

Lately, we have been lowering our standards to the point of being “stuck on stupid”. A prime example is the recent ownership controversy caused by the new stadium gift going to the owners of the Washington Nationals baseball team here in DC.

The powers of the “
Chocolate
City

” demanded better local and Black representation within the ownership of the team.

This was certainly reasonable as the residents of DC were going to be stuck with the bill for building the new stadium via issuance of revenue bonds.

The city is overwhelmingly Black and Black representation should be realized in any endeavor that the people will have to pay for.

So, when the ownership of the team was unveiled there was a sprinkling of a few Black faces – high profile but just a few. Councilman and former Mayor Marion Barry became terribly upset about the “rent a Negro” approach to ownership. In the
end, Mari
on
was proven correct.

Despite the showcase and spreads in the mainstream media, the total dollar amount invested by these so called owners equated to no more than just 1%.

Somehow the community of DC capitulated and let the deal go through.

My brothers and sisters 1% is better than nothing but not too much better.

In fact, it's right next door to nothing. Why do we settle for so little?

Where is our outrage?

What happened to our ability to protest?

In a city 70%+ Black and a sports game that is 50%+ nonwhite we allow ownership to be 99%

white.

It is economically suicidal.

Cities around this nation are suffering from this low expectation. Philadelphia has a beautiful sports complex.

Beautiful baseball stadium, football stadium (perhaps the best in the NFL) and basketball/hockey arena share the same address and provide a venue that makes millions and millions of dollars for the owners of these teams.

How much of that ownership belongs to local Black residents of Philadelphia?
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My estimate is, at best, 1%.

Tax breaks, revenue bond financing by the residents of the city provides treasure troves for the fat cats and none of the fat cats are us.

History will show that these scenarios were some kind of high tech robbery.

Stealing from the masses of Black folks for the benefit of a few powerful Whites is something that borders on Hell not Heaven.

God will bless the child who has his own and we African Americans have got to start demanding and insisting on our fair share of the pie. We need to get away from "fronting" and paper schemes that profess to include us.

Stadiums, sports teams, casinos, hotels, entertainment projects, etc. must include the people paying the bill or generating the income.

Over the years how many record labels, sports teams, movie studios have built empires through the talent and sweat of African Americans.

Yet, we have a pitiful piece of the ownership involved in these industries.

We settle for too little.

We have become happy with virtually nothing.

So, let us turn our attention to the biggest opportunity at hand. The Rebuilding of the Gulf is before us and we need to seize this opportunity.

Louisiana
and
Mississippi
have Black populations that exceed 30% each.

The contracts that will be generated from the federal government alone will approach \$100 billion over the next few years.

What share of the business participation will our corporations receive?

Well, right now it is about 1%.

That's right, just like that baseball team in DC, we are settling for 1%.

It is time to turn the heat up and we all must chant our displeasure and utilize the power of our vote to address this matter.

As of March 15, Black owned firms account for 112 companies participating as prime contractors in the Gulf Rebuilding for an amount that just exceeds \$308 million. That amounts to about 1% of the total.

Again, do we settle for this?

If you want to see just which companies are participating and exactly what states they actually reside in just go to the National Black Chamber of Commerce website and review and/or download the information.

It took months to get this data and it came lump with all other data (585 pages).

After a couple of days we were able to sift out the Black business participation.

Go to

www.nationalbcc.org

and view the data on the homepage.

If you know any of the business owners, please call and congratulate them. What they are doing is historical but don't forget that right now it should be considered remedial.

We must quickly build from there and get into double digit percentages as soon as possible.

Only then we can say that the rebuilding is taking form.

It must include us and 1% is certainly not enough.