

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

Chicago 2016

African Americans involvement in the United States political system began with Mathias de Souza, first person of African ancestry elected to Colonial Maryland Legislature in 1641-1642. Despite the increase in black political representation, the socio-economic condition of black communities continues to see little improvement in general.

The objective of **this political agenda is to identify the best course of political actions our community needs to pursue, in order to reinstate and secure our God given sovereignty/birthright and human rights.** As a community “we” have a responsibility to future generations to secure a framework of freedom for self-determination, self –identity and sustainable development.

Dr. Ansari an International Esq. and Dean of the American Institute of Human Rights; describes the African American plight within the following parameters. **“In the United States the path to poverty, mis-education, and societal discriminations are preconditioned by birthrights.”** Slavery, **“the most notorious of human rights crimes was predicated on the destruction of African American’s birthrights”** and subsequent institutional marginalization (minority status) of an entire people by a **“hostile Anglo-American Majority.”** How then do we seek remedy for these human rights violations?

Article 73 of the Charter of the United Nation mandates that countries that have captured or colonized people to list them and allow them the right to ‘Self-determination’. The right to “birthright self-determination” is a THRESHOLD human right issue that must be resolved in order to proceed to discuss which ‘rights’ and ‘privileges’ are available.

Self-determination is a positive right and a restorative, reparative remedy because, over time, it wipes away the effect of the illegal status and allows the African American people the ability to attain the status necessary to attain cultural, political and economic healing, privileges and native rights. Logically and legally, peaceful, democratic, self-determination is the most comprehensive and appropriate solution to the harms caused by slavery and apartheid.

Public Policy Recommendations

Short Term Strategy

1. **Develop/support Citizen Academy** administered by the Coalition of Black Community Organization (CBCO training).
2. **Create/support local initiatives to educate public on issues that impact the black community,** similar to the MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE orchestrated by CBCO in alliance with the National Black Agenda Consortium- Chicago, NBAC-C.
3. **Develop and coordinate** State representatives’ questionnaire, congressional candidate questionnaire and presidential candidate questionnaire.

4. **Create and Support** a National Black Agenda Political Action Committee (NBAPAC) to drive the political aspect of the black agenda and to raise money for black leadership development.
5. **Revisit the COVENANT** and the 10 areas it raised, in preparation for 2016.
6. **Develop/support a push for executive order to end all gerrymandering in the land.** Gerrymandering is used to destroy Black political power. It must be done away with.
7. **Develop/support the establishment of local control over the police, and residency requirements for all neighborhood police forces.**
8. **Develop/ support and or engage programs that organize Black youth** politically i.e. (human rights education, political leadership training, voter education and registration drive and the formation of a national Black political pressure and action group. (Black Youth-Chicago 2015)
9. **Develop/engage and or Support a *Constitutional Amendment* that guarantee the *Right to Vote*** as a permanent feature of American political life not subject to State variation or conditions.
10. **Militantly oppose the "*privatization*" and "*outsourcing*" of public services.** This includes privatization of Social Security, **City red light and parking metering**, Medicare, Water, prisons, Education, Utilities, Healthcare and Transportation infrastructure. Privatization strategies do not serve the interests of Black people, nor any low income people in America and only serves to transfer more public capital to the private sector.
11. **Convene forums to assess the effects of the War on Drugs in our community** in order to present a different framework/approach that reduces harm to our community.
12. **Develop/support "Report Cards" that grade the performance of ALL elected officials against the Community Agenda**, and widely circulate the results to the community for action and decision making. Skin color alone is not a sufficient determinant of accountability, thus candidates failing the Agenda test should be removed from office and replaced as inimical to the interests of the Black community.
13. **Develop *Political Education processes for Young Black Adults* that focuses on progressive organizing, building social movements, global youth civic participation and electoral politics**
14. **Vigorously pursue reinstatement of African Americans birthright** through Restorative Reparative Remedy.
15. **Build/support unity in the Pan-African World**, creating ties with other Black/African people in Africa and the African Diaspora (those areas outside of Africa in which Black/African people reside).
16. **Build an Independent Black/African Electoral Machine** with concentration on the local level. This machine's objectives are as follows:
 - Engaging in political education beginning at an early age.
 - Develop and run candidates.
 - Influence appointed positions.
 - Engage in voter registration with an emphasis on the Independent Black/African Agenda.
 - Hold politicians in our community accountable to the code of ethics listed below.
 - Encourage involvement in Citizens District Councils, Congressional Districts, business associations and faith institutions.

POLITICAL CODE OF ETHICS

- Leadership in our community will address on some level, advocate and adhere to the

Independent Black/African Agenda.

- Political positions will be utilized to benefit our community not for personal or career advancement.
- Integrity and honesty will be maintained.
- Regular community forums and hearings will be held to gauge community sentiment on important issues.

We the Black Community engage in activities to remove from office elected or appointed officials who violate this code of ethics.

LONG TERM STRATEGY

1. **Construct and or support** a Strategic Plan for the passage of Reparations legislation.
2. **Legally Challenge Federal racial classifications** to reestablish African American's right to self- identity and self-determination.
3. **Legally challenge the apartheid practice in the United States** because of the following:
 - (a) denial to a member or members of a racial group or groups of the right to life and liberty of person: (i) by murder of members of a racial group or groups; (ii) by the infliction upon the members of a racial group or groups of serious bodily or mental harm, by the infringement of their freedom or dignity, or by subjecting them to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; (iii) by arbitrary arrest and illegal imprisonment of the members of a racial group or groups;
 - (b) Deliberate imposition on a racial group or groups of living conditions calculated to cause its or their physical destruction in whole or in part;
 - (c) any legislative measures and other measures calculated to prevent a racial group or groups from participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country and the deliberate creation of conditions preventing the full development of such a group or groups, in particular by denying to members of a racial group or groups basic human rights and freedoms, including the right to work, the right to form recognized trade unions, the right to education, the right to leave and to return to their country, the right to a nationality, the right to freedom of movement and residence, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association..."
4. **Advocate and or support** a White House commissioned National Citizens' Redistricting Conference to inform the citizenry of the importance and long range implications of redistricting.

Community Strategy

1. Support Civic organizations that support the black political agenda and are implementing some aspect of community engagement.
2. Reach out to and partner (MOU) with other organizations that are working towards some aspect of the Black Political Agenda and community empowerment.
3. Share information and human resources collectively to move the agenda forward.

4. Provide technical and logistical support for organizations, churches and other civic entities engaged in moving our community toward self-sufficiency.
5. Work together to raise funding necessary for the work of collective political, social and economic development

What Individuals Can Do

1. Join and or support local civic/community organizations
2. Get involved by reading and asking questions related to the Black Political Agenda
3. Educate yourself on the issues and submit solution ideas to local organizers
4. Volunteer your time/skills to organizations involved in the work of community development
5. Encourage your children to volunteer in the community and to engage other youths
6. Engage your children in community centered conversations and ask for their ideas and concerns.
7. Engage the elderly for their advice and input on our current struggle for soci-economic and political empowerment.
8. Read, read, read; read everything available on those political issues that impact your life directly and find people that have ideas and solutions to discuss your findings with, even if it is your peers.
9. Donate to whatever you can afford i.e. (time, skill and or money) to organizing bodies in your community.
10. Identify your political leaders and study what they are doing in your name, get involved and “become the change you want to see” in your community and the world.