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A PUBLICATION OF BLACK UNITED STUDENTS OF AFTERMATH

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Life-changing events can happen often in the lives of some and can affect the lives of many. Everyone reacts differently to different situations, and those reactions can either improve the situation or make it worse. Many of us young adults were not around during the civil rights era, but we can appreciate all the positive events that took place and even learn from the negatives. How many of us appreciate what those before us went through to get us to where we are today? Militant groups formed to try to combat the injustice that was prevalent. Were they effective? How many of us appreciate the education that we are able to obtain and the struggle it took to get it? After all is said and done, how are we expressing our gratitude for the fight many had to go through? How are we laying a foundation for those to come? What, if anything, have we learned or received from the Million Man/Woman/Youth Marches? We still have a high number of our black men in prison, but once released how do they make a change for the better? What, if any, opportunities are available to them? How we react today, and how we make a stance will affect the future generation, just how the past struggles affected us. One life-changing event that we all are familiar with happened just this past year. The September 11th tragedies brought heartache, sorrow, anger, and pain. That event allowed for many different reactions including racial profiling and ethnic intimidation. As African-Americans, this kind of behavior is not new, but it still should not be tolerated. The aftermath of all these events allowed for many reactions and outcomes. If we learn from past mistakes, if we learn from current mistakes, then possibly our current reality will not evolve in to a future of repeated mistakes. We can only learn and grow from all of our experiences and experiences of others. Questions were asked that we all could apply to ourselves. How have we reacted? How are we reacting? What effect will our actions have on future generations? A positive attitude is contagious, and if we do not allow ourselves to be overcome by negative emotions then only positive outcomes can result.
If you are reading this, then you have witnessed that good things can come out in the aftermath of events. Problems will arise in day-to-day life- some for the good, some for the bad. Some may say these problems are what add spice to life. What would life be if we just went through and never made mistakes, never chose the path that sometimes took us a different way in our life? That is one way for us to learn which is the right way to choose.

In the aftermath, of these events, we should take the time to learn from our mistakes and actions. Realize that everything happens for a reason and is meant to help us choose our right path in life. Good or bad in the aftermath, we must learn to still keep our heads held high and continue on with life, whether we made a mistake or had some type of wrong done to us. In the aftermath nothing should matter but that we have learned a valuable lesson we can use to better ourselves and even teach to someone else so they wont have to go through the same thing.

I hope that you will take from this issue of Uhuru the feeling of still holding your head up high and appreciating situations for all they are worth in the Aftermath.
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LOCATED ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE STUDENT CENTER
SEPTEMBER 11TH: RACIAL PROFILING

BY JEFF JOHNSON
I can remember the sense of panic that filled every fiber of my being moments after the second tower of the World Trade Center fell on September 11, 2001. This was not a fear of something happening to my family or myself at the hands of some terrorists. This was the fear that my Arab-Muslim friends here at Kent State might be unsafe because of the average, culturally insensitive, Amerikkkan who might terrorize them in the same way Amerikkkans terrorized Arabs during the Persian Gulf War. I knew that not only would citizens begin terrorizing Arabs, Muslims and anyone who appeared to fit either category, but the government would also use methods of racial profiling against them the same way it has done to minorities in Amerikkka's past. I was appalled to know that Afrikan-Amerikkkans, knowing what type of punishment we have endured here for nearly 500 years due to racism and discrimination, were condoning the actions taken by government to imprison Arabs and others based merely on their appearances.

Considering the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Civil Rights and the discrimination used to keep over 1500 people locked in prisons across the country; for no other reason than skin color, facial features, choice of dress and religious preference. Blacks, as well as Latinos, make up two million prisoners in the United States' prison system today. We all know well that not all of these prisoners are there because they committed crimes. Many are there because they "fit the description." This is the same attitude that has over 1500 innocent Muslims, Arabs and thousands of lives lost because of Hoover's Cointelpro, (the FBI's Counter Intelligence Program that infiltrated Black organizations labeled radical, subsequently leading to the murder of many Black and other non-white activists), it is disturbing, disgusting and outrageous to think that Afrikan-Amerikkkans would endorse the type of many others who "fit the description" locked up for interrogation.

This divisive, racist activity is what many Blacks have fallen into as they try so hard to be part of the white power structure, a structure that even many whites don't want to be part of, or aren't part of due to personal beliefs or economic status. As soon as Amerikkka
wanted all of her sons and daughters to show their patriotism and partake in their usual politics (or parlor-tricks as I like to say) of reactionary, thoughtless, insensitivity toward humanity, Blacks and other non-Arab or Muslim minorities “rallied ‘round the flag” in order to callously

I WAS APPALLED TO KNOW THAT AFRIKAN-AMERIKKKANS, KNOWING WHAT TYPE OF PUNISHMENT WE HAVE ENDURED HERE FOR NEARLY 500 YEARS DUE TO RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION, WERE CONDONING THE ACTIONS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT TO IMPRISON ARABS AND OTHERS BASED MERELY ON THEIR APPEARANCES.

chastise innocent people who had no ties to Al-Qaida, the Taliban or Osama bin Laden, or to any other terrorists or terrorist activity. In many instances, these innocents were born here in the “land of the free.” Blacks and other non-Arab minorities also forgot that though Amerikkka requested the activism of all of her sons and daughters, she has
the blade of the same sword of evil that has slain so many of our ancestors and kin and will unfortunately slay many of us as well as our children. It is time that all of us, regardless of our race, ethnicity or religion, become aware of and sensitive to each other. That way we can come to know that we truly are not the perpetrators of oppression through racism and discrimination. We cannot partake in the negative actions of this government because we are afraid of terrorism. We must stand firm as a people in the face of hatred and resist it with all the energy we can muster, even if that means we will be subject to the same type of punishment that great rebels of our past have endured. Harriett Tubman, Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and countless other greats of our history knew what risks they were taking by opposing the status quo. Because of their perseverance, sacrifice, blood, sweat and tears we live in a much better position than we would have without them. We must make our ancestors proud and follow their example. We must walk toward freedom from the shackles of injustice for all people.
WE cannot partake in the negative actions of this government because we are afraid of terrorism. We must stand firm as a people in the face of hatred and resist it with all the energy we can muster, even if that means we will be subject to the same type of punishment that great rebels of our past have endured.
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“Black power my people, Black power!" "Say it loud! I’m Black, and I’m proud!" This is what it sounded like in the late 60s and 70s, when brothers and sisters began speaking up for themselves instead of letting the “White Man” run their lives. Slavery, racism and segregation were an outrage to Black people. Those events stripped us of our language, family and dignity. With the help of the Civil Rights movement we slowly began to rebuild the Black environment, our Black pride and ourselves.

Unlike Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Civil Rights movement, the “radical” group called the Black Panthers did not believe in non-violence. They were all about self-defense for Blacks. They monitored neighborhoods and watched for police brutality. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panthers in Oakland, California in 1966. The group was created for an assurance of self-defense, based on the ideas of Malcolm X and the Black Power movement. The group focused on problems in America. They stood out against inequality and racism toward their Black brothers and sisters.

“When I think of the Black Panther Party, I think of the time frame during which they came out,” said computer science major Allen Driscall. “They were a bunch of Black people that were fed up with white people’s actions, and they would take it to the extreme.”

In most cases, the Black Panther Party resided in the Black, urban ghettos across the country. They stood Black, proud, tall and strong, ready to take care of anyone who had hostility toward Black people. They were also strong in appearance, wearing black berets, black leather jackets and toting weapons; do not forget their symbol, the Black Panther!

“When I think of Black Panthers I think of militancy,” said fashion design major Nakiya Kirton. It may seem as if the Black Panthers were just about violence and riots, but they also stood for positive things for which they were not recognized, such as self defense for Blacks, mass organization techniques and practice of equality for women.

When we think of the Black Panthers, we think of the mighty fists that they held up. Will our
generation be able to make a difference? Will we take a stand? Can we create a group defending our generation?

“When I think of Black Panthers, I think of power and unit; it makes me think of how inactive we are now”, says Rukiya Hawthorne, electronic media productions/international relations major.

The truth is that WE as Black people will not be able to make a stand in corporate America unless we unite and stop trying to bring each other down. The Black Panthers were unified. They were about business! It did not matter to them who had on the best jacket, the best beret or who was the strongest. The Black Panthers wanted “land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.” These were all necessities of life. They were not asking for things that were unreasonable. “They wanted righteous life,” said advertising major April Harris, and they would fight just about anyone or anything to get it.

Although they were known for negativity, no one talks about how they gave their lives, dying for the equal rights of Blacks. No one talks about the struggles and the things that they had to put up with to keep their organization progressing. The Black Panthers were against negativity, and if people acted negative, they took negative actions.

Today being Black in America, the land of the free, the land of equal opportunity, is a total disgrace. If you look at the Constitution, Blacks are not considered fully human; we are still only considered three-fifths of a person. For all the people who want to go around criticizing radical and minority groups and do not know the struggles these individuals face, think about that. Until then, “All the power to the people!”

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“It’s time for you to get involved”
The Bittersweet Aftermath of the CIVIL RIGHTS STRUGGLE

By Kelly Hinton
Now is the time to inform ourselves on what these people struggled for and use their lives as examples and inspiration.

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In 1960, four Black college students dared to sit at a "whites-only" lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. They were ridiculed for taking were the rewards he received. The power of his vision for equality and his love for humankind outweighed the hate and injustice he experienced. Consequently, the drive and determination of such ambitious people are increasingly underrated. Those who heroically fought for nearly everything

Perhaps if we were forced to use “colored” bathrooms and water fountains we would be more appreciative.

such radical actions for racial equality. Many criticized them for foolishly attempting the impossible, but with courage and persistence, they fought on. In 1993, the Denny's restaurant chain paid $45.7 million to Black customers who filed class-action discrimination suits against the restaurant. In 1999, a racial discrimination suit was filed against the Waffle House restaurant chain.

What is wrong with this picture?
In 1957, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made 208 speeches, and traveled 780,000 miles as he fought against racial injustice. Throughout his life, he fought for equal opportunities and better treatment for Blacks. House bombings, arrests and assaults

January 21, 2002, Martin Luther King Day, was marked as having more business activity than any other in past years. The day set aside to remember Dr. King's rich legacy was celebrated by another trip to the office by more people than ever before.

An editorial was printed in the Daily Kent Stater the following day that questioned the relevance of such a holiday in today's society.

What happened here?
Respect and acknowledgment for the civil rights struggle diminishes with each passing year. Men and women under the age of 40 cannot recall the days of a totally segregated society, and most do little or nothing to educate themselves about it.

blacks have today have somehow faded into the background. Did they struggle in vain?
The 823,500 African-American owned businesses in this country in 1997 show that the spirit of enterprise is still alive (www.infoplease.com). Sadly, this figure is accompanied by an African-American unemployment rate that was double that of the white population in 1997 (www.imdiversity.com).

Finance major Terry Webb favors Black business ownership because he said it could help bring down unemployment rates. However, he thinks blacks are still at a disadvantage.

"We’re still behind from slavery. We had to start from nothing," he said.
Flight technology major Kwame White echoes these concerns. “It’s the way we were brought up. We [don’t] think well enough of ourselves,” he said.

Randolph and Roy Wilkins when we do not honor or even bother to remember the way they struggled for the equal treatment of Blacks. As a people, we need to take the respect it. No one was required to march for miles on end with aching feet, burning eyes from tear gas and scarred hearts from verbal tongue-lashings. It was

As a people, we need to take the initiative to learn more about the Civil Rights effort.

Let us not fall victim to the negative stereotypes society feeds us. We need to “realize we’re all in the same family” and “sit down and talk shop with each other”, like Malcolm X suggested in his address to the Grassroots Conference in 1963. We are capable, strong, intelligent people, regardless of the oppression of our ancestors. Now is the time to get motivated about helping one another and the problems that plague our communities.

Business management major Diarra Polk urges Black people to start encouraging one another. “We need to support what we see Black people trying to do, or their efforts won’t flourish,” she said. We do a disservice to people like Dr. King, Malcolm X, A. Philip

initiative to learn more about the Civil Rights effort.

More importantly, we need to their resolve to make a difference that spurred the Civil Rights movement and encouraged them

SUBMISSIONS

UHURU is now accepting any articles, short stories, poems, pictures, or ideas

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to press forward. Perhaps if we were forced to use "colored" bathrooms and water fountains we would be more appreciative. We would jump at the chance to praise Civil Rights activists if we were degraded and mistreated when we dared to sit at the front of a public bus. If we could have felt the heartache and sorrow of those who attended colored schoolhouses, passing colleges and universities they were not allowed to attend on the way, we would worship people who fought against such injustice. Instead, we are comfortable with the "norms" of today's society and ungrateful of the labors of people who suffered for us to have such comforts. Now is the time to inform ourselves on what these people struggled for and use their lives as examples and inspiration.

Let us live out Dr. King's dream. We need to take Black history out of February and put it in our hearts and minds every day of the year. Then, and only then, can we wholeheartedly encourage and build one another up. Tomorrow may be too late. The time to get on one accord and take action is now.
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On September 23, 1957, nine black students entered the all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in an attempt to receive an education equal to that of their white counterparts. On that warm September day, those nine students Ernest Green, Elizabeth Eckford, Jefferson Thomas, Terrence Roberts, Carlotta Walls, Minnijean Brown, Gloria Ray, Melba Pattillo Beals and Thelma Mothershed-Wair did not get a full day of classes. Instead, a ferocious mob welcomed them that morning outside the school, and it was not much better inside.

White students spat at them, tripped them and yelled insults at them. The mob became so rau-
cous that by 11:30 a.m. the police felt the mob could no longer be controlled out front. The students had to leave through a rear exit.

This attempt to integrate a public
school in Little Rock was no whim of those nine black students. Their actions came on the heels of the decision made by the U.S. Supreme Court on the case of Brown v. Board of Education (1954). That is when the Topeka, Kansas branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People fought for the right of a little black girl to be able to go to the white school that was only nine blocks from her home, rather than walk a mile through a freight train yard to get to the colored school. The Supreme Court ruled that the precedent set by the Plessy v. Ferguson ruling, where the doctrine of "separate, but equal" was deemed constitutional, had no place in the realm of public education and therefore declared the segregation of public schools to be unconstitutional. Southern governments resisted this decision. Arkansas governor Orval Faubus ordered the National Guard to block the entrance to Central High School on September 4, 1957, the day originally scheduled for the nine black students to begin classes there. Faubus claimed that he called in the National Guard black heels trampled by white terrors. Blood ran from the body of Melba Patillo as she was stabbed and had sticks of dynamite thrown at her and acid sprayed in her eyes.

Those nine students held on and persevered. All of the Little Rock Nine finished the school year. Ernest Green became the first black graduate of Central High School. Was it all worth it? Did integration really make public schools equal for all children? This is hardly the case. Today, providing an equal education for all has nothing to do with race. Money is the winning ticket in the lottery of equal education. Most black students attend school in urban districts where the population is high and the funds are low - very low. Equal opportunity does not mean equality of races anymore; it means equality of resources. In order for minority students in urban school districts to get a good education, they need smaller classes, longer hours and more support services.
Public school districts are steadily moving backwards toward segregation. The steady exit of white middle-class families from urban districts ordered to desegregate has made it all but impossible to achieve anything beyond “token integration” in many places. The popular voucher movement makes re-segregation even easier. Vouchers give parents the option of using the money that would be spent on their child at a public school to send them to private school. This not only takes money away from the public school districts, causing them to plunge deeper into the abyss of inferior education, but vouchers also have a racist history. White parents have used vouchers to avoid racial integration in the past.

In 1959, Prince Edward County, Virginia closed its public schools and provided public tuition vouchers to support a private school, which admitted only whites. There is no guarantee that the voucher programs being implemented all across the country will not put us back into a state of racially segregated education. Segregation is not the only problem facing the future of educating Black children. Today it seems as though school may not be important to them anymore. Of the country’s 11 percent of students that dropped out of high school in 1994, 12% of them were Black students. We need to remember what those nine students in Little Rock did for our race and our country, and honor their sacrifice by refusing to let politics and other petty things put us back in 1957. Just think how our education and our lives would be had they not taken a stand.

Just think how our education and our lives would be had they not taken a stand.

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By Jevon Jackson

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silver on the river of her veins
as her Heart abstains from exploding,
and it’s just that possible,
just that powerful
just that action-packed with accoutrements
of the Love-gun nutrients
that rifle of wisdom
and so much Trust for ammunition
I’ve so admired her and died at least a thousand times, unheard of,
with beauty of my immortal wounds
she says she plans to help me heal, forever,
with Libra hugs and peacock feathers,
and the soft warm Egyptian robes she drapes across my soul
whenever I pray for god to hold on to me.

k u u m b a

"SCOUT’S HONOR"
By Matthew Estvanic

brown skin is a dilemma when dealing with white lies your mother believes with everything that makes her
who she is. your mother would wish things to become difficult, insurmountable. mother reminds you that
you should do something normal with your life and that you might soon break up with your brown girl-
friend. but you’ll be smart enough to see this as untrue and you’ll fall in love with her; you’ll have every
piece of your being utterly infatuated with her. you’ll marry her, love her, and have beautiful bebes. one
will be a boy, Sirus Lazarus Matthew, and he’ll end up painting. then there’ll be a little girl, named Cira
Isis Magdalene, and she’ll be cute like her mother and have your slanty eyes. she’ll grow up to be some
captain of industry, fortune five hundred type, just to take the piss out of her arty, pseudo-intellectual par-
ents. but don’t worry yourself...poetry and pollock will be her dirty little republican secrets.
you are without travail. you and that woman you are going to marry will be happy. you’ll die first,
early...but not starkly so. and, of course, people will read your work once you die...honest.
so listen, i’m telling you...everything is going to be alright. scout’s honor.
UNTITLED
By Ja'nnice Burgess

You looked at me;
Brown eyed beauty
my husband to be
Strong jaw line
Sensual lips
perfectly curved shoulders held by
UNSHAKABLE HIPS
chest of a GOD
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arms that promise I'll never be alone
hands that represent
hard-work at a constant
legs that never end
but are perfect extensions from your
CURVACEOUS BEND
you are the essence of perfection
The first man of creation
a model for all to follow
even though you get pure admiration
from me you remain UNHOLLOW
STRENGTH, COURAGE, and PRIDE
3 words that represent you
BEAUTIFUL BLACK MAN!
how we all began........
Helpless I am around you
since you encompass all that you do
I LOVE U
and appreciate your faith
NEVER underestimate your spirit
whatever you set out to do; you'll get it
STAY STRONG
NEVER GO ASTRAY
and you will reach your goals one day
I PROMISE
I KNOW
I see the God in you, BOO
as long as you remain
CALM,
STEADY,
and two steps ahead of the game.

ASLEEP
By Xsais Mwunaidi

Motherwife...
always asleep
away from home,
outfitted
with maple trees.
Home,
at heart
of halo gold,
vaporized
by bare lightbulbs.
While hot
walls close in
on fired chicken
left behind...her grown children
flee to the movie studio
for pancakes
and maple syrup.

THE WALLS OF OSCAR RITCHIE
By Imani Noel

This is dedicated to the walls.
These walls remind us of where we came from.
The struggle we went through to get were we are.
These walls are beautiful.
Even if you look at them everyday.
You never cease to find something new.
A new picture, a new passage, a new thought.
There are the faces of famous people.
And the faces of ordinary people.
But all the people are beautiful.
As we are all beautiful.
You can see beautiful angels, clouds,
and beautiful rolling hills in these walls.
There are many different colors and shapes.
You could look at these walls for hours,
and never tire.
Some people pass these walls everyday,
and they never really see them.
Like they never really see us.
They don't see all the work done to get us here.
They don't see our struggle,
The struggle for us to gain these walls,
and the blood shed for us to even see these walls.
These walls are beautiful.
All of my people are beautiful.
And we should all appreciate what is here for us.
And appreciate the people that made it possible.
And we should not let them down.
FEELIN' ME....?
By Gayle Grace
For the people who don't know the meaning of being caressed and touched.
So much to the point that they told themselves they don't need it that much.
Who have no patience,
but find out the hard way that it is a virtue.
Stuck like me, wishing for something good,
realizing in the end that good guys and nice girls always finish last and even more that those in last place
wish to hold a first place winner's hand.
Who just can't seem to understand...wanna be in love,
But have been hurt so many times that they've forgotten the feeling and can only pray for an answer from
above.
For those who only have imagination...
as a way of creating safe let your guard down situations.
Who realize that pain doesn't just come from everybody else.
All the solitude brought on knowledge that some of the problem lies in self.
For those who walk slowly, hoping that true love will on day pass...
for those like me who just wanna give up and put a relationship on the "to do" list last.
At least until there are better days,
and their ideas of love aren't blurred and hazed.
And can believe people don't always have a gimick.
And that anyone who is interested must have a major flaw or is f***ed up in the head sick...
Or maybe these are just my thoughts and why right now romance and I won't be.
But I wonder, I think, I hope somebody out there is feeling me....

I WAS THERE
By Shannon Crenshaw
I was there when that little girl inside learned to play
  Hide and seek
I was there and saw how shy she was
I was there I felt the pain she felt inside
  I saw the look in her eyes
I saw her run to her mother and hide.
As I look back I see so many things she was afraid of,
I see so many people, so many fears, so many regrets, and So many tears. I see things through her eyes
That make no sense to me, these things are so confusing and mixed up to me.
These things I see I know they can't be made up
Only I can't pinpoint where they started, I can only feel the way she feels when these things are happen-
ing. Why she feels this way? I don't know.
Why she choose my heart as a hiding place? I can't say.
Maybe it's cause she is part of me.
I sometimes try to separate that little girl from me and then I realize she is me or I am her.
TELL YOUR STORY
By Latonya Green

No life is flawless. No view is untainted.
Optimism is an ideal and in some cases an illusion.
No tear carries more weight than any other.
There is no child who does not need the comfort of a mother.
Everyone has a story to tell; some whisper it, some yell.
My voice is often heard but my pain is rarely felt.
No life is without tragedy. No soul is without sin.
Everyone reaches a point where they would like to stop and start again.
Everyone has a story to tell; some whisper it, some yell.
My voice is often heard but my pain is rarely felt.
Every life holds meaning and to every lie there is some truth.
No one is loved by everyone and for some of us love has been untrue.
So I tell my story with silent words and pretend that they are being heard.
My illusion is that I am telling my story. Because...everyone has a story to tell; some whisper it, some yell.

IN YOUR VOICE
By Fawn Howard

In your voice I can hear your pain, and your happiness.
Your voice rings in my ears, and rests in my heart.
In your voice I hear the story of our struggle.
I hear all the pains you went through in order for me to live.
In your voice I hear you crying. I hear a nation crying.
I hear a nation hurting.
I hear men crying.
Men unable to stand up for their women.
I hear men being torn away from their families.
I hear them crying.
I hear women crying for their men.
I hear women crying because of the pain.
In your voice I can hear women screaming.
Screaming as their innocence is ripped away from them.
In your voice I can hear children crying.
Children crying for their parents.
In your voice I can hear a nation crying.
I hear a nation hurting.
I can hear my people crying.
In your voice. In your voice.
I begin to cry because of what I hear in your voice.
I hear pain, suffering, and hurt.
I hear all the women who died.
I hear all the men who died.
And I hear all the children who died.
They are now weeping together.
But their weeping soon turns to laughter.
They can laugh now because they are free.
But everyday your voice reminds me of their tears.
It reminds me of their pain, and struggling.
And through your voice they tell me to never forget.
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WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR OUR BROTHERS IN JAIL?

By Marla King

What happens to our brothers when they are released from jails and prisons within the United States? Many of them return to the lifestyle and environment that may have contributed to their jail/prison sentence, resulting often in a repeat of another and longer punishment behind bars. However, before we give our opinions based on either common sense or personal experiences, some facts must be presented first. One must first understand or at least have some knowledge of the current state of the jails and prisons within the United States. Currently, America’s overall prison population now exceeds the combined populations of Alaska, North Dakota, and Wyoming (Irwin, 2000). This is disturbing. More disturbing is who are behind bars. There are more of our brown brothers and sisters behind bars than ones not behind bars. African-American and Hispanic males are more than overly represented behind bars, which shouldn’t come to any surprise to anyone who can and has examined the state of this country’s social dynamics and social problems. Drug convictions and other non-violent crimes are the types of crimes that most African-American and Hispanic males are committing due to their economic struggle to survive and provide for either themselves as well as their families. Social activist Angela Davis believes that punishment is linked to poverty and racism (Davis, 2000). The above two reasons for the mass imprisonment of our brown brothers are both valid and true, so why hasn’t the great American society tried to change the obstacles that far too many of our communities have to overcome? Because mass imprisonment is far too easy, sadly enough; for certain racial and ethnic backgrounds this is the case. It has been established that African-American and Hispanic males populate the prisons and
jails in the United States due to circumstances often beyond their control. Poorer communities that house mostly brown people often suffer the consequences that American taxpayers spend on education, health care, and other social programs that could benefit the poorer communities across the United States. While those behind bars are receiving less treatment, less funds, fewer skills, less exposure to the corporate world and less attention on planning a smooth transition to the outside world, their peers may be sharing a martini at the local yacht club and laughing about their recent promotion of their fathers companies. (Petersilia, 2001). What happens to our brown brothers when they are released from jail and prison? Well, they often go back to the same lifestyle and environment that they were in before they were behind bars. Prisons and jails are supposed to be rehabilitating right? They are not, for the simple reality that because there are so many brown brothers behind bars at disturbing overcrowding rates, they are doing the same thing behind bars as they were before they were locked up. Trying to survive and not be killed. African-American and Hispanic males’ chances of pursuing a somewhat normal, non-criminal life after release, is diminished by the time that was spent incarcerated. This does not have to be the case. What can we do to slow down and end the rate of our brothers being incarcerated? For those that are released how can we help them avoid returning to that unproductive lifestyle?

Prisons and jails are supposed to be rehabilitating right?
Seven years ago, a monumental event happened. In 1995, the Million Man March took place in Washington, D.C. which purpose was for Black men to “improve themselves spiritually, mentally, morally, socially, politically and economically for the benefit of himself, his family and his people”. In 1997, the Million Woman March in Pennsylvania, in 1998 the Million Youth March in New York City, and in 2000, the Million Family March in Washington D.C. were held. Each of these marches were held in the same hope to bring about the same changes that the Million Man March strived for. To bring together Black people so we can uplift ourselves from our current position in society, and to bring unity to the Black community from all aspects of our people by teaching us, from the men to the children, and then bringing us all together as a family.

These marches brought about hope that we as Blacks could come together and hold such events without violence or disorganization. The marches recognized that we as African-Americans realized that we had problems we need to deal with as an entire race, not just individually. For men, its purpose was to help them be better fathers, husbands, brothers and sons; for women, better wives, mothers, sisters, daughters; and for children to help them to understand that they could live better lives, and help change the way of life for themselves and their community as adults.

However, the question is did these marches bring about what they intended? After those marches and those days of teaching and learning, did it bring about its
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goals that were set forth? Seven years later from the first march, are we as a race showing any signs that the people who went to these marches have made any use of the knowledge they learned? Did we learn anything from these gatherings? “I don’t think the marches had any effect on us. People just used it as an excuse to go and say they went. Then came back home and gave up on what they learned from it,” said one Kent State student who chose to remain anonymous. This seemed to be the opinion of the majority of the people interviewed.

“I think that the older generations took from the marches more than the younger generations,” criminal justice major, Tianna said. Could it be that the marches occurred before we were ready for them to happen? As young people, many of us do not understand the importance of such events. At that time, we ranged in the ages of 13 to 15. At such young ages, the betterment of the community and us was not on many of our minds. Or could it be that since most of us have never really lived through such hard times, such as slavery and the Civil Rights Movement, that we are sheltered and believe we don’t have any problems to deal with? Or that we only have to worry about our own families before we can worry about other people? Is it that we just do not know how to put to use the knowledge that was given at these events? “It was a good idea in theory, but as far as bringing back something to help our people, I think we were too young to appreciate the efforts,” Matthew Hardin, a political science major said. “We did bring back some things
from the marches, but not everything we brought back was real," commented justice studies major Jason Harris. "Many Blacks who went look at it as a way of having pride in their own right, but they don’t even know the whole struggle behind why we even had these marches." It seems this also could be true. Then it would make sense that there was nothing really brought back by the masses that went to these marches to help uplift the Black race and our communities. What good would any knowledge be if people did not know what it was given for, how to use it, or even worse, if they did not care to use it at all?

"I think that some people brought back things from the march; they just didn’t teach what they learned to the people back in their communities and their homes," said fashion and design major Nakiya Kirton. "They kept what knowledge they learned to themselves."

So, what is the solution now? Where do we go from here to make sure that these events are not looked on in the future as ones that only brought people together for one day? Does it start with one’s self, or do we have to come together to try and make a difference as we set out to do with the marches in the first place?

Do we need to hold these marches more than the once so generations upon generations can learn, and bring back something to their families and communities?

“So many people talk about nothing is happening, that they don’t realize what is happening right in front of their faces,” said Mwatabu Okantah, “People are setting up for things to happen again, just as they set up for the Million Man March. That preparation comes from being involved with the little things that go on around us, such as going to see a speaker who is talking about issues involving you on campus, watching a movie on a black leader, or going to a Black United Students meeting.

Being involved in one of these events is much easier than being involved in a picket line."