to El Paso, Texas the driver would announce "From here on out we will observe segregation rules. Coloreds must sit in the back of the bus. When we come to rest stops you must use restrooms and cafeterias designated as colored."

It wasn't just the Deep South. You could go into a restaurant in Los Angeles, San Francisco or Chicago and if it wasn't Black owned you would receive unwelcome stares. It was tough being Black back then. General Colin Powell in his book "My American Story" recalls going into a restaurant wearing his army officer's uniform in Columbus, Georgia outside of Ft. Benning Army Base and being told by the hostess, "I can't sit you. If you tell me that you are Puerto Rican, I can do it." He replied "but I am not". She then concluded "Then you must leave". Such was the life of a descendent of Africa back then.

Things changed in the nation during the 1970's as we implemented the Civil Rights Act of 1964. That act, the prize of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., made all the difference in the world – not just the nation, the entire world. Its success led to the inspiration of African nations who threw off their colonialist shackles and demanded sovereignty and independence. It even led to the abolishment of apartheid in South Africa and Mozambique. Today, the world is better because of Dr. King and a few others of his ilk. Faith inspired and driven with the fact that only Jesus shall be King, this movement brought freedom.

In the last twenty years I have traveled to many parts of the world. One thing seems to be clear. Blacks, people of the African Diaspora, feel free and demand equality. We are everywhere! I remember standing outside of the Savoy Hotel in Prague, Czech Republic, and being approached by Blacks with a warm welcome. There are more than one hundred million Blacks living in Brazil. Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Columbia and Venzuela have millions of Blacks, descendents of slaves, who now stand tall and are becoming empowered politically. Wherever I go, I see that all of these Black folks look at the United States as their model for empowerment. They emulate our fashion, cosmetics and swagger.

Thus, it is the calling of Blacks in America to continue to "chisel" this model. Independence and freedom are good as well as political power. However, without an economic empowerment component it is just symbolism without substance. This is the final frontier. We are happy but we are also at the bottom rung of the economic ladder regardless of which nation you are in.

It is time for us to strive for economic greatness. Form our businesses from maid service to nuclear science, we should strive to excel. All legal business is good. As we develop wealth we must be conscious of giving back. Scholarships, jobs, charitable giving and other blessed events should be a matter of common protocol. It will make us vibrant and forever undefeatable. We went to politics immediately after civil rights when we should have gone to economic empowerment first. That's all right though as it is never too late to start.

We are involved in a very strong movement for Blackness in France. Next week, I will be giving an introduction speech for my friend, Patrick Lozes. Patrick is the founder of the French African Diaspora Chamber of Commerce. He will now run for the Presidency of France. This is a very giant step for this nation. In France, you cannot even declare your race on any record, including their national census. They try to hide the issue of race. The fact is France is at least 8% Black but the government and society refuse to address any inequity that they may be victim of. The funny thing is that French Blacks have higher educational levels than traditional white French. However, they are on the bottom levels of most occupations. Entrepreneurship will be the only way out and Patrick will be promoting this.

Yes, we are so beautiful. Physically and charm wise we are at the top. The current Miss World is from Botswana, Africa. The newly crowned Miss Universe is from Angola, Africa. Without any doubt we are the greatest athletes known worldwide. Now is the time for us to turn to economic empowerment and that can only be obtained through ingenuity via entrepreneurship. There is a God and all people who follow him and learn to provide for themselves will be prosperous. Let us start providing for each other. What is your business idea?

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